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PSC 366.01: American Presidency

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PS 366
Fall 2003 LA 337
MWF 12:10-1:00

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Office Hours: MF, 4:00-5:00; W 9-10

Course Topics

This class examines the development and power of the modern Presidency. This includes the process for selecting Presidents, the historical development of the Presidency, the President's relationship with the public, the media, and Congress, and the President's role in budget and foreign policy.

Course Texts

There are four class texts: *Politics Presidents Make* by Stephen Skowronek, *Spin Cycle* by Howard Kurtz, *The Presidential Agenda* by Paul Light, and *Bush at War* by Bob Woodward. In addition, there are articles listed in the syllabus and news items I will distribute as opportunity arises. I will distribute both the articles and news stories by e-mail.

Course Grading

Grades are based on class participation (20%), a class presentation (20%), and three short papers (20% each). Papers are due at the beginning of class. Late papers will be penalized a full grade for each day late.

Week	Topics	Readings
Sept. 3-5	Introduction. The Constitutional Presidency.	
Sept. 8-19	The Electoral College. Presidential Nominations. Presidential Elections.	- "Polls or Pols?" Cohen et. al, Brookings Review, Summer 2003. - Daron Shaw, "The Method Behind the Madness," JOP, Nov. 1999. - Daron Shaw, "The Effects of TV Ads and Candidate Appearances on Statewide Presidential Votes, 1988-1996," APSR, June 1999. - other e-mailed articles.
Sept. 22-26	Transitions. The Institutional Presidency. Introduction to Skowronek. Memo 1 due Sept. 26.	PS March 2002 selections. Ragsdale and Theis, "Institutionalization of the American Presidency"
Sept. 29-Oct. 3	Skowronek Presentations.	PPM. All read 1-58.
Oct. 6-10	Skowronek Presentations and Wrap-Up.	PPM. 407-448
Oct. 13-17	Presidents and Public Opinion. Presidents and the Media Introduction. Beginning of Kurtz.	Spin Cycle, 1-104
Oct. 20-24	Media, Scandal, and the Clinton White House	Spin Cycle, 105-183; Epilogue
Oct. 27-31	Presidential Agenda Setting I: Resources and Strategy	Light, President's Agenda 1-103
Nov. 3-7	Agenda Setting II: Presidents and Congress	Light, President's Agenda 104-232
Nov. 10-14	Presidents and the Bureaucracy. Scope; executive orders, pardons.	Mayer, "Executive Orders and Presidential Power," JOP, May 1999.
Nov. 17-21	Presidents and the Budget Process. Writing Assignment Due Nov. 17	
Nov. 24	Introduction: the foreign policy apparatus	
Dec. 1-5	Foreign Policy Decision Making I	Bush at War, 1-109
Dec. 8-12	Foreign Policy Decision Making II Writing Assignment Due Dec. 12	Bush at War, 110-169; Epilogue