

Fall 9-1-1997

PSC 366W.01: The American Presidency

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Political Science

PSc 366(W) The American Presidency
Autumn 1997
Dr. Laslovich

Office: LA 415
Hrs: MWF 11:30-12:30,
TR 9:00-10:00, 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:

- Kernell, Samuel. Going Public, New Strategies of Presidential Leadership. 3rd edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1997;
Thomas, Norman C. and Joseph A. Pika. The Politics of the Presidency. 4th edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1996; and
Thurber, James A., ed. Rivals For Power, Presidential-Congressional Relations. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1996.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

Exam 1 (Oct. 3) Topics I-III	20%
Exam 2 (Nov. 3) Topics IV-VI	20%
Research Paper Proposal (due Sept. 22)	5%
Research Essay (due Oct. 24)	15%
Redraft of Research Paper (due Nov. 24)	20%
Final Exam (Tues., Dec. 16, 1:10-3:10) Topics VII-X	20%

Drop/Add Deadlines

- Sept. 22 - Last day to drop and add classes by Dial Bear and receive refund.
Oct. 13 - Last day to drop classes.

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.

Students must submit a paper proposal by Sept. 22, 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. 24 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. 24 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
Thomas and Pika, chapter 1.
- II Presidential Power and Leadership
Thomas and Pika, chapter 4.
Kernell.
- III President and Public Opinion
Thomas and Pika, chapter 3.
- IV Nominations and Elections
Thomas and Pika, chapter 2.
- V Presidential-Congressional Relations
Thomas and Pika, chapter 5.
Thurber.
- VI Executive Politics
Thomas and Pika, chapter 6.
- VII The President and the Judiciary
Thomas and Pika, chapter 7.
- VIII The President and Domestic Policy
Thomas and Pika, chapters 8 and 9.
- IX The President and Foreign Policy
Thomas and Pika, chapter 10.
- X Conclusion
Thomas and Pika, chapter 11.

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