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PSC 366.01: The American Presidency

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Political Science

PSc 366(W) The American Presidency
Autumn 1996
M. Laslovich

Office: LA 415
Hrs: MWF 10:10-11:00,
and by app't (4901)

Course Description

The course provides a critical analysis of the American presidency. Since the office lacks a clear constitutional statement of precise power, it is subject to various approaches taken by succeeding presidents, as they attempt to meet heightened expectations of presidential performance. Topics include the political resources of the president, presidential-congressional relations, presidential coalition building, case studies in domestic and foreign policy-making, and an evaluation of presidential performance.

Texts

Students are required to read the following texts which are available at the University Bookstore:

Jackson, III, John S. and William Crotty. The Politics of Presidential Selection. New York: Harper Collins, 1996;
Jones, Charles O. Separate But Equal Branches, Congress and the Presidency. Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House, 1995; and
Pious, Richard M. The Presidency. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

Exam 1 (Oct. 2) Topics I-III	20%
Exam 2 (Nov. 1) Topics IV-VI	20%
Research Paper Proposal (due Sept. 23)	5%
Research Essay (due Oct. 23)	15%
Redraft of Research Paper (due Nov. 25)	20%
Final Exam (Thurs., Dec. 19, 1:10-3:10) Topics VII-X	20%

Drop/Add and Grading Option Policies

Oct. 14 - Last day to drop classes or change grading option.

Makeup Exam Policy

Students who are excused from a scheduled exam may write a makeup exam. In fairness to all students, exam absences must be approved by the instructor.

Research Essays

Students are invited to formulate their own research topic. However, topics must be approved by the instructor to ensure proper scope and focus, as well as allow a chance to offer suggestions.

Research Essays (continued)

Students must submit a paper proposal by Sept. 23, approximately 3 typed pages in length. The proposal should, in effect, comprise the introduction of the research paper. It should include a clear research statement (i.e., the purpose of the paper), a discussion of the various academic points of view regarding the topic, and a preliminary bibliography listing scholarly sources to be used. The proposal will be returned with comments and suggestions to facilitate completion of the next writing assignment.

Please note that this is to be a research paper. Consequently the amount of research undertaken, and the ability to marshal that information effectively, will be crucial in the evaluation of the paper. The paper will also be graded for composition as well as content.

The paper should range between 12 to 15 double-spaced typed pages. Papers are due Oct. 23 in class. Extensions will be given only in cases of genuine emergency as judged by the instructor. However all late papers will be penalized TWO points per day, including weekends.

Research papers will be critiqued and returned. A redraft of the paper is due in Nov. 25 in class. NOTE - at this point late papers will not be accepted.

The Classroom Learning Environment (authored by Dr. Ronald Perrin, Professor of Political Theory)

Wherever the learning process takes place (for example, in the library or the seclusion of one's study) it does so best when there are a minimum of distractions. This requirement poses special challenges for the learning that takes place in the lecture hall or the classroom, where the possibility of distractions is the greatest.

In order to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for my students I will not tolerate the few individuals who might be prone to a) come to class late or leave early, b) carry on private conversations during class, c) use the lecture hall/classroom as an opportunity to read material, such as the Kaimin, that is not relevant to the subject matter under consideration.

The only exception to these conditions concern students whose work schedules or unanticipated appointments require them to arrive for class late or leave early. In these circumstances I would appreciate knowing of the circumstances before it occurs and, in all such instances, request that students do so as unobtrusively as possible. Thank you.

Lecture Topics and Readings

- I Introduction
Pious, chapters 1, 2, and 3.
- II Presidential Power and Leadership
Pious, chapter 4.
- III Nominations and Elections
Pious, chapters 5 and 6.
Jackson and Crotty.
- IV President and Public Opinion
Pious, chapters 7 and 8.
- V Presidential-Congressional Relations
Pious, chapter 9.
Jones.
- VI The President and the Bureaucracy - Who's Bureaucracy?
Pious, chapter 10.
- VII The President and the Judiciary
Pious, chapter 11.
- VIII The President and Budgetary Politics
Pious, chapters 12 and 13.
- IX The President and Foreign Policy
Pious, chapters 14 and 15.
- X Conclusion
Pious, chapter 16.