

The Presidency
Political Science 227
Fall 2013

Professor John Gruhl

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Course Outline:

I. Introduction: Historical Eras and Presidential Performance
“The Impact of Historical Eras on Presidential Performance”

II. Growth and Extent of Presidential Power

A. Founders’ Expectations and Constitution’s Provisions
Genovese, Preface, chs. 1-2

B. Growth of Presidential Power

1. Through the Depression
Genovese, ch. 3, ch. 4 (pp. 85-top of 108)
2. After the Bomb and During the Cold War
Genovese, ch. 4 (pp. 108-114)

START READING SUSKIND

C. Imperial Presidency: Johnson and Nixon

1. War Powers
“Presidency at War: Unchecked Power, Uncertain Leadership”
2. Vietnam War
Genovese, ch. 4 (pp. 115-116)
3. Nixon and Watergate
Genovese, ch. 4 (pp. 117-121)

D. Ebb and Flow of Presidential Power
Genovese, ch. 4 (pp. 122-126)

E. Imperial Presidency Returns: G. W. Bush
Genovese, ch. 5

1. Secrecy
2. Signing Statements
3. War Powers
4. War Powers: Iraq
5. Terrorism Policies
“The Dark Ages”

First Exam—Oct. 9 (tentative)

F. Imperial Presidency Continues in Foreign Affairs?: Obama

1. Drones
“Remote Control”

G. Presidential Power Versus Congressional Power
Genovese, ch. 3 (pp. 31-37)

III. Deciding

A. Vice President and Advisers

1. Vice President
“Wanna be VEEP? Okay, But This is Going to Hurt” (required); “The Transition” (optional)
2. Advisers
Suskind (entire book, including Author’s Notes, Epilogue, and Afterword)

Paper on Suskind due—Oct. 18 (tentative)

START READING WILLS, LEDBETTER, OR CLARKE

B. Styles of Decision Making

1. G. W. Bush
Excerpts from The One Percent Doctrine; “Epilogue” of *The War Within*;
“Presidential IQ, Openness, Intellectual Brilliance, and Leadership: Estimates and Correlations for 42 U.S. Chief Executives”

2. Obama
“Presidential Style and the Obama Presidency”; “How It Went Down”

IV. Persuading

A. Persuading Congress

1. Persuading Congress
2. Persuading Congress: Carter
3. Persuading Congress: Johnson, Bush, and Obama
“After String of Setbacks, More Charm may be the Last, Best Option for Obama”

Second Exam—Nov. 4 (tentative)

B. Persuading the Public

1. Public Attitudes
2. Using the Media
“The Presidential Spectacle”
3. Using the Media: Reagan
4. Using the Media: G. W. Bush
“Bush Administration”; “Me Talk Presidential One Day”

Paper on Wills, Ledbetter, or Clarke due—Nov. 13 (tentative)

START READING GRUNWALD PAGES

5. Using the Media: Obama

V. Adopting Policies: Obama

A. Obama’s Goals

Grunwald, ch. 1 (pp. 25-middle of 35); “Presidential Leadership and Public Opinion in an Age of Polarization”

B. Obama’s Constraints

“How Racist are We? Ask Google”; “There’s No Denying Obama’s Race Plays a Role in Protests”; “Boy, Oh Boy”; “Kids Hate-Tweet Obama, Echoing What They Hear at Home”; “Obama and the Polarized Public”

C. Obama's Stimulus

Grunwald, Introduction, chs. 3, 5, 6, 7 (pp. 140-top of 152; 154-160), 8, 9 (pp. 180-192; 198-204), 10 (pp. 207-211; 214-227), 11 (pp. 228-230; bottom of 236-241; 244-249), 12 (pp. 253-262; 266-277), 13 (pp. bottom of 290-302), 14 (pp. 303-304; 311-315; 317-330), 15 (pp. 331-top of 339; 346-351), 16 (pp. 352-367; 369-373), 17 (pp. 396-401), 18 (pp. 410-middle of 414), 19 (pp. 424-429; bottom of 434-435; 439-444).

SUGGESTION: BEFORE YOU START READING, CROSS OFF CHAPTERS AND PAGES NOT ASSIGNED.

D. Obama's Healthcare

"Doing Big Things"; "What the Affordable Care Act Means if You Are..." (optional); "A Mandate for Controversy"; "For Obamacare to Work, Everyone Must Be In"; "President Barack Obama Could Learn from Franklin D. Roosevelt"

E. Obama's Accomplishments and Failures

"The Incomplete Greatness of Barack Obama"; "Barack Obama's First Two Years"; "The Strategist"

VI. Ranking Presidents

"Abraham Lincoln Ranked Best by 65 Historians"; "Abraham Lincoln is an Idiot"; "Worst President in History?"; "What History Will Say"; "Unwinding Bush"

Final Exam—Th., Dec. 19, 3:30-5:30

Course Reading:

Genovese, A Presidential Nation

Suskind, The Price of Loyalty

Grunwald, The New New Deal

and one of the following:

Wills, Lincoln at Gettysburg (Prologue, chs. 1-4. Ch. 5 is optional but recommended for English majors and budding stylists.)

Ledbetter, Unwarranted Influence: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Military-Industrial Complex (entire book)

Clarke, Ask Not: the Inauguration of John F. Kennedy and the Speech that Changed America (entire book, including Prologue and Afterword)

In addition, the articles listed on the syllabus are required and are available through the library's E-reserves, accessible via Blackboard or the library's own website.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Two short (three-page) thought papers based on the readings, two midterm exams, and a final exam. The exams will be all essay, with take-home questions and in-class answers. There is also an expectation that you participate in class, with questions and comments during lectures and discussions. (Attendance itself does not count as participation—you must participate.)

Distribution for the Course:

papers	100 points each; 200 points total
exams	100 points each; 300 points total
class participation	50 points

Grading Scale for Papers and Exams:

97-100=A+
93-97=A
90-92=A-
87-89=B+
83-86=B
80-82=B-
77-79=C+
73-76=C
70-72=C-
67-69=D+
63-66=D
60-62=D-
0-59=F

Grading Scale for the Course:

534-550=A+
512-533=A
495-511=A-
479-494=B+
457-478=B
440-456=B-
424-439=C+
402-423=C
385-401=C-
369-384=D+
347-368=D
330-346=D-
0-329=F

If your grade based on these factors falls on or near a borderline, your pattern of improvement or decline will be taken into account. If you're taking this course on a pass-no pass basis, you must do C (not C-) work to pass. (Note: political science courses, except internships, taken on a pass-no pass basis do not count toward a political science major.)

Course Policies:

Mutual respect: This class covers controversial topics. It will be a forum for the exchange of information and opinions. All students can offer their opinions in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If you ever feel that the atmosphere in the class makes it uncomfortable for you to share your views, see me about your concerns.

Attendance: Not taken, but you, of course, are responsible for all material covered in class and need to attend to participate. Significant portions of the exams will come from material covered in class.

Make-up papers and exams: Available only in special circumstances. You should receive prior permission from me or certification from a doctor. If you do not complete an assignment, you will receive a zero (not an F).

Incompletes: Available only in special circumstances.

Cheating: Using crib notes during exams or copying from other sources—students, periodicals, books, internet, etc.—without proper acknowledgement is cheating. These and any other forms of cheating will result at least in an F for the assignment; they may result in more serious punishment in accordance with university policies. If you have questions about proper acknowledgement, ask me.

Disability: Students with disabilities should contact me for a confidential discussion of their individual needs. It is UNL's policy to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, (402) 472-3787.

ACE Information:

Learning Outcome: This course has been approved for Learning Outcome #6 (Use knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior.)

Reinforcements: Writing. This course will require two short, thought papers based on the readings. The exams will be all essay, with take-home questions and in-class answers. The papers and exams will be graded on the basis of style as well as content. For papers, students are expected to draft and then to revise and polish their essays, improving the clarity and fixing grammatical or punctuation errors. Typos, stylistic mistakes, and awkward sentences will be flagged. The instructor will provide feedback on style as well as content.

Opportunities for Learning the Outcome: There will be lectures to provide background information. Lectures will always include opportunities for questions and comments. There will be discussions of the reading. Class participation is encouraged—in fact, required. Throughout the semester, the class will have an informal atmosphere with give and take between the instructor and the students, who are expected to play an active role. There will be ample opportunities to learn about various aspects of the Presidency and to form your own opinions toward them.

How Your Achievement of the Outcome Will Be Assessed: You will write two short (three-page) papers answering questions about the books assigned. These papers will require careful reading of the books; they will not require additional research. The papers will also require an ability to summarize and critique the points in the books. They will be graded for style as well as content. In addition, you will have two midterm exams and a final exam. These will be all essay. You will be given study questions in advance to direct your studying, and the exam questions will be chosen from these study questions. Your class participation will also be graded. Each day after class, the instructor will note your participation, using a series of checks, check pluses, and full pluses, reflecting the quantity and, especially, the quality of your participation for that day. The instructor will keep a running tally throughout the semester, and at the end of the semester he will use this tally to assign grades for the participation component of your course grade. You may ask the instructor to see his tally of your participation any time during the semester.

