

CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, POMONA

Political Science 326 – Spring 2017

# The American Presidency

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Dr. Mario Guerrero

*E-mail:* mag@cpp.edu

*Voice:* (909) 869-3885

*Classroom:* 5-125

*Time:* TuTh 3:00 - 4:50PM

*WWW:* <http://marioguerrero.info/courses/pls326>

*gChat:* mariog *Facebook:* marioguerrero

*Office:* Building 94, Room 316

*Office Hours:* TuTh 10:30AM - 12:00PM

Th 1:00 - 2:00PM

By appointment

## 1 Course Description

This course is dedicated to a systematic examination of the United States presidency. While the American Presidency is known as one of the most powerful offices in the world, scholars struggle to understand the complexities of the office and the motives of those people who have held that office. This course introduces students to important and theoretical works in US presidency research. Doing so gives you a perspective of how scholars think about the executive branch, encouraging you to think critically and assess presidential administrations on your own.

The purpose of this class is to examine the presidency and its place in American politics, including its origin and development. Students should be able to assess the ways in which presidents make decisions and seek to shape foreign, economic, and domestic policy. The course is intended to address several questions about the presidency. These questions include but are not limited to: What is the relationship of the presidency with other governmental institutions? To what extent do presidents compromise with other elected officials? How often do presidents respond to public opinion? Which theories best explain how presidents make decisions? What constraints influence the president's ability to demonstrate leadership in the United States political system? One of the core tenets of this class is **leadership**. While the knowledge that we extract from academic work is important, the principles of leadership can be practically applied to your own lives and careers.

## 2 Required Text

In an effort to save you money, there are no textbooks or printed reader for this course. All required readings will be found online. Please visit the course website for frequent updates. If you have trouble with accessing course materials or prefer printed readings, please contact me to make alternate arrangements.

## 3 Course Requirements

Your final grade is based on eight different components. These components are designed to give a fair and comprehensive assessment of your progress in this course.

Percentage	Assignment
5%	<i>Pre-Assessment:</i> In a one to two page paper, students will be asked to analyze the modern presidency. The pre-assessment is due <b>Thursday, March 30.</b>
10%	<i>Presidential Profile:</i> Students will be asked to profile a modern president. The profile is 7-8 pages in length and is due <b>Thursday, May 4</b>
15%	<i>Presidential Library Proposal:</i> Students will complete a proposal to bring a presidential library to Cal Poly Pomona. The proposal is comprised of a cover letter, brochure, and justification. This is due on <b>Tuesday, May 16.</b>
10%	<i>Presentation:</i> Students will be required to present their complete library proposal. These presentations are scheduled for the eighth, ninth, and tenth weeks of the quarter.
10%	<i>Attendance and Participation:</i> Students are expected to be present, on time, and actively engage in classroom activities. Each lecture counts as a point. You lose 1/2 point for tardiness. Absences and tardiness will not be excused under any circumstances.
20%	<i>Midterm Exam:</i> To be held on <b>Thursday, April 27.</b>
30%	<i>Final Exam:</i> To be held on <b>Friday, June 10.</b>

### 3.1 Extra Credit

Students also have the ability to earn up to five percent of course credit by visiting either of the Presidential Libraries in Southern California. The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library (40 Presidential Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065; (805) 522-2977; reaganfoundation.org; Approximately 70 miles from campus; Admission: \$29.00) and The Richard Nixon Library and Museum (18001 Yorba Linda Boulevard, Yorba Linda, CA 92886; (714) 933-3383; nixonlibrary.gov; Approximately 18 miles from campus; Admission: \$6) are both open seven days a week. Make sure to call ahead to check if the museums are closed for special events.

This visit is completely optional. If you do choose to complete this credit, you must be responsible for arranging your own transportation. To receive credit, students are required to submit a 2-3 page, double-spaced paper summarizing which critical aspects and events of each administration are missing from the museum exhibits. This task requires students to do some independent research. In addition, students must turn in a ticket stub from the museum.

## 4 Communication

Office hours are great for getting detailed answers and clarification. Furthermore, you are welcome to visit office hours if you are in search of academic advising. I encourage **everyone** to come to office hours at some point in the quarter. It will help me to get to know you better and it will help you do well in this class. Office hours have been statistically proven to help your grade.

Whenever I am in my office (94-316), I am happy to meet with you. I am guaranteed to be in my office during dedicated office hours, but you can also schedule an appointment so we can meet when it is convenient for you. I do not make formal appointments during drop-in hours. Feel free to contact me online via Facebook chat (marioguerrero). I am frequently online and will be happy to answer your questions whenever I can.

## 5 Academic Honesty

Cal Poly Pomona takes academic honesty very seriously. Cheating is not tolerated and students will be held accountable for cheating on an assignment or an exam. Violators will receive an F in the course and then be referred to the Dean of Students and Judicial Affairs for further disciplinary action that may result in suspension. There should be no reason for you to feel compelled to cheat in this class. If you feel overwhelmed with the course, please do not hesitate to contact me for help.

## 6 Special Assistance

A wide range of services is available to support students in their efforts to meet the course requirements. Cal Poly Pomona offers counseling for personal and academic concerns at the Counseling and Psychological Services at no additional charge to students (Building 66-110, 909-869-3220). Additionally, Student Health Mental Services (Building 46, 909-869-3070) provides a range of services to help students identify and overcome obstacles stemming from financial, emotional, social, or family situations. The Disability Resource Center (Building 9-103, 909-869-3333) also provides academic support services to eligible students with temporary and permanent disabilities. You must register with DRC prior to receiving these accommodations.

Separately from these services, the University Writing Center (Library 2921) provides assistance to students writing papers. The Writing Center offers students 30-minute one-on-one appointments. Writing Center tutors specialize in reading for content, but will also read papers for grammar and style. Please utilize this resource if you know you need help with your writing.

## 7 Course Schedule

Please note that the following schedule is subject to change throughout the quarter. Students are expected to complete the reading before each individual class meeting.

### UNIT 1 PRESIDENTIAL POWER

**Tuesday, March 28, 2017** Course Introduction. What "makes" a president?

*Readings* NO READING

**Thursday, March 30, 2017** Evaluating the Presidency. How do we evaluate the president in the past, present, and future?

*Readings* James Fallows. 2012. "Obama, Explained." *The Atlantic*. 6 February.  
Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Rating the Presidents: From Washington to Clinton. *Political Science Quarterly* 112(2): 179-190.

PRE-ASSESSMENT DUE: THURSDAY, MARCH 30

**Tuesday, April 4, 2017** The Framers' Intent. How does the concept of "energy" translate into current presidential administrations?

*Readings* Jeffrey K. Tulis. 2003. "The Two Constitutional Presidencies." *The Presidency and the Political System*. Washington DC: CQ Press.

**Thursday, April 6, 2017** The Imperial Presidency. What is the imperial presidency?

*Readings* Richard Neustadt. 1990. "Leader or Clerk?" *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidencies: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York: The Free Press.  
Richard Neustadt. 1990. The Power to Persuade. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidencies: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York: The Free Press.

**Tuesday, April 11, 2017** The Presidency and Legislative Power. In the never-ending struggle between Congress and the presidency, which branch is better suited for leadership?

*Readings* Matt Bai. 2009. "Taking the Hill. *New York Times*, 2 June.

**Thursday, April 13, 2017** No Class. Western Political Science Association Conference.

*Readings* No Readings

**Tuesday, April 18, 2017** The Presidency and Executive Power. As the leader of the executive branch, does the president have control over the bureaucracy?

*Readings* Terry M. Moe. 2003. "The Presidency and the Bureaucracy: The Presidential Advantage." *The Presidency and the Political System*. Washington DC: CQ Press.

**Thursday, April 20, 2017** The Presidency and Rhetorical Power. How has the president's use of rhetoric changed over time?

*Readings* Samuel Kernell. 1997. The Growth of Going Public. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*. Washington DC: CQ Press.

**Tuesday, April 25, 2017** The Presidency and Judicial Power. What developments in the modern presidency has influenced the president's relationship with the judiciary?

*Readings* David A. Yalof. 2003. The Presidency and the Judiciary. *The Presidency and the Political System*. Washington DC: CQ Press.

MIDTERM EXAM: THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2017

## UNIT 2 INSTITUTIONS

**Tuesday, May 2, 2017** Presidential Decision-Making. How do individual president's display different decisionmaking skills?

*Readings* Richard E. Neustadt. 1990. Men in Office. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidencies: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* New York: The Free Press.

Roger B. Porter. 1982. Organizing the White House for Presidential Decision Making. *Presidential Decision Making*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Thursday, May 4, 2017** The President and Foreign Policy. In examining decision-making, what factors seem to influence foreign policy decisions?

*Readings* James P. Pfiffner. 2011. Decision Making in the Obama White House. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41(2): 244-262.

PRESIDENTIAL PROFILE DUE: THURSDAY, MAY 4

**Tuesday, May 9, 2017** The President and Domestic Policy. What constraints do presidents face in the domestic arena that are not present in foreign policy?

*Readings* Stuart Eizenstat. 1992. "Economists and White House Decisions." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 6(3): 65-71.

UNIT 3 THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

**Thursday, May 11, 2017** The Executive Office of the President and the Evolving Role of the Vice-President. Has the Executive Office, including the Vice-President's office, evolved beyond the scope of its original power?

*Readings* John P. Burke. 2003. "The Institutional Presidency." *Three Presidency and the Political System*. Washington DC: CQ Press.  
Silverstein, Gordon. 2009. Bush, Cheney, and the Separation of Powers: A Lasting Legal Legacy? *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39(4): 878-895.  
Traub, James. 2009. After Cheney. *New York Times*, 24 November.

**Tuesday, May 16, 2017** The Evolving Role of the First Lady and Women Executives. Is the United States ready for a woman president?

*Readings* Heldman, Caroline. 2007. Cultural Barriers to a Female President in the United States. *Rethinking Madam President*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY PROPOSAL DUE: TUESDAY, MAY 16

UNIT 4 HOW DO THE PRESIDENTS RANK?

**Thursday, May 18, 2017** Presentations I

*Readings* No Readings

**Tuesday, May 23, 2017** Presentations II

*Readings* No Readings

**Thursday, May 25, 2017** Presentations III

*Readings* No Readings

**Tuesday, May 30, 2017** Presentations IV

*Readings* No Readings

**Thursday, June 1, 2017** Course Conclusion

*Readings* NO READINGS

FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 1:40 - 3:40PM