



## Presidential Politics

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PS 412/512 (4 credits)  
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MW 8:00-9:50 a.m.; MLM 206

For many Americans the president *is* the national government. Journalists reinforce this orientation by telling us daily about presidential actions and by providing frequent “box scores” about presidential “popularity” (approval). Americans often blame or praise the President for nearly everything that happens in the national government and assume he is involved in and controls nearly all elements. This course attempts to counter some of these assumptions by examining not only individual presidents but also factors that affect what they are able to do.

The course examines presidential elections and presidents as individuals, the presidency as an institution, and the relationships of presidents with the public, journalists, Congress, and others. It will emphasize the importance of presidential images, and will give particular attention to the Reagan, Clinton, and George W. Bush presidencies and to the 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012 presidential elections, in addition to paying close attention to the Obama presidency.

Course requirements are five “response papers” reacting to course materials, and a written and oral presentation about a president from Franklin Roosevelt to George H. W. Bush. (For each RP, graduate students read a journal article and one or two chapters from an additional book.) Much class time will be spent analyzing media coverage of presidents, drawing on the *New York Times* (NYT), the *Washington Post* (“WaPo,” online) and other sources.

**Course Goals:** I intend the course both to add content of student information about presidents and to help develop skills in analyzing presidents.

### Content

- To develop an approach to the presidency as individual, institution, and set of relationships
- To examine the relationship between campaigning and governing by presidents
- To develop knowledge about various presidents and of one president, individually chosen, in particular
- To develop a sense of the effect of institutional arrangements on presidents and how they operate, illuminated by examining the presidency historically and in comparison with practices in other nations

### Skills

- To develop more highly nuanced ways of evaluating presidents—that is, avoiding either/or judgments—and so move beyond image-based evaluations
- To develop abilities to gather a variety of information for studying and evaluating presidents

**Requirements and Grading:** The requirements are five response papers summarizing and reacting to course material (@ 100 points, for a total of 500 points), and an oral presentation and paper analyzing an individual president (300 points), for a course total of 800 points. **Graduate students** (PS 512) read and analyze extra material, as indicated on page 4 below (200 points; course total 1000 points). An A requires 90% (720 of 800 points; 900 of 1000 for graduate students), a B 80% (640 or 800), a C 70% (560 or 700), and a D 60% (480 or 600). **Within each grade range**, the bottom three percentages are minus and the top three are plus. (Students may improve low scores by analyzing an additional book.) Attendance and participation are important. I do not assign specific points for participation but I will use attendance, participation, and improvement to help decide borderline grades.

⇒ **Course Blackboard Web Site:** Use [PS\\_412\\_X001\\_F2014](#) for those in both **PS 412** and **PS 512**.

**Questions and Difficulties:** It is important to **read** course materials **regularly**. Useful guidelines for the course: plan ahead, read regularly course materials and news media, attend class, and participate in class discussion. **Feel free to contact me about questions or problems**, during office hours, immediately after class, or by e-mail (please indicate [PS 412](#) on subject line, even if in PS 512).

**Note:** Although I am in political science (housed in Gilkey Hall), several of us now have offices in Ballard Hall, at the corner of Campus Way and 26<sup>th</sup> Street. My office is Ballard Hall 330B. Any papers not submitted in class should be delivered to me in the **Economics office, Ballard Hall 303**. **Put papers in the box outside that door ONLY IF no one is available in the Economics office.**

⇒ **Note:** This is not a no-show drop course. If you stop coming to the course, you must drop it.

**Course Reading:** Although I have ordered **all course books except Mann-Ornstein for 3-hour reserve in Valley Library**, I recommend purchase of the Han-Heith text. The following course books are available at the Bookstore. **Read for central themes and arguments, not for details.** The Topic and Reading Schedule below suggests some guidelines for reading. In addition, I sometimes will preview forthcoming course readings.

**Core Textbooks:** The first two of these are required reading for all students.

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency* (Oxford, 2013); core text; the publisher's web site for this book is online at <http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195385168/>

Mann and Ornstein, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks* (Basic Books, 2013) 978-0465074730; **get the paperback edition (2013)**; an analysis of American politics changes that affect the how presidents can operate

This book is required **only** for **graduate students** (those enrolled in PS 512): Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency* (Routledge, 2011). This is a recent collection of analyses of the American presidency. Two chapters—available in Blackboard—are required; others are required for graduate students, as indicated in the Topic and Reading Schedule, and can be used as **extra credit on RPs by undergraduates**. **A copy of this book is on 3-hour reserve.**

⇒ **Students are required to monitor news media coverage of presidential topics during the quarter, using the *New York Times* (NYT), the *Washington Post* (WaPo), and possibly other media.**

**Optional but strongly recommended subscription:** The *New York Times* (NYT) remains the most influential news publication, and is useful for students of American politics to know. (It is much less “liberal” than many people appear to assume. For example, its editorial page was consistently very critical of President Clinton.) Although much of the NYT is available free online, students can subscribe at special student rates for home delivery. Students who want to subscribe should contact NYT by toll-free telephone (888-698-2655) or online ([www.nytimes.com/student](http://www.nytimes.com/student)). Students can subscribe for Monday through Friday or for seven days a week (Sunday's NYT is the most widely read; see especially the “Sunday Review” section). This is **totally optional** but recommended because of the quality of NYT coverage of polls, its own and those of others.

Other news media (the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, and the *Financial Times*) also are available at special student rates. Interested students can ask me for details.)

**Response Paper Makeup Reading:** To offset low Response Paper or other scores a student may read and analyze a book on the presidency, **pre-approved** by me. Then write a paper no more than 10 pages long, single-spaced, typed, carefully written and proofread, with these components: summary, statement of themes, relating to other course material, and evaluation (as part of this, locate, use, and **cite** published book reviews).

**Review Reading:** Students who need review of basic features of American politics and government might want to read appropriate chapters in an American government text, e.g., US election process. Ask me for suggestions.

**Course Blackboard Site:** Because of financial restrictions, most of the materials shown in class lectures will **not** be distributed in class. Instead, I will place them on the course Blackboard web site. **I strongly encourage students to visit that site regularly and download/print/save those materials.** Also, I might establish discussion groups for various presidents, so students studying the same president can share information, ideas, questions, and so on.

♿ **Students with documented disabilities** who need accommodations, have emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation should contact the instructor. Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with accommodations approved through SSD are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at (541) 737-4098.

**Library Research:** The reference librarians at OSU's Valley Library can help with specific research issues or questions, at [ISSoc/HumLibrarians@orst.edu](mailto:ISSoc/HumLibrarians@orst.edu). OSU reference librarians have prepared a guide to library research for political science: <http://osulibrary.orst.edu/research/srg/polsci.htm>.

**NOTE:** On all **graded** written materials, indicate student ID number, PS 412 (even if in PS 512), paper or project name (e.g., Response Paper [or RP] 2), and date submitted. Do **NOT** indicate your **NAME**. On **progress reports**, indicate your **name**.

### General Guidelines for Written Assignments

- As indicated above, on all **graded** assignments, do **NOT** indicate your **name**. Instead, in the upper right corner

of the first page indicate your student ID number, PS 412, the assignment name, and the date you submit it.

- Do not use a cover (plastic or similar) on any written assignment.
- I prefer that you type single-spaced, with a line between paragraphs, with 1-inch margins on all sides.
- I indicate below guidelines for paper length for specific assignments. These are approximate and are estimates of what might be required to respond adequately to the elements of the assignment. I do not grade for length, but concise responses are appreciated more than long, less clearly written responses.
- Each paper should be carefully written and proofread. Use a spell checker and a grammar checker!
- Citations to course reading should use simply the author and page number(s), in parentheses after a quotation, paraphrase, or any other use. You need not list course readings in any citations listing at the end.
- Citations of non-course material should be complete: Author, *Title*, edition if 2<sup>nd</sup> or later (City: Publisher, year) or web address and date accessed, using footnotes or—preferred—**parenthetical references** and citations at end.
- Many students engage in plagiarism—presenting points that need citation without indicating source—sometimes without realizing it; to avoid plagiarism, you **must give credit whenever you present**:
  - another person’s idea, opinion, or theory
  - any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge; if in doubt about whether something is “common knowledge,” provide a cite (that is, err on the side of caution)
  - quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or
  - paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words (that is, re-wording what another person has said or written does not eliminate plagiarism)
- **NUMBER** the pages on all assignments, for ease in my commenting and to be sure pages are in correct order.

#### **Criteria for Evaluating Written Work**

- Response to each of the specific questions to be addressed
- Drawing on appropriate course materials and, if appropriate, materials from other sources
- Reflecting recent media coverage of the presidency in relation to the topics discussed in reading
- Clear and well-written responses, showing use of spell checker, grammar checker, and careful organization

#### **OSU Writing Assistance**

The Oregon State University Center for Writing and Learning has very useful materials for helping the writing process, including online access. The address is <http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/twc.html>. Note especially the “Online Writing Lab,” to which you can submit a draft of your papers for feedback, the “web resources,” which has excellent links to writing resources, and “Writing Tips and Handouts,” which has suggestions about many writing issues. You can make appointments for in-person consultation about your writing.

#### **Participation**

Attendance is expected but not required. “Participation” involves taking part in class activities in a way that both contributes to class learning and shows your knowledge of course materials. There is no “bonus” for frequent participation. Instead, the aim is participation that shows thoughtfulness about course materials, especially as they relate to recent developments, and reflects respect for the views of others. If necessary, I will call on people, but I prefer individual initiative. In-class participation and attendance have no specific point value but will count in determining borderline grades. I might take attendance for the purpose of helping decide borderline grades.

A course about the presidency during nearly any time period is an obvious opportunity for discussion. I plan to rely on in class discussion. However, if we as a class decide that class discussion is too limited by time or other factors, I might in addition use “online participation,” using Blackboard “Discussion Board.” We will discuss this in class.

#### **Response Papers (RPs; 500 points)**

This quarter I have dropped the earlier take-home exams and require only response papers. I also have shortened the RPs. These changes should reduce the writing load and avoid duplication of effort. Five response papers are required, each worth 100 points, a maximum total of 500 points. For each response paper, I will distribute a set of questions or topics at least one week before that RP is due. Each response paper should be 4 to 8 single-spaced pages long, clearly written, and carefully proofread. Instead of footnotes, I use parenthetical references, as indicated above.

Following the guidelines stated above, each response paper should be single-spaced, and carefully written and proofread. Use a **spell checker and a grammar checker**. **Instead of footnotes**, I prefer that you identify sources of

quotes, paraphrases, or similar by name of the author, in parentheses, with page or chapter numbers. If you use course materials, you need not provide full citations but only name(s) of author(s) and page numbers, e.g., (Mann and Ornstein, pp. 20-22). If you use non-course materials include the full citation at the end of the response paper, using **standard form**, as follows: **for journal or magazine article**: Author, "Title," *Journal*, Volume and number (or date), page numbers; **for book**: Author, *Title*, edition, if not first (City, Publisher, year). Author should include first and last name and middle initial. Underlining can replace *italics* in titles

A [link](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/social_sciences/intext.html) to **citation styles** is available at [http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/social\\_sciences/intext.html](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/social_sciences/intext.html).

### Graduate Student Journal Reviews (200 points)

Graduate students (enrolled for PS 512) do the following for each RP, worth a maximum of 40 points for each RP:

Read the chapter(s) from Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency* assigned for each submitted RP as listed in the Topic and Reading Schedule. In addition, locate one **journal article** about the presidency for **each** of the five response papers they submit. For journal articles, summarize each of them, including the main research question and the approach used, summarize their findings, suggest how they relate to other course materials, and evaluate them. Essential: **attach** at the end of the analysis the **first page** of each journal article, that is, the page that shows the journal article abstract. Many scholarly journals are available through the OSU Library main page e-journals.

The following journals are likely to be especially relevant (this list is illustrative only):

- *American Political Science Review* (APSR), *Perspectives on Politics*, and *P.S.* (these are the official journals of the American Political Science Association [APSA], with the APSR being the oldest and most "academic" of the three)
- *American Journal of Political Science*
- *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (PSQ)
- *Annual Review of Political Science* (this is an important source for updating political science topics)
- Other political science journals and possibly also sociology, history, or other social science journals

### President Analysis

Each student is to analyze one President from Franklin Roosevelt through President George H. W. Bush (**not** GW). Because the course focuses particularly on presidents Clinton, GW Bush, and Obama, these may not be used for this.

The intent of the analysis is to develop a balanced judgment of the strengths and weaknesses of that president, making very clear the bases upon which the judgment is made and comparing and contrasting that judgment with those of presidential scholars. At a **minimum**, read the section(s) about the chosen president in **most** of the following books, each available on **3-hour reserve in the Library**. It is **important** to **CITE** the books that you use.

⇒ **These are the books referred to in the list below. I have requested all of these for 3-hour reserve in Valley Library:**

Milkis and Nelson's *American Presidency 1776-2007*: skim the chapter on the president you are studying.

Genovese, *The Power of the American Presidency 1789-2000* (on reserve); you may read this **instead of** Milkis and Nelson.

Read the chapter on your president (if Kennedy or later) in Hargrove's *Effective Presidency*.

Chafe, *Unfinished Journey*. This is an excellent history of post-World War II US. Skim the chapter on the president you are studying to provide an overview of the historical context of the period during which he governed.

Lammers and Genovese, *Presidency and Domestic Policy*; excellent analyses of Presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to Bill Clinton, focusing on achievements in domestic (non-foreign) policies. Several chapters are required reading.

Barber, *Presidential Character*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (**reserve**), the chapter on your president, about presidential "personality," if Barber includes your president; if not, locate possible sources using citations in Cronin and Genovese.

Preston, *The President and His Inner Circle*; foreign policy decision styles and examples Presidents Truman to Clinton, **or** George and George, *Presidential Personality and Performance*

Perloff, *Political Communication*; parts of chapters 3 to 7 about your president, or discussions of that president's public orientation in Kernell, *Going Public*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.

Concerning scholarly ratings of presidents, use materials distributed in class and/or placed in Blackboard, and/or use Murray-Blessing, *Greatness in the White House*, 1994 edition (reserve), and tables in Ragsdale (below).

Jones, *The Presidency in a Separated System*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (on reserve) all the pages on that president

**Optional:** Brody, *Assessing the President*, and/or Hinckley, *Symbolic Presidency*, to supplement other readings about evaluating presidents; use each book's index to locate materials about that president.

**Supplement** other course readings with one or both of these **collections** of data (**reserve**): Ragsdale, ed., *Vital Statistics on Presidents*, and Stanley and Niemi, *Vital Statistics on American Politics*, especially sections on public opinion, relations with Congress, scholarly evaluations, and newspaper endorsements; read the chapter introductions and use in relation to

the discussions in Jones. **Note:** Ragsdale also is available to OSU students as an online data resource through the OSU Libraries (search Valley Library online catalog for this book to find the online link).

**Teams:** Students studying the same president form a “team” and are encouraged to work together to share information and exchange views. Teams will work together to present an oral report about each president studied.

**The paper should include the following sections titled AND numbered as indicated:**

1. **Presidential Situation:** Briefly summarize the presidential situation, that is, the domestic—especially economic—and foreign context of the presidency, “problems” his predecessor left, similarity/contrast with his predecessor, and similar points (Hargrove and/or Lammers-Genovese, Chafe, Genovese, Jones, possibly other readings).
2. **Pre-Presidential History:** Briefly summarize the major events in that person’s life prior to the presidency (Hargrove, Barber, Genovese, Lammers-Genovese, possibly other materials).
3. **Major Events and Developments:** Briefly summarize the major events and developments in that person’s presidency, including domestic and foreign developments, policy orientations, and similar (Milkis-Nelson, Hargrove, Barber, Chafe, Jones, Kernell, possibly other materials). (**Note:** The required chapter 9 [Blackboard] from DiClerico is excellent for this, as is the optional chapter 4 [also in Blackboard] in Pika-Maltese.)
4. **Management Style and “Personality”:** Summarize that president’s management style and “personality” as president (Barber and required chapter 9 from DiClerico book, in Blackboard, especially Preston; possibly George and George).
5. **Public Approval:** Summarize in some detail the president’s “public orientation” (speaking, etc.) and public approval trends, using tables and possibly charts, with discussion of general factors and specific developments that appear to have affected his public approval (opinion data from class lectures and Blackboard readings and from Ragsdale, Kernell, Hinckley, supplemented by additional web sites, especially Roper).
6. **Media Relations:** Summarize that president’s media strategy, relationship, and level of “success” with the media, making your reasoning very clear (Perloff, Kernell, Ragsdale, and possibly other readings).
7. **Congressional Relations:** Summarize that president’s strategy, relationship, and “success” with Congress (congressional data from class materials, books by Jones, Ragsdale, and possibly other readings).
8. **Scholarly Evaluation:** Summarize what appears to be the overall evaluation by scholars of that president, with reasons (Murray-Blessing, course readings, and Ragsdale tables).
9. **Personal View:** Carefully state your evaluation of that president’s strengths and weaknesses, being very clear in stating your criteria. As part of this, carefully compare and contrast this president with **Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and at least one other** recent president in terms of strengths, weaknesses, similarities, and differences. (One or more response papers might ask that you to do something like this, so you can draw on that in answering this).
10. **Materials Consulted:** List ALL materials consulted, using standard format, **either (for book)** Author, Title (City: Publisher, year), **or (for article)** Author, “Title of Article,” Journal or Magazine, volume and number or date, page numbers. (*Italics* should replace underlining if using a word processor.) List web sites by name and full address.

⇒ **Reminder:** Use the **numbers and titles** indicated above to **IDENTIFY** the various **PARTS of your paper**.

The analysis should be typed, single-spaced, standard one-inch margins on all sides, usually no longer than 15 pages, and probably somewhat shorter (not counting charts and any attached appendices), **pages numbered**, and carefully written and proofread. **Use a word processing spell checker and grammar checker** if available. Tables or other data can be added as extra pages at the end of the paper and do not count in maximum length.

A statement is **due Wednesday, October 12** stating which president you will analyze and reasons for the choice. Because this is not graded, write your **name** on it instead of your student ID number. **Three progress reports** will be due during the quarter (all non-graded, so indicate name), as stated in the Topic and Reading Schedule.

The **oral presentation** of the presidential analysis is **due during week 10**, when student teams present brief reports about individual presidents reviewed. The **paper is due by the end of the day (5 p.m.) Monday, March 16**.

### Online Resources

In examining presidents, I encourage students to use both print and electronic media. I strongly recommend that students use the web to locate information. Some useful starting points for using the web to locate political information and images, each containing links to many other sites, are listed below (all start with: <http://>). **Please notify me about any incorrect or no longer operating web sites.**

Some course materials also contain many specific web listings.

- ⇒ The following two web sites are **extremely useful** starting points for examining nearly all aspects of the presidency: [csl-cla.semo.edu/renka/PresidencyLinks.htm](http://csl-cla.semo.edu/renka/PresidencyLinks.htm) and [www.presidency.ucsb.edu](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu); both include a wide variety of materials, including data, as well as links to specific presidents and much other material
- ◆ OSU Political Science Department home page: [oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/](http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/); see the political science sites section, which contains numerous links; also [www.politicalindex.com](http://www.politicalindex.com); see also the OSU Library guide to political science materials:

<http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/home>

- ◆ An excellent starting point for general political searches is the set of links to many web sites by the *New York Times*, at [www.nytimes.com/navigator](http://www.nytimes.com/navigator)
- Excellent starting points about current political developments are [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com) and also [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (the NYT site might not be accessible from all computers because of “registration” requirement [no charge]); also see also [www.politicaljunkie.com](http://www.politicaljunkie.com) and [politicalwire.com/](http://politicalwire.com/); the *New York Times* also has an excellent political web site link section, [www.nytimes.com/ref/politics/POLI\\_NAVI.html](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/politics/POLI_NAVI.html); some parts of the NYT now require subscription
- The “Monkey Cage” site at the *Washington Post* contains interesting material from political scientists around the country; it might be interesting to visit: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/>
- ◆ An excellent media starting point is [www.newslink.org](http://www.newslink.org), with links to newspapers, magazines, radio-TV in the US and abroad
- An excellent starting point for a broad range of views on current news is [fullcoverage.yahoo.com/fc](http://fullcoverage.yahoo.com/fc)
- ◆ Sites that contain critical analyses of media coverage are Salon Magazine [www.salonmagazine.com](http://www.salonmagazine.com), and also “Daily Howler,” [www.dailyhowler.com](http://www.dailyhowler.com) (the “Daily Howler” does not necessarily publish “daily”), and “Media Matters,” [mediamatters.org](http://mediamatters.org). (Parts of the Salon site might be available only to subscribers.)
- ◆ Selected specific media sites are [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com); [www.abcnews.com](http://www.abcnews.com); [www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com); [www.msnbc.com/news](http://www.msnbc.com/news); and [www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com)
- Two extremely useful reference sources (many kinds of data and other useful materials) are [www.refdesk.com/](http://www.refdesk.com/) and [www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html](http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html); each provides a huge number of links to a wide variety of reference sources
- ◆ Concerning the presidency, these are useful: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov); [metalab.unc.edu/lia/president/](http://metalab.unc.edu/lia/president/); [www.ipl.org/div/potus/](http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/)
- ◆ These links from another presidency textbook might be useful: [highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072390409/student\\_view0/](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072390409/student_view0/)
- ◆ Some links about the presidency of George W. Bush, many of them critical, are available at the “Bushology” web site [www.moldea.com/bushology.html](http://www.moldea.com/bushology.html)
- ◆ Very important site concerning sources of funding for various election campaigns: [www.opensecrets.org/](http://www.opensecrets.org/)
- ◆ Project Vote Smart (formerly headquartered in Corvallis; excellent on domestic politics): [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)
- A very good source of recent opinion data is Polling Report [www.pollingreport.com](http://www.pollingreport.com); also see Gallup Organization polls [www.gallup.com/](http://www.gallup.com/) (parts require subscription, so are not accessible; if you need data, I have a subscription); Pew Center has excellent data about many public issues: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press [www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org); also good in collecting and summarizing polling data, with emphasis on campaigns, is [www.realclearpolitics.com/index.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/index.html)
- The *Washington Post* not only maintains its own polling web site ([www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/vault/vault.htm](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/vault/vault.htm)) but also includes links to numerous other poll web sites [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/datadir.htm](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/datadir.htm).
- Two sites that contain many articles, including possibly some of those required for this course, are [web.lexis-nexis.com/universe](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe) and “e-journals,” from the main OSU Library page [osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/](http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/), via the web
- Useful starting points for seeking US government data: [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov); [www.fedstats.gov](http://www.fedstats.gov) and [www.infoctr.edu/fwl](http://www.infoctr.edu/fwl)
- Other useful data sources are: *Statistical Abstract*, <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>; guide to government data bases: *Green Book* (very important source about welfare and related topics); nearly all items from the 2008 *Green Book* are available at web site [waysandmeans.house.gov/singlepages.aspx?NewsID=10490](http://waysandmeans.house.gov/singlepages.aspx?NewsID=10490); other data sources are available at [www.execpc.com/~helberg/statistics.html](http://www.execpc.com/~helberg/statistics.html) and [www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/dsc/stats/us.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/dsc/stats/us.html)
- Budget data are available from the Congressional Budget Office, [www.cbo.gov/](http://www.cbo.gov/) and from the Office of Management and Budget (President), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>; recently CBO data have been especially reliable and useful
- A web “encyclopedia” that contains useful political information is [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page). **CAUTION: Do NOT over-use Wikipedia.** It is a useful source of materials and references but is less authoritative than many other sites.
- Economics data: current: [www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm); other data: [www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stecon.html](http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stecon.html); [www.dismal.com/store/default.asp](http://www.dismal.com/store/default.asp); [netec.wustl.edu/](http://netec.wustl.edu/); [economics.about.com/library/weekly/bl-a-to-z.htm](http://economics.about.com/library/weekly/bl-a-to-z.htm); [epinet.org/datazone/dznational.html](http://epinet.org/datazone/dznational.html); economic indicators (published monthly, with the most recent economic data): [www.gpoaccess.gov/indicators/browse.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/indicators/browse.html); *Economic Report of the President* (available for years 1995 to current), [w3.access.gpo.gov/eop/](http://w3.access.gpo.gov/eop/); **mv site** contains inflation-adjustment factors for years 1774 to estimated 2024 and other data in graphical form: [oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/sahr/sahr](http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/sahr/sahr); other historical economic data are available at the Economic History web site, [www.eh.net/](http://www.eh.net/); concerning taxes see [www.taxpolicycenter.org/](http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/)
- Some useful “think tanks:” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (liberal, but excellent data sources) [www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org); Heritage Foundation (influential conservative think tank) [www.heritage.org](http://www.heritage.org); Brookings Institution: [www.brook.edu](http://www.brook.edu); Joint Center for Poverty Research [www.jcpr.org/index.html](http://www.jcpr.org/index.html); Citizens for Tax Justice (liberal) [www.ctj.org](http://www.ctj.org), vs. Americans for Tax Reform (conservative), [www.ATR.org](http://www.ATR.org); Cato Institute (libertarian) [www.cato.org](http://www.cato.org); Urban Institute [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org); a relatively new liberal think tank is Center for American Progress [www.americanprogress.org](http://www.americanprogress.org)
- ◆ Two web book companies, Amazon ([www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/home/home.html](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/home/home.html)) and Barnes and Noble ([www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)), have information about and reviews of books relevant to this course

### Quick List of Assignment Due Dates (Subject to Minor Change)

<u>By Monday, October 6</u>	Complete and turn in the course grade form (last page of this syllabus)
<u>Wednesday, October 8</u>	Statement of President chosen for analysis, with reasons for choice
<u>Wednesday, October 13</u>	<b>Response Paper 1 (RP 1)</b> ; questions for each RP will be distributed one week in advance
<u>Wednesday, October 26</u>	Presidency <b>progress report 1</b> due, briefly summarizing progress, problems, and questions
<u>Thursday, October 23</u>	<b>RP 2</b> (questions distributed one week in advance)
<u>Monday, November 3</u>	<b>RP 3</b> (questions distributed one week in advance)
<u>Wednesday, November 5</u>	Presidency <b>progress report 2</b> due, briefly summarizing progress, problems, and questions
<u>Wednesday, November 12</u>	<b>RP 4</b> (questions distributed one week in advance)
<u>Wednesday, November 19</u>	Presidency <b>progress report 3</b> due, briefly summarizing progress, problems, and questions
<u>THURSDay, November 26</u>	<b>RP 5</b> (questions distributed one week in advance)
<u>Monday, December 1</u>	First day of student presentations about presidents
<u>Monday, December 8</u>	Written presidential analysis due in the Economics (Ballard Hall 303) by 5 p.m.

### Expectations about Media Use

I expect students to monitor news media coverage of present and past presidents, using the *New York Times* and other media. **Pay attention to media treatment of the following**, who are either past or present political leaders: Barack Obama, former President George W. Bush, former President Clinton, Hillary Rodham Clinton, John McCain, Republican leaders, and other candidates and government officials to whom journalists give frequent attention.

Students should monitor a variety of media coverage of the presidency and the campaign. In addition to standard news sources, you should use the web to broaden the range you examine. In addition to the sites of standard news media listed on pages 5 and 6 above (and via Newslink), you might want to look at sites that are openly ideological. Among many such sites are: **Conservative:** *Washington Times*, [www.washtimes.com](http://www.washtimes.com); *National Review*, [www.nationalreview.com](http://www.nationalreview.com), and *American Spectator*, [amspec.org](http://amspec.org); **Liberal:** *Mother Jones*, [www.motherjones.com](http://www.motherjones.com); *The Nation*, [www.thenation.com](http://www.thenation.com); **Difficult to classify though generally leftist:** [www.consortiumnews.com](http://www.consortiumnews.com) and [www.wsws.org/sections/category/news/govt-us.shtml](http://www.wsws.org/sections/category/news/govt-us.shtml). *Wall Street Journal* editorial page is very conservative. The WSJ has a subscription web site but some items are available through various online links. The “Daily Howler” ([www.dailyhowler.com](http://www.dailyhowler.com)) and especially “Media Matters” ([mediamatters.org](http://mediamatters.org)) often have interesting media critiques.

### Topic and Reading Schedule

**Note:** All required course materials except the Mann-Ornstein book are available on 3-hour reserve in Valley Library or have been placed on Blackboard. **Read regularly** to be able to participate in class discussion. Study text graphs and similar carefully. Know core points and supporting details. We will discuss current national political events, so pay attention to news media, especially on topics of that week.

In addition to required reading, also **regularly look through the *New York Times***. I also recommend at least occasionally monitoring the *Washington Post* and possibly some television news coverage. (It is interesting to compare coverage of the same topic by FOX News and by other media.)

**Note:** I expect students to read for **understanding of concepts, not details**. So, avoid getting caught up in details except as emphasized in class. **Note also** that **some items** listed below are **optional**, for possible **extra credit**. Usually I list more general reading first, so I suggest that you read items **in the order listed**. As much as possible, reading assigned for Wednesdays is lighter than reading assigned for Mondays.

I strongly recommend that you read indicated materials **prior to** each class, because response papers ask that you react to various course materials and you will be able to do that most fully if you complete reading prior to classes in which we discuss that topic. Note that occasional assigned or recommended reading requires using online materials.

Extra credit readings are available for response papers, as stated for each RP.

**Plan ahead** for **Response Paper 1**, which examines a non-US leader and is due January 19, and **Response Paper 3**, which analyzes images of the President and is due February 7. Both require earlier effort.

⇒ **Note:** Blackboard reading is required except when I have identified it as extra credit, so it is important to reflect required Blackboard reading in RPs.

⇒ See also the above “expectations about media use.” Plan to monitor media regularly.

**1. Monday, September 29. Introduction to the Course and the Presidency**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, Preface

**Suggestion:** Visit the publisher’s online site for this book to learn about supplementary materials available for this book: <http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195385168/>

**2. Wednesday, October 1. Studying Presidents and the Presidency**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 1 and Appendix A

**Required reading for graduate students (enrolled in PS 512) and Extra Credit for PS 412 students:** Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 1-2. Graduate students also read one relevant journal article (see page 4 above). **Non-required chapters** from this book are **not** available in Blackboard; the **book** is on 3-hour reserve and copies are available in the Book Store.

**Recommended early in the quarter for graduate students (PS 516):** Jordan and Zanna, “Appendix: how to read a journal article in social psychology,” in Jost and Sidanius, *Political Psychology: Key Readings* (Psychology Press, 2004). The chapter is in **Blackboard** documents.

**3. Monday, October 6. The Emergence and Historical Development of the Presidency**

Visit the first two web sites listed on page 5 above to locate items that might be useful for studying presidents.

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 2 and Appendix B

**Totally optional but recommended (and fun):** Excerpts from Williams, *How to Be President* (Chronicle Books, 2004). This book, on **reserve**, presents some very practical advice on—in the words of the sub-title—“What to Do and Where to Go Once You’re in Office,” including such topics as “Getting Settled,” “the Daily Grind,” “Travel, Safety, and Security,” and “Official Ceremonial Functions.” Although it is not extra credit, it is very easy to read (it is not a textbook) and it might be interesting and possibly even fun to browse at some point during the course.

**4. Wednesday, October 8. Comparative Context of Presidents and the Presidential Office**

Rockman, “The American Presidency in Comparative Perspective,” ch 2 in Nelson, ed., *Presidency and Political System* (**Blackboard**)

**Due:** Statement of the President selected for analysis, with reasons (this is not graded, so write your **name** on it)

**5. Monday, October 13. The Electoral Context of the Presidency: Preparing to Campaign or to Govern?**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 3 and Appendix C

Edwards, “Faulty Premises of Electoral College,” in Nelson, *Presidency and the Political System* (**Blackboard**)

**Due: Response Paper (RP) 1.** **Note:** this will require gathering information about the leader of another nation. (**See also** required graduate student reading and extra credit reading for this RP as indicated for **class 2.**)

**6. Wednesday, October 15. Presidents as Individuals**

DiClerico, *Contemporary American President*, ch 9 (“Personality and the Presidency” [**Blackboard**]);

Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy*, ch 10 (“Image and Reality;” chapter in **Blackboard**)

**Required reading for graduate students (enrolled in PS 512) and Extra Credit for PS 412 students:** Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 3. Graduate students also read one relevant journal article.

**7. Monday, October 20. Presidential Decision Making**

DiClerico, *The Contemporary American President*, ch 7, “Five Cases in Presidential Decision Making” (**Blackboard**); optional but recommended: Pika and Maltese, *Politics of the Presidency*, ch 4, “Presidential Character and Performance” (**Blackboard**)

**8. Wednesday, October 22. Communication, Mass Media, and the “Washington Establishment”**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 4

Eshbaugh-Soha, ch 4, “The Public Presidency: Communications and Media,” in Han, ed., *New Directions in the American Presidency* (**Blackboard**)

Abshire, ed., *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, section X, and Pfiffner, “Presidential Crises,” pp 285-302 (both are available in **Blackboard**)

**Optional and Recommended:** Sahr, “Historical Overview of Changes in U.S. “Media Regimes,” 1950s to the Present” (**Blackboard documents**); whether or not you agree with all elements of this paper, focus on the overall argument about Republican success in image creation and using media to their advantage

**Due:** Presidency **progress report 1** due, summarizing progress and questions (not graded; indicate your **name**)

**Due THURSDay, October 23, by 5 pm: RP 2.** (See also required graduate student reading and extra credit reading for this RP as indicated for **class 6.**)

**9. Monday, October 27. Presidents and the Public**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 5

Cronin and Genovese, *Paradoxes of the American Presidency*, ch 1, “Presidential Paradoxes” (**Blackboard**)

Heith, ch 5 “Presidency and Public Opinion,” in Han, ed., *New Directions in the American Presidency* (**Blackboard**)

Presidential approval trends from Franklin Roosevelt to G. W. Bush, from Gallup: Presidential approval Franklin Roosevelt to George W. Bush (**Blackboard**; some of this will be shown in class)

King and Schudson, “The Myth of the Great Communicator” (**Blackboard**; 3 pages)

Read the memo by Republican pollster and strategist Frank Luntz about how Republicans should address environmental concerns (**Blackboard**)

**Required reading for graduate students (PS 512) and Extra Credit for PS 412 students:** Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 6-7. Graduate students **also** read one relevant journal article.

**10. Wednesday, October 29. Presidents and Congress**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 6

**11. Monday, November 3. Presidents, the Bureaucracy, and the Courts**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 7 and 8

Critical analyses of efforts to influence the federal courts (both **Blackboard**): Pomper, “Gipper’s Constitution,” and Landay, “Federalist Society,” both from *Washington Monthly*

**Optional and extra credit:** Parry, “Picking Prosecutors,” at: [www.consortiumnews.com/1999/c041799b.html](http://www.consortiumnews.com/1999/c041799b.html)

**Due Tuesday, November 4: RP 3.** This will include analysis of presidential images, so it will require observing systematically media portrayals of the President. (See also required graduate student reading and extra credit reading for this RP as indicated for **class 9.**)

**12. Wednesday, November 5. Presidents, Domestic Policies, and the Reagan Presidency**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 9, pages 369-375 only

Han, ed., *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 10 (**Blackboard**)

Hargrove, *The Effective Presidency*, ch 6, “Ronald Reagan” (**Blackboard**); review DiClerico, ch 9, pp 404-412 “Ronald Reagan Legacy Project” (**Blackboard**)

**Due:** Presidency **progress report 2**, summarizing progress and questions (not graded; indicate your **name**)

**Required reading for graduate students (PS 512) and Extra Credit for PS 412 students:** Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 8-9. Graduate students **also** read one relevant journal article.

**13. Monday, November 10. Presidents, Foreign Policy, and the Clinton Presidency**

Han and Heith, *Presidents and the American Presidency*, ch 10

Han, ed., *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 11, especially pages 189-192 (**Blackboard**)

Hargrove, *The Effective Presidency*, ch 8, “Bill Clinton” (**Blackboard**)

“Clinton and the Washington Establishment” reading (**Blackboard**)

Thompson, “Greenspan? Gipper? Gates?,” *Washington Monthly*, June 2000 (**Blackboard**). Think about this in relation to recent discussion of President Obama blaming President GW Bush for inherited difficulties.

**All these are in Blackboard:** Judging President Clinton: Glad, “Judging Presidential Character;” Branch, “Clinton Without Apologies” (*Esquire*); Wills, “Does He Believe in Anything?” (*New York Times Magazine*); Franklin, “He’s No Bill Clinton” (*Washington Monthly*); and possibly selected analyses of media coverage

**14. Wednesday, November 12. The George W. Bush and Obama Presidencies**

Hargrove, *Effective Presidency*, ch 9, “George W. Bush” (**Blackboard**)

Pika and Maltese, *Politics of the Presidency*, ch 4, “Presidential Character” (**Blackboard**), pp 174-184

Alterman, “Why a Progressive Presidency Is Not Possible, for Now,” *The Nation*, July 2010 (**Blackboard**)

Dickinson, “Obama,” *Rolling Stone*, October 2010 (**Blackboard**)

*Rolling Stone* Fall 2014 analyses of President Obama (**Blackboard**)

Locate and read several current evaluations of President Obama, from various points of view

**EITHER** Alterman, *When Presidents Lie*, ch 6, “Conclusions and President George W. Bush,” **OR** Pious, *Why Presidents Fail*, ch 9, “Parallel Governance: Bush and Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction.” Think carefully about your views of the arguments and conclusions of these authors.

**Due: RP 4:** This RP will focus especially on the Reagan, Clinton, GW Bush, and Obama presidencies, and

policies. (See required graduate student reading and extra credit reading for this RP as indicated for class 12.)

**15. Monday, November 17. Evaluating Presidents and Possible Presidential Reforms**

Cronin and Genovese, *Paradoxes of the American Presidency*, ch 2, “How We Evaluate Presidents,” and ch 10, “The Future of the American Presidency” (both in **Blackboard**)

Kessel, *Presidents, the Presidency, and the Political Environment* (book **on reserve** and chapters in **Blackboard**), ch 7 and 8; read these two chapters **carefully** and think about them in relation to Hargrove’s judgments in his *The Effective Presidency* and in other required course readings

Lammers and Genovese, *Presidency and Domestic Policy*, ch 1 and 12; these examine presidential success in relation to level of opportunity of each president; read carefully and think about what their conclusion about level of opportunity of Presidents George W. Bush and Obama (their book ends with the Clinton presidency)

**Required reading for graduate students (PS 512) and Extra Credit for PS 412 students:** Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 11. Graduate students **also** read **TWO** relevant journal articles.

**16. Wednesday, November 19. Presidential Constraints and Possible Changes I**

Begin Mann and Ornstein, *It’s Even Worse Than It Looks* (**paperback**), at least “Preface to the Paperback Edition,” Introduction, and several chapters from Part I; think about their emphasis on their being non-partisan in their many years in Washington and the fact that Ornstein works in the conservative American Enterprise Institute. Part I emphasizes diagnosis of the current situation. Note: The cloth version of this book omits the “Preface to the Paperback Edition” and the “Afterword to the Paperback Edition.” For those who purchased the cloth version, the two new materials are available in a pdf file in **Blackboard** documents.

**Note to graduate students (enrolled in PS 512):** Graduate materials to be read for **RP 5** are Han, *New Directions in the American Presidency*, ch 11, and **TWO** relevant journal articles. (This change occurred because of change of Han, ed., ch 10 to required, to replace domestic policy chapter in the core text.)

**Due:** Presidency **progress report 3** due, summarizing progress and questions (not graded; indicate your **name**)

**17. Monday, November 24. Presidential Constraints and Possible Changes II**

Continue Mann and Ornstein, *It’s Even Worse Than It Looks*, at least into and possible through Part II; be sure to read carefully the “Afterword to the Paperback Edition.” Think carefully about whether you are persuaded by their argument that Republicans act very differently both when their party holds the presidency and especially when they are in opposition to a Democratic president, and about the basis for your judgment.

**18. Wednesday, November 26** (day before Thanksgiving; possibly no class). **Presidential Constraints and Possible Changes III**

Complete reading Mann and Ornstein, *It’s Even Worse Than It Looks*

**Due Wednesday, November 26, 5 pm: RP 5:** This RP will consist primarily of reactions to and analysis of presidential evaluations and possible reforms and also the arguments by Mann and Ornstein. (See also required graduate student reading and extra credit reading for this RP as indicated for class 15.)

**19. Monday, December 1. Presentations about Individual Presidents I**

**20. Wednesday, December 3. Presentations about Individual Presidents II**

**Due:** No later than 5 p.m. Monday, December 8, in the Economics office, Ballard Hall 303: presidency analysis

⇒ **For your reference, these spaces may be used to record course points on various course assignments:**

<b>Response</b>	1 _____	_____ (100/140)
<b>Papers:</b>	2 _____	_____ (100/140)
	3 _____	_____ (100/140)
	4 _____	_____ (100/140)
	5 _____	_____ (100/140)
	Response Paper Total	_____ (500/700)

**Presidential Report:** President selected \_\_\_\_\_  
 Progress reports (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (50 points total)  
 Oral presentation (50)  
 Written report (200)  
 Presidential report total \_\_\_\_\_ (300)

**Graduate student reading** (1-2 chapter[s] from Han, *New Directions* and one journal article for each RP)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_



PS 412\_/512\_ (Sahr)

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

Fall 2014

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname, if prefer \_\_\_\_\_

OSU Student ID Number (clearly, with hyphens, as 930-123-456): \_\_\_\_\_

Local address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (print very clearly): \_\_\_\_\_ Local telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent telephone: (area code \_\_\_\_\_) number \_\_\_\_\_

From what high school did you graduate? Name \_\_\_\_\_, City/state \_\_\_\_\_

Year (**start of fall quarter**): freshman \_\_, sophomore \_\_, junior \_\_, senior \_\_, MPP 1 \_\_, MPP 2 \_\_, other graduate \_\_, other \_\_

Major (or likely major): \_\_\_\_\_ Minor (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Career goals: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous college-level courses in American politics, US history, or similar related to this course, if any:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What other courses are you taking now (names and numbers)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have ever lived in another country besides the US, which, when, and for what purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you can read or speak another language besides English, which and how fluently? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have athletics \_\_, work \_\_, or other required non-class activity (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) in addition to classes, check the appropriate space in the line above and indicate how many hours per week \_\_\_\_

If you have ever worked in government, a political campaign, media, or similar, check here \_\_\_\_ and indicate the kind of experience and when: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the main reasons you are taking this course?

<b>Response</b>	1 _____	(100/140)
<b>Papers:</b>	2 _____	(100/140)
	3 _____	(100/140)
	4 _____	(100/140)
	5 _____	(100/140)
	Response Paper Total	(500/700)

**Presidential Report:** President selected \_\_\_\_\_  
 Progress reports (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (50 points total)  
 Oral presentation (50)  
 Written report (200)

Presidential report total \_\_\_\_\_ (300)

**Graduate student reading** (1-2 chapter(s) from Han, *New Directions*, and one journal article for each RP)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ + attendance \_\_\_\_ (+ adjustment \_\_\_\_ ) = Total points \_\_\_\_\_ 800/1000 = \_\_\_\_\_ Percent = Grade \_\_\_\_\_