

HI283A1: The Modern American Presidency
Fall 2019
CAS 315, Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45

Professor Andrew David
226 Bay State Road, Room 401
Email: andavid@bu.edu
Office Hours: TR 4:45-5:45, R 11-12, and by appointment

Overview:

The presidency is perhaps the most important yet misunderstood office in the American government. On one hand, the president has tremendous ability to shape events and policy. On the other hand, it is surprising just how little power a president sometimes has in influencing events. HI 283 examines the development of the institution of the presidency from the election of William McKinley in 1896 to the present day. We will examine not only the careers of the presidents themselves, but also those that served in their administrations as well as the evolution of the Executive Branch. We will look at how presidents win elections, how they manage their administrations, how they deal with Congress, and how Americans perceive the office and its occupants.

Course Organization/Requirements:

Specific course requirements are as follows:

Short Paper (10%) (Hard copy due at start of class, Thursday, October 10)
Midterm Exam (25%) (In class, October 22)
Analytic Paper (30%) (Hard copy due at start of class, December 3 or 10)
Final Exam (30%) (Monday, December 16)
Attendance and Class Participation (15%)

The short paper prompt will be posted to the Blackboard site (and discussed in class) on September 24. The analytical prompt will be posted to the Blackboard site (and discussed in class) on October 31.

Attendance: Students are required to attend lectures and discussions, and attendance will be taken at each class meeting via a sign in sheet. Attendance will be considered when calculating class participation grades, and students will be docked a full grade for every three classes they miss (i.e. 3 missed classes moves a grade you from an A to a B, 6 from a B to a C, etc.). Note that these absences need not be consecutive. If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g., varsity athletics, religious observances), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester.

Exams: Students are expected to take the midterm and final on the days they are administered (October 23 and December 18). Make-up exams will only be given in the event of a medical emergency (with a note from a doctor) or a family emergency.

Technology: Use of laptops (and other digital devices) is not permitted in class. If you need to use a laptop for notetaking, please speak to myself or Charley.

Readings

The following books are available at the Barnes and Noble bookstore in Kenmore Square:

Lewis Gould, *The Modern American Presidency* (2nd Edition)
Eric Rauchway, *Winter War*
Jacob Weisberg, *Ronald Reagan*
Joshua Zeitz, *Building the Great Society*

In addition to these, other readings are posted to the class' Blackboard site

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the passing off of another's words or ideas as your own, and it is a serious academic offense. Cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures described in the College of Arts and Science Academic Conduct Code. All students are subject to the CAS code, which can be read online at:
<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>
Penalties for plagiarism can range from failing an assignment or course to suspension or expulsion from the university. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please speak with me.

Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Assignments

Tuesday, September 3-Intro to Class

Thursday, September 5-How William McKinley Stayed on His Front Porch and Reinvented the Modern Campaign

Blackboard Material:

Presidential Power, Chapters 1 and 2
The Imperial Presidency, Chapters 1 and 2

Tuesday, September 10-Theodore Roosevelt and the Bully Pulpit

Thursday, September 12-The Election of 1912 and Third Parties

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 1

Blackboard Material:

Republic of Spin, Chapter 1
Woodrow Wilson, "The New Freedoms"
Theodore Roosevelt, "The New Nationalism"

Tuesday, September 17-Woodrow Wilson Changes the White House, the Presidency and the World

Thursday, September 19-America's Worst President, Quietest President, and the Greatest President Who Never Was

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 2-3

Blackboard Material:

Warren G. Harding, "A Return to Normalcy"

Herbert Hoover, "Principals and Ideas for the United States Government"

Tuesday, September 24-Making the New Deal Coalition

Thursday, September 26-The Only Thing We Have to Fear is Franklin Roosevelt

Readings:

Winter War, Chapters 1-4

Blackboard Material

Franklin Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address (Video)

Tuesday, October 1-Eleanor Roosevelt and the Role of First Ladies

Thursday, October 3-Saving the White House, America, and the World

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 4

Winter War, Chapters 5-8

Blackboard Reading

"Modern First Ladies in Historical Perspective" *Presidential Studies Quarterly*

Franklin Roosevelt's 1936 Democratic Convention Speech (Audio)

Tuesday, October 8-Inventing the National Security State

Thursday, October 10-Dwight Eisenhower's Hidden Hand

Readings

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 5

Blackboard Material:

In the Shadow of the Oval Office, Chapter 1-2

McGeorge Bundy Memo to John F. Kennedy, 5/16/61

SHORT PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS ON 10/10

Tuesday, October 15-**NO CLASS (Monday Schedule)**

Thursday, October 17-Presidents and Civil Rights (to 1960)

Blackboard Material

The Hidden Hand Presidency, Chapter 5

Dwight Eisenhower's Speech on the Integration of Little Rock Central High School

Tuesday, October 22-**MIDTERM**

Thursday, October 24-In Class Movie: Adventures on the New Frontier

Blackboard Material

"Making the Celebrity Presidency" in *Recapturing the Oval Office*

The Atlantic, The Day President Kennedy Embraced Civil Rights

John F. Kennedy's Announcement on Civil Rights

[NOTE: These readings should be done after the midterm]

Tuesday, October 29-Making Camelot

Thursday, October 31-The Great Legislator

Readings:

Building the Great Society, Chapters 1-7

Tuesday, November 5-The Road to Vietnam

Thursday, November 7-How a Presidency Falls Apart-1

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 7

Building the Great Society, Chapters 8-Conclusion

Blackboard Material

The Atlantic, How the Vietnam War Broke the American Presidency

Lyndon Johnson Secret Recordings

Tuesday, November 12-Nixon or How a Presidency Falls Apart-2

Thursday, November 14-Victims of Circumstance and Infighting: Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 7-8

Reagan, Intro to Chapter 6

Tuesday, November 19-Morning in America and Ronald Reagan in the White House

Thursday, November 21-**NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)**

Readings:

Reagan, Chapters 7-15

Blackboard Material

Reagan TV Campaign Ads

Tuesday, November 26-In Class Video: Boggie Man

Thursday, November 28-The Least Important Person in Washington?: The Vice President

Readings:

The Modern American Presidency, Chapters 9-10

Blackboard Material:

The Atlantic, Why the Vice Presidency Matters

Richard Neustadt Memo on the Vice Presidency

Tuesday, December 3-In Class Movie: The War Room

Thursday, December 5-The Failure (?) of George HW Bush and the Success (?) of Bill Clinton

Blackboard Material:

The Impossible Presidency, Chapter 9

The Presidential Difference, Chapter 11-12

Tuesday, December 10-What Is the Presidency in the 21st Century?

Reading

The Modern American Presidency, Chapter 11

Blackboard Material:

The Atlantic, The Hardest Job in the World

In Class Final: 12:30-2:30, Monday, December 16