The US Presidency: The Buck Stops Here
Political Science 100A

Fall 2014 | TTh 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Instructor: Justin Levitt | Classroom: WLH
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Office Hours: in SSB 447 | TA Email:

Course Purpose
This course is an upper-level seminar that covers the Presidency. As an upper-division course, students are

Required Textbooks (available at the Bookstore):
1. Textbooks TBA
2. Other readings will be available via the internet.
3. Follow the news

Requirements and Grades:
• **General**: Website, readings. I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus in response to any developing current events.
• **Readings**: In order to get the most of discussion
• **Grading**: This grading system gives you a number of opportunities to earn points, and offers you the chance to counterbalance a poor grade in one area. The grade will be broken down as follows:
  - Group Project on a President (45%), divided into:
    - Debate—15%
    - Your section of the paper—15%
    - Overall paper grade—15%

Your final project for this course is a group project on a single president. We will be discussing this further during Week 3. Please begin thinking about which President(s) most interest you. Focus on those that offer the most information available—Millard Fillmore will not be a good choice for this project. No one may do Barack Obama, but many others are just as interesting!

Midterm 1 (In Class)—20% (Thursday of Week 2 – 10/16/2014)
Midterm 2 (Take Home)—25% (Tuesday of Week 8 – 11/25/2014)

Attendance and Participation—10%
Throughout the course, I will be taking attendance and there may be additional in class activities during which participation credit will be awarded.

• Grading rubric:
  - Above 92%: A
  - 90 – 92%: A-
  - 89 – 87%: B+
  - 86 – 83%: B
  - 80 – 82%: B- (Same for C grades)
  - 60-69%: D
  - Below 60%: F

Academic honesty
From the UCSD Statement on Academic Integrity: “Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind.”
In plain English, you may not have someone else complete an assignment for you. Let’s be real here. Asking someone to proofread your paper is okay, but if they’re telling you what to say, that’s too far. If you are unfamiliar with the University’s policy on academic integrity, please see http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html.

Learning disabilities
Students with University-documented learning disabilities should inform me as soon as possible.

Course Schedule and Readings

Unit 1: Power and the Development of the Presidency (Weeks 0-2)

**Th 10/2—Introduction: Classifying the President’s powers**
Readings: Skim Chapter 2 when you have free time; begin Morris, “Theories of Presidential Power”

**Th 10/7—The Founders’ President: Designing a Chief Executive**
For Debate: DtP 3.5: Term Limits: Should the Twenty-Second Amendment be repealed?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 1 (pp. 1-13), 4
Primary: Constitution, Cato #4, Federalist #71-72, George Washington’s Farewell Address, Thomas Jefferson’s Letter to the Vermont Legislature, John F. Kennedy’s Civil Rights Address, Ronald Reagan’s First Inaugural Address (EP 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 33, 44)
Online: Bessette and Tulis “On the Constitution” (From The Constitutional Presidency)

**Th 10/9—The Imperial Presidency: Informal Powers**
For Debate: DtP 3.1: Would the Founders approve of the modern presidency?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 1 (pp. 13-end)
Primary: Pacificus-Helvidius exchange #1, Lincoln’s letter to Albert G. Hodges, Roosevelt and Taft on Presidential Power, FDR’s First Inaugural Address, Youngstown Sheet v. Sawyer, Eisenhower’s Little Rock Executive Order (EP 6, 14, 20, 24, 29, 30)
Online: Irwin Morris, “Theories of Presidential Power”; Richard Neustadt, “Three Cases of Command.” (From Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents)

**T 10/14—The Rhetorical Presidency: Ceremonial Powers**
For Debate: DtP 3.7: Is the President’s power their ability to persuade?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 9
Primary: Jimmy Carter’s Crisis of Confidence Speech (EP 43, or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCOd-qWZB_g); FDR’s Fireside Chat (e.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9CBpbuV3ok or any other); Reagan’s Berlin Wall Address (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MDFX-dNtsM); Obama’s Egypt Speech (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_889oBKkNU)
Online: Sam Kernell, “The Politics of Popularity” (From Going Public)
Unit 2: The Person of the President: Understanding Presidential Leadership (Weeks 3-5)

T 10/21—Evaluating the President
For Debate: DtP 3.6: Does presidential success depend on their personal characteristics, or the circumstances in which they lead?

Readings
Textbook: Fred Greenstein, “The Person of the President: Leadership and Greatness;” Optional (PPS 6)
Primary: Historical Rankings of the Presidents: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historical_rankings_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States; Bush II and Clinton on leadership (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aub6LBeoizU)
Online: “The Presidential Breakthrough of Barack Obama” (From The Presidential Difference: Leadership Styles from FDR to Barack Obama)

T 10/23—Public Communication and the Media
For Debate: DtP 2.5: Are the media too hard on the President?

Readings
Textbook: PPS 10
Online: (On JSTOR) Brandice Canes-Wrone, “The President’s Legislative Influence from Public Appeals”

T 10/28—Organizational Capacity
For Debate: DtP 3.2: Is the Unitary Executive a myth?

Readings
Textbook: PPS 3
Online: Peter Shane, “The President’s Personal Bureaucracy”

T 10/30—Political Skill and the Electoral Process
For Debate: DtP 3.3: Should the presidential nomination process be held on a single day across the nation?

Readings
Textbook: PPS 7

T 11/4—Policy Vision: Parties and Interest Groups
For Debate: DtP 2.13: Are Presidents agents of change?

Readings
Textbook: PPS 11, 12
Primary: Skim the 2012 Party platforms and watch clips from Presidential debates

T 11/6—Presidential Scandals and Impeachment
For Debate: DtP 1.4: Is the impeachment process sound?
Readings
Textbook: James Pfiffner, “Three Crises of Character in the Modern Presidency”
Primary: Teapot Dome Resolution, Articles of Impeachment against Johnson, Nixon (EP 18, 22, 39)
Online: (On JSTOR) Basinger and Bottinghaus “Skeletons in White House Closets: A Discussion of Modern Presidential Scandals”

Unit 3: The Policy Team: the Executive Office and the Cabinet (Weeks 6-8)
T 11/11—The Veto Power
For Debate: DtP 3.8: Should the Congress be forced to vote on Presidential initiatives?
Readings
Textbook: Andrew Rudalvide, “The Executive Branch and the Legislative Process”
Primary: Andrew Jackson’s veto of the Second National Bank, Clinton v City of New York (EP 13, 47)
Online: Charles Cameron, “Veto Threats” (from Veto Bargaining)

Th 11/13—Unilateral Executive Action
For Debate: DtP 3.11: Should signing statements be allowed?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 17
Primary: Read signing statements from Obama and Bush here: http://www.coherentbabble.com/listBHOall.htm
Online: William Howell, “Unilateral Action” (from Power without Persuasion)

T 11/18—Appointments and the Judiciary
For Debate: DtP 3.13: Should the President have more authority to make appointments?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 16
Primary: Noel Canning: the recess appointment debate (read posts on SCOTUS Blog)
Online: Mitchel Sollenberger, “Establishing the Pre-Nomination Process” (from The President Shall Nominate)

Th 11/20—War Powers
For Debate: DtP 3.9: Should Congress repeal the War Powers Act?
Readings
Primary: The War Powers Resolution (EP 38). Obama’s ISIS speech
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spIWGoNZnaU)
Online: Richard Pious, “Prerogative Power and the War on Terrorism”; James Pfiffner, “Constraining Executive Power: George W. Bush and the Constitution”

T 11/25—Midterm II DUE (Take-Home Exam)

Th 11/27—Thanksgiving: NO CLASS

Unit 4: Making Government Work: The Bureaucracy (Weeks 9-10)
Th 12/2—The Executive Office of the President
For Debate: DtP 1.10: Should the Cabinet play a larger role in making policy?

Readings
Textbook: Matthew Dickinson, “The Executive Office of the President: The Paradox of Politicization”
Online: Charles o. Jones: “Organizing to govern (pp. 66-80)” (from The Presidency in a Separated System).

Th 12/4—Public Administration and Executive Oversight
For Debate: DtP 3.12: Should the President be allowed to appoint czars without Congressional approval?
Readings
Textbook: PPS 14; Barry Weingast “Caught in the Middle”
Primary: Madison’s defense of the President’s removal power, The Pendleton Act (EP 5, 19)

T 12/9—Debates

Th 12/11—Debates

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 17th, 2014 (Happy Holidays!)