POS 6415
The American Presidency

Instructor	Dr. Jonathan Knuckey
Office	Phillips Hall 302L Second office: Lou Frey Institute, Orlando Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, 400 Building Suite, Suite 406
Office hours	Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 9.00am-11.00am. You don't need to make an appointment for these times. I will be in my office during these times unless you are notified to the contrary. I am also happy to meet on other days or times by appointment either in my office in the Political Science department or my office at the Lou Frey Institute in the Research Park (easy parking and no parking permit needed!). To get to the Lou Frey Institute from the main campus take the #9 UCF Shuttle and get off at Stop #2.
Email	Use Inbox, which is the global communication function in Canvas. I will normally respond to all messages within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.
Skype	I am happy to talk via Skype if you cannot make office hours. My Skype name is **jonathan.knuckey70.**

Course Overview

Welcome to The American Presidency!

This graduate seminar is intended to provide a broad overview of some major research topics and literature on the American Presidency. While we will not be able to cover every aspect of the presidency in a single semester, the topics covered will be relevant to anyone wishing do research on the presidency or executive politics more generally. It will also provide a solid grounding for those wishing to teach undergraduate classes on the presidency or American political institutions. As well as focusing on the role of the president in the American political system, we will also address the interaction between the president and other relevant political actors and institutions.

Scholarly research on the presidency has often been critiqued for being atheortical and descriptive in nature. Therefore throughout the semester we will continually address how existing research on the presidency can be improved, both theoretically and methodologically. Thus in addition to introducing you about topics and controversies in studying the American presidency, I hope this seminar will hone your ability to conduct your own research and to help you become a producer -- not just a consumer -- of political science knowledge. Hopefully, this course might also stimulate ideas for potential thesis topics for students in the MA program in Political Science.

Seminar Participation

Participation is key to the success of a graduate seminar. If you have already taken graduate classes, one of the first things you know is that there is no place to hide in a graduate seminar! You will be expected to participate actively and effectively, Research is not a spectator sport, so you should expect to contribute toward seminar discussion on a regular basis.

Thus, I cannot emphasize enough that the readings need to be completed before our seminar meetings. There will be no shirking. If you do, it will be visible and it will have an effect on your grade. Moreover, it will also have an effect on your training. If you do not invest in the time to do the reading, the thinking and the analysis of the works we are examining then you will not be investing in your future career.

“Doing the readings” in this seminar means that you will read, annotate in the articles, make notes, and otherwise be prepared as if you were required to meet with the authors of the books and articles and question what they have done. Generally we will want to understand what the author(s) for each week are trying to say and do, and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s theoretical framework, methodology, and substantive conclusions. To help you organize your thoughts and analysis please refer to the **"Analytical Brief"** (which you can also find under "Pages" in Canvas).

Again, this is not a lecture class. If you fail to read the assigned material we will likely spend nearly three hours each week staring at each other with very little to say!

Attendance in a graduate seminar is assumed. **Any absence from a seminar requires a prompt explanation.** Multiple absences seriously jeopardize the prospect for successful completion of the course.

Seminar participation (including posting of discussion topics and the weeks you are a discussion leader) will be graded using the **Seminar Participation Grading Rubric.** This should give you an idea of my expectations of you in the seminar and help you to prepare.

Discussion Topics

To provide an incentive for regular participation you must submit at least two substantive discussion topics (more are certainly welcome!) to the Weekly Discussion Topic (in Canvas) **each week.** The questions must be submitted by 2:00pm of the Wednesday immediately preceding our seminar on Thursday nights.

Discussion topics should be designed to generate thoughtful reflection and insight on the substantive, theoretical and methodological concerns of the week's readings. The Analytical Brief noted above can certainly also be useful in helping you frame your discussion topics.

Note: You do not have to post discussion topics in the weeks you are a discussion leader.

Discussion Leaders

A member of the seminar will be assigned to be discussion leaders for at least two weeks. You will be assigned the week at the beginning of the semester.

Discussion leaders will be expected to be prepared to help shepherd class discussion on the topic. Your goal is to ensure that the seminar engages in thoughtful reflection about what we can learn from that week's readings. How you do this is up to you—perhaps through the use of prepared questions, an outline of themes, critiques of findings, new avenues for research or other means. Of course, you can also include the discussion topics posted by other members of the seminar (see above).

Your grade for being a discussion leader will reflect the quality of your preparation, as well as the quantity and quality of class discussion you generate. What I do not want discussion leaders to do is to simply summarize the readings for a week.

Students are strongly encouraged to meet with me before the seminar for which they are to lead the seminar discussion for the week. A written overview of students' plans for leading discussion is due to me by 2.00pm on the day prior to our seminar meeting. I will then email this in Canvas for all students, who should print out the outline and bring to the seminar meeting.

Short Papers

Three papers (approximately 8 pages, double-spaced and 12 point font) that analyze and critique (not just summarize) all the readings for a week. Like the weekly article critiques, these papers might raise questions provoked by the readings, compare the arguments of different authors, critique the authors' methodology, discuss common themes across articles or propose alternative explanations for the authors' findings. You can use the "Analytical Brief" (see above) to help you organize your papers, although remember you still should be writing a coherent essay, i.e., you are not simply turning in the brief!

You should choose the topic of your paper according to the following schedule:

- **Paper 1:** Choose a topic from one of the seminars from January 16th to February 6th
- **Paper 2:** Choose a topic from one of the seminars from February 13th to March 20th.
- **Paper 3:** Choose a topic from one of the seminars from March 27th to April 17th.

Note: You should not choose a week that you will be serving as discussion leader.

Papers should be submitted at the end of the seminar in the week for the topic on which you are writing. I will return them with comments the following week.

Research Paper

As one of the goals of this seminar is to produce knowledge about the American presidency your semester project is to prepare a research paper of approximately 20-25 pages (i.e., journal length). The paper should result in a product which, when further developed through additional research and analysis, could be presented at a professional conference or submitted to a journal. You will find further guidelines under **"Research Paper Guidelines"** (which you can also find under "Pages" in Canvas).

You have two options for the research paper:

Option 1: Research Design.

Choosing this option means you will produce a research design. That is you will go through all the stages of a research paper absent the actual collection and analysis of data. This is similar to what you would do for a thesis proposal.

Option 2: Complete Research Paper

I would recommend this option for those who have an interest who have taken graduate-level research methods courses, although it could be completed even with a background in undergraduate research methods.. This option includes the same steps as option 1, except you will collect and analyze data (using STATA or SPSS). As you are conducting data analysis, my expectation would be that you are closer to 20 rather than 25 pages, perhaps responsible for a shorter literature review section.

Regardless of the option you choose, the topic of the research paper is wide open, as long as it relates to the American presidency. Students may approach the research question of interest to them from a longitudinal or case study perspective. Possible topics include campaigns, public

opinion, executive-legislative relations, press relations, White House organization/management, and executive-branch decision-making. Students should use the various frameworks in the weekly reading assignments as the foundations of your line of research inquiry. One approach I would highly recommend it to update the findings of an existing article by collecting more recent data and doing the analysis. You can also get a good overview of potential topics from Nelson's textbook The Presidency and the Political System as well as Edwards and Howell, *The Oxford Handbook of the American Presidency.*

Here are the key dates for the research paper:

- Paper topic must be approved by me by February 20th. Students should schedule a time to meet with me prior to then so we can talk about your paper topic. The earlier you come and talk to me the better.
- During the seminar on February 27th each student will briefly make a Power Point presentation of their research design. The format for the presentation can be found under **"Research Paper Proposal."**
- The research paper should be submitted in Canvas by Monday, April 21st.
- On Thursday, April 24th students will make a Power Point presentation of their findings and answer questions about those findings from other students. We will treat this like a paper presentation you would make at a professional conference. Refer to **"Research Paper Presentation Guidelines"** for further details.

Progress of your research papers will be monitored throughout the semester, and you are encouraged to consult and with me about the paper as much as you need to.

Grades

I will assign a percentage grade to each piece of written work (short papers and research paper). I will also grade your participation in the seminar throughout the semester, your role as discussion leader and the quality of your discussion topics posts.

Your overall grade will be weighted as follows:

Papers on Readings for 3 weeks	20%
Seminar Participation	20%

Weekly Discussion Questions	10%
Discussion Leader	15%
Research Paper & Presentation	35%

Grade boundaries are as follows:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

Note: No graduate-level course with a grade of "D+" or lower can be used to complete a course requirement, but the grade is calculated into the overall GPA. Only a maximum total of six semester credit hours of “C” grades (including C+ and C-), or the “C” grade credits associated with at most two classes (whichever is greater) may counted toward a graduate program of study.

Other Policies:

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are not familiar with the rules of citing sources in written work or what constitutes plagiarism, you should do so immediately. Academic dishonesty will result in an F in the course and referral for additional non-academic sanctions.

All papers are expected to be original work, not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course (unless prior approval of all instructors involved is obtained).

Religious holidays

Any student missing a written assignment or class because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work, provided that this does not create an undue burden on the university of instructor. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor no later than the end of the first week of class of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess.

Submission of late papers

Submission of late papers really should not be an issue in graduate school. I do know, however, that life sometimes can throw the unexpected at us. So, if you think you might not be able to submit a paper by a deadline, please let me know ahead of time, and provide a convincing rationale for doing so. It usually will have to be some extenuating circumstance, other than failing to manage your time accordingly.

This policy does not apply to the research paper, which will be subject to a letter grade reduction for up to two days after the due date.

Incompletes

Incompletes are discouraged and are assigned only under extenuating circumstances. Since degrees will not be certified with an incomplete on the degree audit, "I" grades will be changed to "F" if not resolved by the last semester. "I" grades are considered "unsatisfactory" grades until resolved for program of study purposes.

Note: Incomplete grades are not counted as completed courses or recognized as such by Financial Aid. Therefore, students on financial assistance must check with the Financial Aid office to see if the receipt of an incomplete grade will affect their financial award.

Special Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities.

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request.

Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from me.

Disclaimer

I reserve the right to change, add or modify any part of the syllabus. Of course, advance notice will be given of any such changes.

Course Schedule, Topics and Readings

Books can be purchased from the UCF Bookstore. You might be able to find the books at a cheaper price than the UCF Bookstore, although make sure you buy the correct edition if purchasing from somewhere else.

All other readings are articles from journals. Most, if not all, of the articles are available online through JSTOR, or the website of the respective journals, which the UCF library has electornic access to. If you are not on-campus you will need to log-in to the UCF library via a proxy server. You can find the link on how to do that **here.**

January 9th: Course Introduction; Studying the Presidency

Readings:

- Tulis, Jeffrey K. "The Two Constitutional Presidencies," in Nelson.
- Ragsdale, Lyn. "Studying the Presidency: Why Presidents Need Political Scientists," in Nelson.
- Landy, Marc and Sidney Milkis."The Presidency in the Eye of the Storm," in Nelson.

Note: I will be attending the Southern Political Science Association meeting in New Orleans, so we will not meet during the first week. I would like you, however, to do the following:

- *Post an introduction to the seminar group in the discussion forum in Canvas;*
- *Make sure you have read the the syllabus. Post any questions you might have have to the the discussion forum;*
- *Read the the chapters noted above from Nelson's textbook, which are good background for studying the the presidency*

January 16th: Presidential Elections

Readings:

- Pious, Richard, "The Presidency and the Nominating Process," in Nelson.
- Edwards, George, "The Faulty Premises of the Electoral College," in Nelson.

- Bary Burden and Sunshine Hillygus. 2009. “Polls and Elections: Opinion Formation, Polarization, and Presidential Reelection.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39 (3): 619-635.
- Baum, Matthew. 2005. “Talking the Vote: Why Presidential Candidates Hit the Talk Show Circuit.” *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2): 213-234.
- Holbrook, Thomas and Scott McClurg. 2005. “The Mobilization of Core Supporters: Campaigns, Turnout, and Electoral Composition in United States Presidential Elections.” *American Journal of Political Sci*ence 49 (4): 689-703.
- Ulbig, Stacy G. “The Appeal of Second Bananas: The Impact of Vice Presidential Candidates on Presidential Vote Choice, Yesterday and Today.” *American Politics Research* 38 (2): 330-355

January 23rd: The President and the Media

Readings:

- Groelling, Tim. 2008. "Who's the Fairest of them All? An Empirical Test for Partisan Bias on ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox News." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (4): 631–657.
- Kernell, Samuel and Laurie L. Rice. 2011. “Cable and the Partisan Polarization of the President’s Audience.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41 (4): 693-711.
- Young, Gary and William Perkins. 2005. “Presidential Rhetoric, the Public Agenda, and the End of Presdiential Television's 'Golden Age.'” *Journal of Politics* 67 (4): 1190-1205.
- Farnsworth, Stephen J. and S. Robert Lichter. 2011. The Return of the Honeymoon: Television News Coverage of New Presidents, 1981-2009. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41 (3): 590–603.
- Barabas, Jason. 2008. “Presidential Policy Initiatives: How the Public Learns about State of the Union Proposals from the Mass Media.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (2): 195-222.
- Barrett, Andrew W. 2007. "Press Coverage of Legislative Appeals by the President." *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (4): 655-668.

January 30th: The Public Presidency

Readings:

- Miroff, Bruce, "The Presidential Spectacle," in Nelson.
- Kernell, Samuell. Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership (4th Edition)

February 6th: Presidential Approval and Public Perceptions of the President

Readings:

- Waterman, Richard C., Hank C. Jenkins-Smith, and Carol L. Silva. 1999. “The Expectations Gap Thesis: Public Attitudes toward an Incumbent President.” *Journal of Politics* 61 (4): 944-966.

- Nicholson, Stephen P., Gary M. Segura, and Nathan D. Woods. 2002. “Presidential Approval and the Mixed Blessing of Divided Government.” *Journal of Politics* 64 (3): 701-720.
- Macavoy, Gregory E. 2008. "Substance versus Style: Distinguishing Presidential Job Performance from Favorability.*” Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (2): 284-299.
- Cohen, Jeffrey E. and Richard J. Powell. 2005. "Building Public Support from the Grassroots Up: The Impact of Presidential Travel on State-Level Approval." *Presdiential Studies Quarterly* 35 (1): 11-27
- Edwards, George C. III and Tami Swenson. 1997. "Who Rallies? The Anatomy of a Rally Event." *Journal of Politics* 59 (1): 200-212
- Druckman, James N. and Justin W. Holmes. 2004. “Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (4): 755-778.

February 13th: The President & Political Parties

Readings:

- Milkis, Sidney M. "The Presidency and Political Parties," in Nelson
- Jacobson, Gary C. 2009. "The Effects of the George W. Bush Presidency on Partisan Attitudes." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39 (2): 172-209
- Crockett, David A. 2000. "The President as Opposition Leader." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30 (2) 245-274
- Coleman, John J. and Paul Manna. "Above the Fray? The Use of Party System References in Presidential Rhetoric." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 37 (3): 399–426
- Sellers, Patrick J. and Laura M. Denton. 2006. “Presidential Visits and Midterm Senate Elections.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36 (3): 410-432.
- Mellen, Rob and Kathleen Searles. 2013. "Predicting Presidential Appearances During Midterm Elections: The President and House Candidates, 1982-2010." *American Politics Research* 41 (2): 328-347.

February 20th: The President & Congress

Readings:

- Dickinson, Matthew, "The President and Congress," in Nelson.
- Edwards, George C. III et al. 1997. “The Legislative Impact of Divided Government.” American Journal of Political Science 41 (2): 545-563.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice and Scott de Marchi. 2002. “Presidential Approval and Legislative Success.” *Journal of Politics* 64 (2): 491-509.
- Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew. 2010. “The Importance of Policy Scope to Presidential Success in Congress.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*724.
- Lee, Francis. 2008. “Dividers, Not Uniters: Presidential Leadership and Senate Partisanship, ” *Journal of Politics* 70 (4): 914-28.
- Gilmour, John B. 2011. “Political Theater or Bargaining Failure: Why Presidents Veto.” Presidential *Studies Quarterly* 41 (3): 471-487.

****** Meeting to finalize research paper topic should be held by Friday, Febraury 21st******

February 27th: Research Paper Proposal Presentations

You will make a presentation of your reserach paper proposal. Refer to **Research Paper Proposal** for details.

Spring Break

March 13th: The "Two Presidencies" Thesis

Readings:

- Sigelman, Lee. 1979. "A Reassessment of the Two Presidencies Thesis." *Journal of Politics* 41 (4): 1195-1205.
- Fleisher, Richard and Jon R. Bond. 1988. "Are There Two Presidencies? Yes, But Only for Republicans." *Journal of Politics* 50 (3): 747-767
- Fleisher, Richard, Jon R. Bond, Glen S. Krutz, and Stephen Hanna. 2000. "The Demise of the Two Presidencies." *American Politics Quarterly* 28 (1): 3-25.
- Schraufnagel, Scot and Stephen Shellman. 2001. "The Two Presidencies, 1984-98: A Replication and Extension." *Presidential Studies Qu*arterly 31(4): 699-707.
- Marshall, Bryan W. and Richard L. Pacelle, Jr. 2005. "Revisiting the Two Presidencies: The Strategic Use of Executive Orders." *American Politics Rese*arch 33 (1): 81-105.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William Howell, and David Lewis. 2008. "Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Re-Evaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis." *Journal of Politics* 70 (1): 1-16.

March 20th: The President & the Judiciary

Readings:

- Yalof, David A., "The President and the Judiciary," in Nelson
- Segal, Jeffrey, Richard Timpone, and Robert Howard. 2000. "Buyer Beware? Presidential Success through Supreme Court Appointments." *Political Research Quarterly* 53 (3): 557-573.
- Bailey, Michael, Brian Kamoie, and Forrest Maltzman. 2005. "Signals From the Tenth Justice: The Political Role of the Solicitor General in Supreme Court Decision Making." *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (1): 72-85.
- Graham, Barbara L. 2002. "Executive-Judicial Interaction as a Factor in Explaining Presidential Policy Making." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 32(3): 509–529.
- Johnson, Timothy, and Jason Roberts. 2004. "Presidential Capital and the Supreme Court Nomination " *Journal of Politics* 66(3): 663-683.

- Cameron, Charles and Jee-Kwang Park. 2011. “Going Public When Opinion is Contested: Evidence from Presidents’ Campaigns for Supreme Court Nominees, 1930-2009.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41 (3): 442-470.

March 27th: The Unilateral Presidency

Readings:

- Rudalevige, Andrew, "The Presidency and Unilateral Power: A Taxonomy."
- Howell, William. *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action.*

April 3rd: *Midwestern Political Science Association Meeting - No seminar meeting*

...but use the week to work on your research papers.

April 10th: The Vice Presidency and First Ladies

Readings:

- Pika, Joseph. "The Vice Presidency: Dick Cheney, Joe Biden and the New Vice Presidency," in Nelson.in Nelson.
- Goldstein, Joel K. 2008. "The Rising Power of the Modern Vice Presidency." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (3): 374–389.
- Hiller, Mark, and Douglas Kriner. 2008. "Institutional Change and the Dynamics of Vice Presidential Selection." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (3): 401–421.
- Jones, Chalres O. 2008. "Vice Presidents and Other Heirs Apparent: The Historical Experience of Experience." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 38 (3): 422–432.
- Watson, Robert P. 2003. "Source Material: Toward the Study of the First Lady: The State of Scholarship." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 33 (2): 423–441.
- Sulfaro, Valerie A. 2007: "Affective Evaluations of First Ladies: A Comparison of Hillary Clinton and Laura Bush." *Presidential Studies Quarterly. 3*7 (3): 486–514.

April 17th: The Psychological Presidency

Readings:

- Nelson, "The Psychological Presidency," in Nelson
- Barber, James David. *The Presidential Character: Predicting Presidential Performance in the White House* (4th Edition)

****** Upload final copy of Research Paper, Monday April 21st******

April 24th: Research Paper Presentations

You will make a presentation of your reserach paper, like you would at a professional meeting. Refer to the **Research Paper Presentation Guidelines** for details.