

POLS 4221: The Presidency

Dr. Keith E. Lee Jr.

Fall 2018

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Class Hours: TR 2:00-3:15pm

Class Room: A & S 2-40

Course Description

“The presidency has made every man who occupied it, no matter how small, bigger than he was; and no matter how big, not big enough for its demands.”
~ [LBJ](#)

“Politicians have used you and stolen your votes. They have given you nothing. I will give you everything. I will give you what you’ve been looking for for 50 years. I’m the only one.” ~ [Donald Trump](#)

Presidents often over promise and under deliver (see [The Green Lantern Theory of the American Presidency](#)). This comes from a gap between the expectations placed on presidents and the institutional limitations of the office which hinder their ability to deliver. This class will explore this dynamic by looking at the early period of the presidency in its infancy and then moving into the nomination and election process where candidates tend to over promise. Next, we’ll turn to the institution and how presidents relate to the general public, how they lead, and their relationship with the media. Finally, we’ll dive into the separation of powers and how the president works with the other branches to achieve policy goals, closing out the class by looking at how policy is crafted.

Required Readings

- Edwards, George C. III, Kenneth R. Mayer, and Stephen J. Wayne. 2018. *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making* 10th Edition. [Amazon \(\\$70 New | \\$58 Used\)](#)
- Howell, William G. 2003. *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action* [Amazon \(\\$40 New | \\$33 Used | \\$33 Kindle\)](#)
- Neustadt, Richard E. 1991. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* Revised Edition. [Amazon \(\\$18 New | \\$13 Used\)](#)

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Discuss the powers of the presidency as outlined in the Constitution.
- Explain the nomination and election process of the president.
- Describe how the president leads the public through direct appeals and through the media.
- Discuss the structure of the presidency.
- Recall how the president interacts with other branches of government.
- Explain how policy decisions are executed by the president, both foreign and domestic.

Course Assignments

Quizzes (Dates Vary): There will be quizzes given periodically throughout the semester. The quizzes will be multiple choice and/or short answer.

Book Review #1 (October 7): You will begin the semester with Richard Neustadt's *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. This classic work has shaped the way scholars think about presidential power and leadership. You will read this book and turn in a book review ([tips for an academic book review](#)). The review should be roughly 750-1000 words and must not exceed four pages using standard font, spacing, and margins.

Midterm Exam (October 11): The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions from material covered in the first half of the semester.

Book Review #2 (December 2): The second half of your semester will begin with William Howell's *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action*. This book challenges Neustadt's thesis that presidential power relies on their ability to persuade. You will read this book and submit a book review very similar to the one completed above, with an additional section that offers a critical reflection on how both books inform our assessment of the current president. The review should be roughly 750-1000 words and must not exceed four pages using standard font, spacing, and margins.

Literature Review (December 9): You will write a 6-8 page literature review on a topic of your choice approved by the professor. The lit review should cite no fewer than 15 academic, peer reviewed sources. The paper must be 12 point font, double spaced, and have 1" margins. The paper must use the [APSA citation style](#).

Final Exam (December 13): The final exam will be a cumulative, 2-hour final exam that tests your mastery of the course material. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Grading

Assignment	Value	Letter Grade	Range
Final Exam	30%	A	90-100%
Midterm Exam	20%	B	80-89.999%
Literature Review	20%	C	70-79.999%
Book Review 1	10%	D	60-69.999%
Book Review 2	10%	F	0-59.999%
Quizzes	10%		
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Total	100%		

Course Policies:

- **Office Hours and Contact:** Office hours are stated on the front page of the syllabus. I will be in my office to assist students during the times listed UNLESS an emergency arises in which case I will notify students. Students can contact me using GeorgiaView, Slack, and email (keith.lee@gcsu.edu), though Slack is preferred.
- **Late Policy:** No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Every assignment will be posted with ample time to complete them, thus a medical/family emergency on the due date is not an acceptable excuse. Get your work done early and you should not have any issues.
- **Attendance and Absences:** There is not an attendance policy for this course, however it is the student's responsibility to keep up with the course schedule.
- **Academic dishonesty:** Cheating, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will result in an "F" in the course. This class will use plagiarism detection via GeorgiaView.
- **Changes to the Syllabus:** I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Students will be notified when changes are made.
- **Device Policy:** Cellphones, tablets, and laptops are to be out of sight during class. Students violating this policy will be given a pop quiz that will count toward their overall quiz grade in the course.
- Please read these additional [common syllabus statements](#) provided by Georgia College.

Class Schedule

Week 01, 08/20 - 08/24: Chapter 1: Introduction

Also read:

- Syllabus
- [The Green Lantern Theory of the American Presidency](#)
- [Steve Miller's Guide to Taking Good Notes](#)

Week 02, 08/27 - 08/31: Chapter 2: The Powers of the Presidency

Week 03, 09/03 - 09/07: Chapter 3: The Nomination Process

Week 04, 09/10 - 09/14: Chapter 4: The Presidential Election

Week 05, 09/17 - 09/21: Chapter 5: The President and Public Opinion

Week 06, 09/24 - 09/28: Chapter 6: Leading the Public

Week 07, 10/01 - 10/05: Chapter 7: The President and the Media

Book Review #1 due Sunday, October 7 by 9:00 pm

Week 08, 10/08 - 10/12: Midterm Exam

No class Tuesday, October 9 due to Fall Break

Week 09, 10/15 - 10/19: Chapter 8: The Structure of the Presidency

Week 10, 10/22 - 10/26: Chapter 9: Presidential Decision Making

Week 11, 10/29 - 11/02: Chapter 10: The President and the Executive Branch

Week 12, 11/05 - 11/09: Chapter 11: The President, Congress, and the Courts

No Class Thursday, November 8 due to GPSA

Week 13, 11/12 - 11/16: Chapter 11 & 12: The President, Congress, and the Courts

Week 14, 11/19 - 11/23: Chapter 12: The President, Congress, and the Courts

No Class Thursday, November 22 due to Thanksgiving

Week 15, 11/26 - 11/30: Chapter 13: Domestic and Economic Policy Making

Book Review #2 due Sunday, December 2 by 9:00pm

Week 16, 12/03 - 12/07: Chapter 14: Foreign and Defense Policy

Literature Review due Sunday, December 9 by 9:00pm

Week 17, 12/10 - 12/14: Final Exam

Final Exam Thursday, December 13 at 1:00pm