

POL 433F: Presidential Politics in America

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Lawrence LeDuc, 109 Carr Hall (SMC)
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TEXTS: Joseph A. Pika, John A. Maltese and Andrew Rudalevige.
The Politics of the Presidency (9th edition)

Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich, Brad T. Gomez and David W. Rohde.
Change and Continuity in the 2012 and 2014 Elections

United States Election Primer. Routledge FreeBooks, 2016 [on Blackboard]

A selection of articles will also be posted on Blackboard [BBD] or made available by the instructor

MEDIA / INTERNET:

Students are expected to keep up to date with the events of the election campaign using the many sources that are readily available for this purpose. In particular, the *New York Times* and *CNN* will be used as routine references for current information and commentary. Both of these also maintain web sites [www.nytimes.com; www.cnn.com]. The *New York Times* offers an inexpensive on-line subscription to students. Other useful sources are C-Span [www.c-span.org], Real Clear Politics [www.realclearpolitics.com], *National Journal* [www.nationaljournal.com], Five thirty eight [<http://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/>] and *Politics1.com* [www.politics1.com]. Sites maintained by the presidential campaigns [www.hillaryclinton.com; www.donaldjtrump.com] may also be of interest.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

The literature on the U.S. presidency and on American presidential elections is vast. The following are recommended as additional reference sources, but are only a small sampling of the Political Science literature in this area. Note that there are multiple editions of a number of these books.

James David Barber, *The Presidential Character*

Harold D. Clarke et al, *Making Political Choices: Canada and the United States*

Morris P. Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*

William H. Flanagan & Nancy Zingale, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*

Marc J. Hetherington & Bruce A. Larson, *Parties, Politics and Public Policy in America*

Michael Lewis-Beck et al, *The American Voter Revisited*

Theodore J. Lowi, *The Personal President*
L. Sandy Maisel & Mark Brewer, *Parties and Elections in America*
Thomas E. Mann & Norman J. Ornstein, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks*
Michael Nelson (ed), *The Presidency and the Political System*
Michael Nelson (ed), *The Elections of 2012 (2008, 2004. etc.)*
Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*
Nelson W. Polsby et al, *Presidential Elections: Strategies and Structures*
Lori M. Poloni-Staudinger & Michael R. Wolf, *American Difference*
Gerald M. Pomper & Susan S. Lederman, *Elections in America*
Bert A. Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency: Appraisals and Prospects*
Steven A. Shull (ed.), *The Two Presidencies: a Quarter Century Assessment*
Paul D. Shumaker & Burdett Loomis, *Choosing a President*
Stephen Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*
James Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System*
Jeffrey Stonecash, *Understanding American Political Parties*
James A. Thurber (ed.), *Divided Democracy*
Martin P. Wattenberg, *The Rise of Candidate Centered Politics*
Stephen J. Wayne, *The Road to the White House*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Two essays. The first essay (25%) will deal with some aspect of any one of the three areas of U.S. public policy scheduled for discussion in the classes of October 17th, 24th or 31st. The essay should be approximately 6-9 pages in length and should begin with (although not rely exclusively on) the readings listed on the syllabus under the topic chosen. The due date for the first essay is **Tuesday, November 1st**, but students are expected to make a brief class presentation based on their preliminary work for the essay in one of the three class sessions mentioned above. All students should send an email (a short paragraph indicating the theme of the proposed essay, working title, and initial list of references) to the instructor no later than **October 6th**.

The second essay (35%) will deal with any topic of your choice falling under one of the four broad areas scheduled for discussion in the classes of November 14th, 21st, 28th and December 5th. It should be approximately 10-15 pages in length, and should address some of the themes found in the readings for the appropriate class session. Although the second essay is not due until **Tuesday, December 6th**, students should similarly expect to make a short class presentation based on their research in one of the four sessions commencing on November 14th. All students should send an email (a short paragraph indicating the theme of the proposed essay, working title, and preliminary references) to the instructor no later than **November 3rd**.

Participation/seminar (20%). Each student will be expected to contribute to and participate in all class discussions, and to make two short class presentations based on research undertaken for the essays (see above).

Final oral exam (20%). An oral exam based on the required readings, seminar presentations, and written work will be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time in December.

COURSE SYLLABUS (* denotes required reading for all students; + denotes required for students writing essay under that theme)

September 12th — Introduction: Before and After November 8th

Stephen Medvic, “Campaigns and Elections in American Democracy” chapter 1 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [BBD]

September 19th — Studying the Presidency and the American Political System

* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 1-3 and appendices

* Louis Fisher, “Teaching the Presidency: Idealizing a Constitutional Office.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (January 2012), pp. 17-31 [BBD]

Sidney M. Milkis & Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development*

Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*

Stephen Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*

Theodore J. Lowi, *The Personal President*

September 26th — Political Parties and Elections in 2016 America

* Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 2, 3, 8, 13

* Matt Grossman & David A. Hopkins, “Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats: The Asymmetry of American Party Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (March 2015), pp.119-139 [BBD]

Morris P. Fiorina, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*

Martin Wattenberg, *The Decline of American Political Parties*

Theda Skocpol & Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*

October 3rd — The Long, Long Road to the Nominations

* Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 1, 12

* Barbara Norrander, “Presidential Nomination Politics at the Dawn of the 21st Century” chapter 2 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [BBD]

* “Trump’s Triumph.” *The Economist*, May 7, 2016 [BBD]

* Robert Draper, “The Primary that Disqualified the Qualified.” *New York Times*, December 29, 2015 [BBD]

Larry Bartels, *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice*

Michael John Burton, “The Republican Primary Season: Strategic Positioning in the GOP Field” chapter 3 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [BBD]

October 10th — Thanksgiving holiday: no class

October 17th — The Candidates, Foreign Policy and National Security

- * Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 10
- * Robert S. Singh, “Change and Continuity in Obama’s Foreign Policy” in Bert A. Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency: Appraisals and Prospects* [BBD]
- * Michael C. Desch, “The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: The Liberal Tradition and Obama’s Counter Terrorism Policy.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (July 2010), pp. 425-29 [BBD]

- + John Gerard Ruggie, “The Past as Prologue: Interests, Identity and American Foreign Policy.” *International Security* 21 (1997), pp. 89-125 [BBD]
- + Sebastian Rosato & John Schussler, “A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (December 2011), pp. 803-19 [BBD]
- Lawrence J. Korb, *A New National Security Strategy in an Age of Terrorism*
- Alexander George, *Presidential Decision Making in Foreign Policy*
- Thomas J. McCormick, *America’s Half-Century: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Cold War and After*

October 24th — The Economy and the 2016 Election

- * Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 9
- * Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 7
- * M. Stephen Weatherford, “Comparing Presidents’ Economic Policy Leadership.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (September 2009), pp. 537-60 [BBD]
- * Andrew Ross Sorkin, “President Obama Weighs His Economic Legacy.” *New York Times*, April 28, 2016 [BBD]

- + Michael Lewis-Beck & Mary Steigmeier, “Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000), pp. 183-219 [BBD]
- + D. Sunshine Hillygus & Michael Henderson, “Political Issues and the Dynamics of Vote Choice in 2008.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 20 (2010), pp. 241-69 [BBD]
- Douglas A. Hibbs, *The American Political Economy*
- Morris P. Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*
- Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics: the Making of Economic Policy From Roosevelt to Reagan and Beyond*

October 31st — Social Policy Issues in Today’s America

- * Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 8
- * Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 5, 6
- * Jacob S. Hacker, “The Road to Somewhere: Why Health Care Reform Happened.” *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (September 2010), pp. 861-76 [BBD]

- + Leslie McCall & Lane Kenworthy, “America’s Social Policy Preferences in the Era of Rising Inequality.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (September 2009), pp. 459-84 [BBD]

+ Russell L. Hanson, "Liberalism and the Course of American Social Welfare Policy" in Lawrence C. Dodd & Calvin Jillson, *The Dynamics of American Politics* [BBD]
Paul C. Light, *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice From Kennedy to Clinton*
Marc J. Hetherington & Bruce A. Larson, *Parties, Politics and Public Policy in America*
Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: the Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*

November 7th — Fall break, no class

November 14th — Election Retrospective: What Happened and Why?

* Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 4
* Lawrence LeDuc and Richard G. Niemi, "Voting Behavior: Choice and Context" in Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds.) *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*. London: Sage, 2014, pp. 133-149 [BBD]
* Robert A. Jackson, "Voter Mobilization" chapter 6 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [BBD]

+ Costas Panagopoulos, "Campaign Context and Preference Dynamics in U.S. Presidential Elections." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 22 (2012), pp. 123-137 [BBD]
+ Herbert F. Weisberg & Christopher J. Devine, "Partisan Defection and Change in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 20 (2010), pp. 213–240 [BBD]

Stanley Kelley, *Interpreting Elections*

Michael Nelson (ed.), *The Elections of 2012*

Michael Lewis-Beck et al, *The American Voter Revisited*

Kate Kenski et al, *The Obama Victory: How Media, Money and Message Shaped the 2008 Election*

November 21st — American Politics and the 115th Congress

* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 5
* Abramson et al, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 9, 10, 11
* Kathryn Pearson, "Demographic Change and the Future of Congress." *PS: Political Science and Politics* (April 2010), pp. 235-238 [BBD]
* Alan Abramowitz, "Expect Confrontation, Not Compromise." *PS: Political Science and Politics* (April 2011), pp. 293-295 [BBD]

+ Kathleen Bawn et al, "A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* (September 2012), pp. 571-597 [BBD]

+ Sidney M. Milkis et al, "What Happened to Post Partisanship? Barack Obama and the New American Party System." *Perspectives on Politics* (March 2012), pp. 57-76 [BBD]

Lawrence C. Dodd & Bruce I. Oppenheimer (eds.), *Congress Reconsidered*

Roger Davidson et al, *Congress and Its Members*

James A. Thurber (ed.), *Divided Democracy: Cooperation and Conflict Between the President and Congress*

November 28th — Organizing the Trump [Clinton] Administration

- * Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 6
- * Joel D. Aberbach, “A Reinvented Government or the Same Old Government?” in Colin Campbell & Bert Rockman, *The Clinton Legacy* [BBD]
- + John P. Burke, “The Institutional Presidency” in Michael Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System* [BBD]
- + Andrew Rudalevige, “Rivals or a Team? Staffing and Issue Management in the Obama Administration” in Bert A. Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency* [BBD]
- Hugh Heclo, *A Government of Strangers*
- James Pfiffner, *The Strategic Presidency*
- Stephen Hess, *Organizing the Presidency*
- Charles O. Jones, *Transitions*

December 5th — The Clinton [Trump] Presidency: Expectations

- * Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch.4, 7
- * Fred I. Greenstein, “Barack Obama: the Man and his Presidency at the Midterm.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (January 2011), pp. 7-11 [BBD]
- * Joel D. Aberbach, “Change We Can Believe In Meets Reality” in Bert A. Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency* [BBD]
- + Michael Nelson, “The Psychological Presidency” in Michael Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System* [BBD]
- + Stephen Skowronek, “Presidential Leadership in Political Time” in Michael Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System* [BBD]
- James David Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*
- Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton*
- Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*
- James Pfiffner, *Character and the Modern Presidency*

December 7th - 17th — Final oral exams TBA

January 20th — Inauguration Day