

**Political Science 4036
The American Presidency
Fall 2015**

Professor: Kevin V. Mulcahy
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Note: THE USE OF LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES IS PROHIBITED DURING CLASS.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide an overview of various theories on the institution of the American Presidency. It is principally focused on the triune relationship between Domestic Affairs, Foreign Affairs and the Election Process that all successful Presidents must balance carefully. However, this course does not provide a historical survey of the presidents from Washington to Obama; it emphasizes the Office of the Presidency as an institution.

Course Texts

The Politics of the Presidency- Joseph Pika and J.A. Maltese
Harry S. Truman – Robert Dalleck
George H. W. Bush – Timothy Naftali
George W. Bush – James Mann

Grading out of 400 pts

A+: 97-100/ 400-388	A: 93-96/ 387-372	A-: 90-92/ 371-360
B+: 87-89/ 359-348	B: 83-86/ 347-332	B-: 80-82/ 331-320
C+: 77-79/ 319-308	C: 73-76/ 307-292	C-: 70-72/ 291- 280
D+: 67-69/ 279-268	D: 63-66/ 267- 252	D-: 60-62/ 251- 240
	F: 59>below/ 239-000	

- **Three** non-cumulative exams on the dates assigned- **60 pts each/ total 180 pts**
 - Exams will cover lecture material, textbook readings, and in class videos.
- **Three** biography tests, which will be on the dates assigned- **20 pts each/ total 60 pts**
- **Up to 12** randomly- given quizzes on the movies/ Pika chapters – **5 pts each/ total 60 pts**
- **One** paper 15 pages- **100 pts**

- Due the last Tuesday of class. Late papers will be penalized 20% each day that it is late.
- Each of the presidents whose biographies you have read succeeded to the office. What was their political background? Why were they selected as vice president? What was their record as president? Discuss any notable achievements. Evaluate tenure.
- It is essential that the responses be presented clearly, concisely, and with very frequent, extensive in-text citations [ex. (Greenstein, 58)]. Citations are to be drawn exclusively from lecture material, video, and texts.
- What is **not** desired is a series of facts about presidents; **analysis is necessary**. The last section of your paper should empower/ interest/ evaluate the three presidents.
- Paper should be double- spaced, Times New Roman font; 1" Top, bottom and side margins, and include page numbers. The paper should be at least 15 pages in length **and a cover page**. A reference page is not necessary

Class Attendance

- Class participation is expected & required. As attendance is the *sine qua non* of participation, more than **two** absences will result in a letter-grade reduction of your final course grade.
- Be a good citizen about arriving on time and staying for the entire class.
- Arriving late and /or leaving class early is only allowed in the case of a dire emergency **and only after prior consultation and approval from the instructor**.

Graduate Students / Law Students

If you are a graduate student or Law school student – please see me @ 221 Stubbs Hall within the first 2 weeks of the semester.

Course Outline

Part I: The Office of the President

8/25	Introduction; discussion of syllabus Evolution of the Presidency I Pika Chapter 6
8/27	Evolution of the Presidency II

9/1 Presidential Character and Greatness I
Pika Chapter 4
Final day to drop without receiving “W”

9/3 Presidential Character and Greatness II

9/8 *Thirteen Days*

9/10 *Thirteen Days* continued
Test on Truman biography

9/15 *Thirteen Days* conclusion
President’s Constitutional “Hats”

9/17 The President and Congress
Pika Chapter 5

9/22 **EXAM 1:** Consisting of:
Part 1 Lectures
Thirteen Days movie
Pika Readings

Part II- Becoming the President of the United States

9/24 Nomination Process I
Pika Chapter 2

9/29	Fall Break
10/1	Nomination Process II Convention I
10/6	Convention II Pika Chapter 1
10/8	<i>The Fog of War</i> Test on George H. W. Bush Biography
10/13	<i>The Fog of War</i> conclusion/discussion Campaign I
10/15	<i>Maya Lin:</i> <i>The Controversy over her Vietnam Wall Design</i>
10/20	The Campaign II 2000 Election (Bush vs. Gore)
10/22	2008 Democratic Selection Process Pika Chapter 3

10/27 The Electoral College
Pika Chapter 11

10/29 **EXAM 2:**
Part 2 Lectures
Pika Readings
Fog of War

Part III: Being President

11/3 Organization of the Federal Government
Pika Chapter 8

11/5 The Federal Budget

11/10 Foreign and Defense Policy
Test on George W. Bush Biography

11/12 National Security Advisory Process
Presidency in the Cold War I
Pika Chapter 10

11/17 Presidency in the Cold War II

11/19 Presidency in the Post- 9/11 World I
Pika Chapter 11

- 11/24** Presidency in the Post- 9/11 World II
Reflections on the Current World Order
PAPER ON PRESIDENTIAL BIOGRAPHIES DUE!
- 11/26** **Thanksgiving Break**
- 12/1** *The Unknown Known*
- 12/3** *The Unknown Known* conclusion/ discussion
- 12/9** **Final EXAM 3:**
Lectures
The Unknown Known
Pika readings
3:00 pm- 5:00 pm