POS 3413
The American Presidency
Semester: Spring 2017
6:00-8:50pm Thursday
Valencia West Building 11, Room 311

Instructor: Nathan Ilderton
Office: 328 Valencia West Building 11
Office Hours: 2:00-5:00pm Monday and Thursday and by appointment
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Course Description:
This class is a study of the U.S. presidency, how the institution has developed over time, and how it operates today. We will examine presidential elections, including the nominating process and general elections. The course will also include a study of the president's interactions with the public, media, Congress, and the judiciary. We will conclude with an examination of the presidential power in the domestic and foreign policy domains.

Course Objectives:
The first objective is to understand the basic problems of the presidency, the behavior of presidents, and the theories political scientists use to understand them. The second objective of the course is to enhance critical thinking in students. This will be accomplished through the talking point and discussion assignments. Finally, understanding the workings of the institution of the presidency will enhance the ability of students to interact with their government and to understand how it generates policy.

Required Reading:
There are two books required for this class. Each is available at the University Bookstore and through the usual off campus and internet outlets.

- George C. Edwards and Stephen J. Wayne. *Presidential Leadership*. 9th edition. (Cengage Learning). (E&W in the course calendar).
- Michael Nelson, editor. *The Presidency and the Political System*, 10th edition. (Sage CQ Press).

If you purchase the text books online please insure that you are purchasing the correct editions of the required texts. This course will adhere to the listed editions; students who purchased the wrong editions are responsible for acquiring any new or changed material.

Assignments, Exams and Grading:
Exams: Students will be graded on the basis of two exams. The first will be given in class on March 2nd. Exam 2 will be given during the final exam period, Thursday, April 27th, 7:00-

9:50pm. Even though it will be given during the final exam period, Exam 2 will not be cumulative. Format for the exams will be multiple choice and short answer questions.

Participation: Students will also be graded on the basis of a three part participation grade. Part of eight class periods will revolve around a discussion of several readings.
The first part of the participation grade will be based on attendance. See below for the full attendance policy.

Talking Points: Students will be assigned to write talking points on readings from the *Presidency and the Political System* textbook three times over the course of the semester. These talking points will be used to guide the class discussion. I will provide the Week 2 talking points to give everyone an example of how talking points should be formatted. The class will be divided into two rotations with each rotation assigned three class discussions for which they must turn in talking points. Neither rotation is assigned Week 13. Students who fail to turn in an assigned talking point may turn one in that week with no penalty for the missed talking point. Students who turned in all their talking points, but wish to improve their talking point grade may turn in a Week 13 talking point. The grade for the Week 13 talking point will substitute for the lowest talking point grade the student received.

Talking points are questions or statements meant to prompt and guide discussion. A good talking point will help your fellow students think about and discuss the material in the class. Talking points will be graded on a 10 point scale. They will be graded on the basis of the insight and critical thought displayed in the talking point as well as the quality of the writing. I also reserve the right to penalize a talking point if the author has an unexcused absence on the day the talking point is to be discussed. Talking points are limited to 250 words. They must be submitted by 12:00pm the day of the class meeting. They are to be submitted to me via email.

Discussion: Participation in the actual discussion is also expected. I will expect that students who submit talking points for a given week to be the most active in the discussion for that week, though I encourage everyone to participate in all discussions. This requires both attendance and careful reading of the assignments.

Film Response Papers: Three times during the semester the class will watch a film during the second part of the class period. During each film I will handout a series of questions on the film. Each student will turn in a two to three page paper (double spaced, 12 point font, proper citations to any works cited in the paper) on two of the three films viewed during the semester. The papers will be due in class the week following the in class viewing of the film. Students may only turn in papers on two of the three films.

Final grades will be calculated using the following formula:

Participation: 30%
- Attendance: 10%
- Talking Points: 10%
- Discussion: 10%

Film Papers: 10%

Exam 1: 30%
Exam 2: 30%

The grading scale for final grades is as follows:

A: 89.5% or above
B: 79.5% to 89.4%
C: 69.5% to 79.4%
D: 59.5% to 69.4%
F: 59.4% or below

Final grades are just that, final. I will not reconsider them except in a case where I made a computational error in calculating them (I have taught for several years and have yet to miscalculate a final grade). Please do not email or call me asking for a grade change for another reason, it will not happen.

Student Engagement and Financial Aid
As of Fall 2014, all faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the syllabus quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than January 13th. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

The syllabus quiz is a five question multiple choice quiz and can be found on the class' webcourses site under the "Quizzes" tab. The only purpose of the syllabus quiz is to satisfy the financial aid requirement for this class. It will not be included in the calculation of your final grade.

Attendance Policy:
Because of this class' discussion component, attendance will be mandatory and will be a part of your participation grade. Be warned, I will usually take attendance after the break between the lecture and discussion portions of the class. Absences can be excused if you can document that you have been absent for a legitimate reason, i.e. illness, family emergency, mandatory university activity.

Makeup Work:
I will not allow missed assignments to be made up without a documented university excused absence. If you know ahead of time that you will miss a scheduled exam or other assignment please inform me prior to the class period the assignment is due. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the scheduled due date for the assignment of the reason you missed the assignment and request a makeup. This should be done either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup exams will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup exams at my discretion.

Webcourses
A webcourses section has been created for this class and is accessible through the myUCF web portal at my.ucf.edu. This space will be used to post the syllabus, lecture notes, grades, and important class notices. You may use the "send message" under the people tab to turn in talking points.

Class Topics and Reading Assignments:
Students are expected to complete the assigned reading by the beginning of each week. Please note that I reserve the right to change the lecture and readings schedule as necessary to adequately cover all topics. I also reserve the right to add or subtract readings from the course. Any changes to the schedule or assigned readings will be announced in class. The Presidency and the Political System readings are to be used to create talking points.

Week 1: Introduction to Class, Introductory Lecture. January 12th
Readings: E&W Ch. 1

Week 2: Presidential Elections: Politics of Nominations. January 19th
Readings: E&W Ch. 2
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Presidency and the Nominating Process: Aspirants, Parties, and Selections" pg. 191-213
Talking Point Rotation: Sample Talking Points

Week 3: Presidential Elections: The General Election. January 26th
Readings: E&W Ch. 3
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Faulty Premises of the Electoral College" pg. 214-230
Talking Point Rotation: 1

Week 4: The President and the Public. February 2nd
Readings: E&W Ch. 4
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Presidential Spectacle." pg. 231-257
Talking Point Rotation: 2

Week 5: The President and the Media. February 9th
Readings: E&W Ch. 5
Film: Martha Kumar's Interview with Joshua Earnest

Week 6: The President and His/Her Advisers. February 16th
Readings: E&W Ch. 6
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Institutional Presidency" pg. 349-373
Talking Point Rotation: 1

Week 7: Presidential Decision Making. February 23rd
Readings: E&W Ch. 7
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Psychological Presidency." pg. 167-190
Talking Point Rotation: 2

Week 8: Exam 1. March 2nd

Week 9: The President and the Executive Branch. March 9th
Readings: E&W Ch. 8
Film: Hank: Five Years from the Brink

Spring Break, No Class, March 16th

Week 10: The President and Congress. March 23rd
Readings: E&W Ch. 9
Presidency and the Political System:
"The President and Congress." pg. 406-447
Talking Point Rotation: 1

Week 11: The President and the Judiciary. March 30th
Readings: E&W Ch. 10
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Presidency and the Judiciary." pg. 448-472
Talking Point Rotation: 2

Week 12: No Class Meeting. April 6th
Complete Extra Credit Assignment

Week 13: Domestic and Budgetary Policy. April 13th
Readings: E&W Ch. 11 and 12
Presidency and the Political System:
"The Presidency and Unilateral Power: A Taxonomy." pg. 473-499
Talking Point Rotation: Makeup Talking Point

Week 14: Foreign Policy. April 20th
Readings: E&W Ch. 13
Film: The Cuban Missile Crisis: At the Brink

Exam 2, Thursday, April 27th, 7:00-9:50pm

UCF Creed and Academic Honesty
Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity
I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

Scholarship
I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

Community
I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

Creativity
I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

Excellence
I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University's Rules of Conduct (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Students with Disabilities

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. 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 the professor.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes

Third parties may be selling class notes and other materials from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.