POL 433F: Presidential Politics in America

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Lawrence LeDuc, 329 Alumni Hall (416 926-1300, x3232)
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Paul R. Abramson, John H. Aldrich & David W. Rohde, Change and Continuity in the 2008 and 2010 Elections

A selection of articles which will be posted on Blackboard [BBD] or made available in another form [OTH] 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]. Other useful sources are C-Span [www.cspan.org], Real Clear Politics [www.realclearpolitics.com], National Journal [www.nationaljournal.com] and Politics1.com [www.politics1.com]. Sites maintained by the presidential campaigns [www.barackobama.com; www.mittromney.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.

Herbert B. Asher, Presidential Elections and American Politics
James David Barber, The Presidential Character
Paul Allen Beck, Party Politics in America
Larry Bartels, Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice
Colin Campbell et al, The George W. Bush Legacy
Harold D. Clarke et al, Making Political Choices: Canada and the United States
Lawrence Dodd & Calvin Jillson (eds.), The Dynamics of American Politics
Morris P. Fiorina, Retrospective Voting in American National Elections
William H. Flanagan & Nancy Zingale, Political Behavior of the American Electorate
Doris Graber, Mass Media and American Politics
Fred I. Greenstein (ed.), The George W. Bush Presidency
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 15th, 22nd or 29th. 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 Thursday, November 1st, but students are expected to make a very brief class presentation based on their preliminary work for the essay in one of the three class sessions mentioned above. 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 12th, 19th, 26th and December 3rd. It should be approximately 10-15 pages in length, and should address some of the themes found in the core readings for the appropriate class session. Although the second essay is not due until Thursday, 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 12th.

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 during the week of December 10th.
COURSE SYLLABUS  (* denotes required reading for all students)

September 10th — Introduction: Before and After November 6th

September 17th — Studying the Presidency and the American Political System

* Pika & Maltese, The Politics of the Presidency, ch. 1, 2 and appendices
* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, Change and Continuity, ch. 2
* Louis Fisher, “Teaching the Presidency” [BBD]

Richard E. Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents
Walter Berns, After the People Vote: A Guide to the Electoral College
Arthur M. Schlesinger, The Imperial Presidency
Theodore J. Lowi, The Personal President

September 24th — Political Parties and Elections in 2012 America

* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, Change and Continuity, ch. 3, 8
* William J. Crotty, “Party Origins and Evolution in the United States” [OTH]
* Vanessa Williams et al, “The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism” [BBD]

Paul D, Shumaker & Burdett Loomis, Choosing a President
Morris P. Fiorina, Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America
Martin Wattenberg, The Decline of American Political Parties
Kate Kenski et al, The Obama Victory: How Media, Money and Message Shaped the 2008 Election

October 1st — The Long, Long Road to Tampa

* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, Change and Continuity, ch. 1, 12
* Konrad Yakabulski, “Why Tennessee is the State to Watch on Super Tuesday” [BBD]
* David Shribman, “Battered Romney, Tamished Prize” [BBD]
* David Brooks & Gail Collins, “Super Pac! Super Bad!” [BBD]

Jack Citrin & David Karol (eds.), Nominating the President
Barbara Norrander, Super Tuesday
Larry Bartels, Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice
October 8th — Thanksgiving holiday: no class

October 15th — The Candidates, Foreign Policy, and National Security

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 10, 11
* John Gerard Ruggie, “The Past as Prologue” [BBD]
* Robert S. Singh, “Change and Continuity in Obama’s Foreign Policy” [OTH]
* Sebastian Rosato & John Schussler, “A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States” [BBD]
* Michael C. Desch, “The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: The Liberal Tradition and Obama’s Counter Terrorism Policy” [BBD]

Lawrence J. Korb, *A New National Security Strategy in an Age of Terrorism*

Steven A. Shull (ed.), *The Two Presidencies: a Quarter Century Assessment*

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 22nd — The Economy and the 2012 Election

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 9
* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 7
* Thomas M. Holbrook, “Economic Considerations and the 2008 Presidential Election” [BBD]
* D. Sunshine Hillygus & Michael Henderson, “Political Issues and the Dynamics of Vote Choice in 2008” [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 29th — Social Policy Issues in Post-911 America

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 8
* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 5, 6
* Jacob S. Hacker, “The Road to Somewhere: Why Health Care Reform Happened” [BBD]
* Russell L. Hanson, “Liberalism and the Course of American Social Welfare Policy” [OTH]
* Leslie McCall and Lane Kenworthy, “America’s Social Policy Preferences in the Era of Rising Inequality” [BBD]

Erwin C. Hargrove & Michael Nelson, *Presidents, Politics and Policy*

Paul C. Light, *The President’s Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice From Kennedy to Clinton*

John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*

Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: the Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*
November 5th — Assessing the Campaign; Predicting the Outcome

* Thomas M. Holbrook, “A Model of Campaign Effects” [OTH]
* APSA, “Forecasts of the National Two-Party Presidential Vote in 2012” [BBD]
* Costas Panagopoulos, “Campaign Context and Preference Dynamics in U.S. Presidential Elections” [BBD]

Thomas M. Holbrook, *Do Campaigns Matter?*
Darrell M. West, *Air Wars: Television Advertising in Election Campaigns*
Kathleen Hall Jamieson & David Birdsell, *Presidential Debates: The Challenge of Creating an Informed Electorate*

November 6th — Election Day

November 12th — Election Retrospective: What Happened and Why

* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 4
* David R. Mayhew, “The Meaning of the 2008 Election” [OTH]
* Arthur Lupia, “Did Bush Voters Cause Obama’s Victory?” [BBD]
* Herbert F. Weisberg & Christopher J. Devine, “Partisan Defection and Change in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election” [BBD]

Stanley Kelley, *Interpreting Elections*
Warren E. Miller & J. Merrill Shanks, *The New American Voter*
Gerald M. Pomper et al, *The Election of 2000: Reports and Interpretations*
Michael Nelson (ed.), *The Elections of 2008*

November 19th — American Politics and the 113th Congress

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 5
* Abramson, Aldrich & Rohde, *Change and Continuity*, ch. 9, 10, 11
* Barbara Sinclair, “Doing Big Things: Obama and the 111th Congress” [OTH]
* Kathryn Pearson, “Demographic Change and the Future of Congress” [BBD]
* Alan Abramowitz, “Expect Confrontation, Not Compromise” [BBD]

David K. Price, *The Congressional Experience: A View from the Hill*
Jon R. Bond & Richard Fleisher, *The President in the Legislative Arena*
Roger Davidson & Walter Olezek, *Congress and Its Members*
Gary Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*
James A. Thurber (ed.), *Divided Democracy: Cooperation and Conflict Between the President and Congress*
November 26th — Organizing the Obama [Romney] Administration

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 6
* John P. Burke, “The Institutional Presidency” [OTH]
* Andrew Rudalevige, ”Rivals or a Team? Staffing and Issue Management in the Obama Administration” [OTH]

Hugh Heclo, *A Government of Strangers*
James Pfiffner, *The Strategic Presidency*
Stephen Hess, *Organizing the Presidency*
Joel Aberbach & Mark Peterson (eds.), *Presidents and Bureaucrats*
Charles O. Jones, *Transitions*

December 3rd — The Romney [Obama] Presidency: Expectations

* Pika & Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 4, 7
* Joel D. Aberbach, “Change We Can Believe In Meets Reality” [OTH]
* Fred I. Greenstein, “Barack Obama: the Man and his Presidency at the Midterm” [BBD]

James David Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*
Stephen Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*
Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton*
James Pfiffner, *Character and the Modern Presidency*
Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*
The Reagan Diaries

December 10th - 17th — Final oral exams (as scheduled)

January 20th — Inauguration Day