POLITICAL SCIENCE 3413:
THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Summer D 2016

Professor: Dr. Drew N. Lanier	**Office Hours**: M-R, 09:30-11:00 *or by appointment*
Office: Phillips Hall 302O	
Phone: (407) 823-3753 [direct dial] or -2608 [main office]	**Credit Hours**: Three (3)
E-mail: drew.lanier@ucf.edu	

Course Description

This course is a study of the United States Presidency as it has developed over time and as it exists today. Components of the course include: presidential relations with Congress, the media, public opinion, the bureaucracy, and the judiciary. We will also explore the conduct of presidential nominations, campaigns and elections, as well as recent conflicts over the role and powers of the president in current American politics. Students will be introduced to the various theories about the presidency and its relation to the other elements of the United States system of governance.

Course Goals

The most fundamental goal of this course is to enhance and improve your critical thinking skills. The ability to critically analyze concepts or programs and then present your conclusions and criticisms well will be one of the most valuable skills you learn at the University. The subject matter on which you will practice these critical skills will be the American Presidency. In order to effectively develop your analytic abilities, you will find that you need a great deal of specific knowledge about the president's Constitutional duties and responsibilities, and his/her relation to other actors within his/her legal and political environment. This course will fill that gap.

Requirements for a Web-Based Class

This is a **completely web-based class**, and, consequently, requires a much different approach in terms of requirements than a wise student would undertake in a face-to-face class. Most obviously, there will be no face-to-face meetings and no lectures. However, one should realize that a web-based class **does not** mean that you will be doing less work; indeed, a web-based class will require that a student take a **much more active role** in one's education as compared to that level of effort traditionally exerted in a face-to-face class. The web-based format will likely require approximately **three times the effort** that a student would on average expend in the face-to-face modality in the same course.

Generally, I have found that students who do well in a web-based class are self-motivated, have developed performance-oriented active learning skills, and have usually earned good grades (B- or higher) in face-to-face classes. A web-based class does, however, provide students with some flexibility in that they are not required to be in a classroom two or three times a week at a specific time. As those who have taken a web-based course before may attest, this is one of the nice features of this type of class, and can make for a very rewarding learning experience.

My general rule of thumb is that students devote **at least five hours of study per course credit hour per week**. As this is a three credit-hour class, wise students should plan on devoting exclusively **15 hours per week to this class at a minimum to this course alone**. If a student does not reasonably think that he or she can honestly devote this time to class, that student likely will struggle to make a passing grade, especially in this class. ***Past students have ignored this warning here to their own detriment. See the list of suggestions on Canvas from prior students as to how to do well in this course. Learn from their experiences.***

Web Resources

Canvas Site – Course Management Software

The Course has a WebCourses site associated with it. It is an innovative technology that allows the students to interact with each other, post messages to a common bulletin board, take quizzes, and many other tasks that facilitate comprehension of the course material and collaborative learning among the course's students in a student-centered context. This site, however, is a password-protected domain. A more thorough discussion of this course tool as well as how to navigate through it will be offered in class. Navigate to it via your my.ucf.edu login, find the course in the Online Course Tools Tab and the Webcourses@UCF Pagelet and then enter your PID and password.

Required Books

There are two **required texts** for this course (*that is, you must read and digest their content or your grade will suffer*):

Cronin, Thomas E., and Michael A. Genovese. 2012. *The Paradoxes of the American Presidency*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-986104-0 (hereafter "C&G").

Kennedy, David M. 1999. *Freedom From Fear: The American People in the Great Depression*. *Part I*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-516892-5 (hereafter, "K").

Mandated Documentation of Course Attendance

As of fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course in order to comply with federal regulations involving student financial aid. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the **self-introduction assignment**, on the Canvas Discussion board, by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but **no later than Friday, May 20. 2016**. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid (adapted from a draft statement from Academic Affairs Office, UCF).

Technological Requirements

This course is a completely online course. Hence, it imposes on students the heavy responsibility and obligation to anticipate problems that, all too often, haunt humans' use of technology. Namely, computers know when a deadline is approaching and will fail to function as the user wants at the most critical time, causing untold woe and trauma. Read and understand the technical requirements mentioned in the online learning module referenced above.

Thus, students **must**, as a course requirement, take steps to prevent any technological or other problems from obstructing their completing the course exams during the period when it is available. These steps include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Disable the call-waiting feature on one's home telephone line**. If students do not do so before their beginning an online exam, they likely will lose the connection with UCF's server and, thus, not be able to re-access the exam. See above warning about my re-opening exams for students who encounter technological problems.

- **Ensure that anti-virus software has been installed and is regularly updated**. If I receive any document containing a virus, I will deduct 10% from the assignment's final grade. If I receive a virus-infected assignment from the same student for a second time any time during the term, I will reduce that student's final course grade by a full letter grade (e.g., from A- to B-). If I receive a third virus-infected assignment, the student will fail the course automatically.

- **Enable pop-ups from the course Canvas site**. This will allow you to have full functionality in the course. Do not disable the pop-up block entirely as you will need to be shielded from those intrusions while navigating in other sites.

- **Online Exams**: the exams in this course are administered entirely online. As you will have limited time to complete the exam, I **strongly encourage** you to plan to take the exam from an on-campus location, if at all possible, as this will decrease the wait time that you experience as you load and save your answers. Otherwise, your exam time will be consumed, to some extent, by the lag time needed for the questions and answers to load and save.

- **Technical Assistance**: with an entirely online course, there are inevitable technological problems that usually occur at the last minute (**hint: don't wait to the last minute**). If such problems occur, the professor is **not** your point of contact. Rather, students should contact Online@UCF Support at (407) 823-0407, webcourses@ucf.edu, or submit a question via https://online.ucf.edu/support/. There are as well many self-help online course resources on the Learn Online Website. You may also wish to post a question to the many HELP! Discussion Fora within the course Canvas site itself.

Skype Availability

I have a Skype account and am able to meet with you via video during the above-referenced office hours or by appointment to discuss course-related questions. My Skype account name is drew.lanier.

GRADING

Exams (300 points, each 20% of your final course grade)

Each of three exams during the course is worth 100 points. The tests will be composed entirely of *very challenging* multiple choice questions. **They are each noncomprehensive**, although (to some extent) the material builds throughout the course. These exams are not for the faint hearted. Each is worth 20 percent of the final course grade, for a total of 60 percent drawn from performance on exams. They will seek to test your understanding of both factual and conceptual ideas and your relative analytical and synthetic skills. They do not emphasize rote memorization of

facts. Rather, they test students' ability to analytically address each question and conceptual understanding of course concepts and ideas. You should prepare for the exams as if you were called on to teach the class yourself.

As this is an online course, all exams will be administered through the Assessment function of the Canvas site associated with the course. There will be a **very narrow window** open during which students must complete the exam. Accordingly, students should anticipate any problems that they may foresee in completing the exam within that time frame. Once you open an exam, you will have a **maximum of 75 minutes to finish it**. If you begin it within 75 minutes of the posted closing time for the exam window, you will have less than that amount of time to complete the test. **I will re-open the exam window only under the most extreme (i.e., truly emergency, Act of God) circumstances**. Such circumstances do NOT include weddings, cruises, "road trips," and so forth. There are *absolutely NO excuses* for missing an exam and not contacting me in advance. Unexcused exams will receive a failing grade (0 points).

Course Content Modules (35% of final grade)

Because this is a completely online class, a substantial part of students' earned final course grades will be determined by the timely completion of specific content modules. There will be two modules due per week, on average, that tie in with that week's topics. The modules will often provide a brief overview of the topic, list the required reading, and outline specific tasks and assignments. These can involve researching a certain topic, discussing and debating issues through forum postings and, sometimes, the completion of specific internet assignments. These assignments are designed to make you more familiar with knowledge and information, and associated websites, relevant to the study of the American presidency.

As there are no formal face-to-face classes, **it is incumbent on you to keep up** with the readings, assignments and the pace of the course. Getting behind the current schedule of the course is dangerous to your final course grade. All of the modules are listed in the Canvas site for the course. Together, they will be averaged into 35% of your final course grade. Grades for each module will appear in the Grades section of the Canvas site. Students may discuss the graded module assignments with me during office hours (either by phone, in person or via Skype).

Some modules have multiple due dates for subparts of the module. The syllabus lists the FINAL DUE DATE for the Module – not its first. Plan accordingly.

I WILL NOT accept late modules. Computers and servers always seem to know when humans are working on a last-minute deadline and they take maniacal pleasure in crashing and not allowing you access to websites when the clock is approaching the deadline. The point (again): start the module assignments early in case there are problems. If you come to me with an exotic tale of woe, I will nod relatively sympathetically but point to this warning.

The following rules apply to the Content Modules:

- **Any module, or part thereof, submitted after the due date/time will not be graded. The usual deadline time is 11:57 pm (23:57).**

- **Students MAY NOT makeup late modules**, as such assignments require an ongoing, dynamic discussion among the students across the term that cannot be later replicated.

Surveys and Discussion Board (5%)

A portion of the Modules includes the completion of **Surveys** that require you to answer two questions about the material covered within that Module: what is the most important issue or concept addressed?; and, what is the topic or concept that bears further discussion? Completion of the Surveys earns you the appropriate number of points announced in each of the Modules of which they comprise a part.

The following are regulations regarding the Surveys that must be followed:

- Please be honest and forthcoming in your survey responses as they are designed to deepen your understanding of the course content and its significance.

- After the due date for the Surveys has passed, I will collate and collect the most pertinent and relevant questions and post answers to them, in the Discussion Area, for the entire class to read and consider. They are good ways to prepare for the exams, and not "busy work." Use them for your benefit. Ignore them at your own peril.

- **Do NOT send blank responses through for the Survey**. Doing so will earn zero points for that portion of the Survey that was left blank. Past classes have, sadly, tested me on this requirement.

- Failing to complete even a small number of the Surveys will negatively affect your final course grade.

Do not put the Modules off until the last minute. *You should do them as they are assigned, since you cannot control for the internet being down, or the site that you must access being temporarily unavailable. I will have little sympathy for you if this circumstance befalls you and you are unable to turn-in your assignment.*

Assignments do not count until they are RECEIVED, not sent. See above warning about anticipating technological problems. Thus: **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT.** If you come to me with an exotic tale of woe about your not having turned in your assignment on time, I will nod relatively sympathetically and point to this warning. If you submit the assignment through the Assignment tab in Canvas AND you receive confirmation of its receipt safely there, you may rest assured that it has been properly received.

Furthermore, note the following rules regarding the Modules, some of which require a written product submitted to me:

- You may NOT use Wikipedia (or its variants) as *any* source in your internet assignments. Doing so will substantially reduce your grade, even to an "F." One of the early modules to be completed in the course will introduce you to ways to evaluate websites properly.

- Double space between paragraphs, even in a document that is otherwise single-spaced.

- Provide in-text citations to the SPECIFIC SOURCE FROM WHICH YOU ARE TAKING THE INFORMATION. Otherwise, the reader does not know to what source you attribute your information. Failure to do so will result in a least a one letter grade reduction in the grade earned.

- Attaching printouts to a module's assignment does not magically satisfy the cite and reference requirements noted in Module submissions.

- Assignments containing more than five spelling errors will automatically earn a score of zero. Multiple misspellings of the same word will count the number of times that the word is not correctly spelled, rather than simply once. Note that prior students' failing to heed this requirement has caused them great misery. Spelling counts.

- **Insure that your name appears on each and every assignment. Even though you may upload the assignment to the Assignment link or to Canvas, PLEASE put your name on the *assignment itself* as I download the assignments and often grade them in hard copy. It is impossible to grade and assign a score for an assignment whose author is unknown. Those assignments not bearing the student author's name will be penalized by one letter grade.** Yes, college students regularly do not put their name on submitted assignments.

Course Point Allocation

Component	*Weight*
Exam I	20%
Exam II	20%
Exam III	20%
Course Content Modules	35%
Surveys and Discussion Board	5%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale (as a Percentage of Total Points)

GRADE	**PERCENTAGE**
A	100-90
B+	89-87
B	86-80
C+	79-77
C	76-70
D+	69-67
D	66-60
F	59 or less

Course Policies (aka My Pet Peeves)

There are several points you should note.

No Excuses

First, this class operates under a "No-Excuse" policy. It is incumbent upon you to be responsible for the notes given in the unlikely event you miss class. If you miss class, you NEED NOT inform me about it. Because this course is an upper division class, you will quickly learn that if you intend to pass, you should plan on regularly attending class, keeping up with the lecture, and completing the assignments as they are given.

Accommodations for Physically Challenged Students

Second, if you are physically challenged, every attempt is made to accommodate your learning needs. See me by the end of the first week of class so that we can make appropriate arrangements. This class operates in accordance with the Office of Student Disability Services here at the University and federal guidelines governing the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (1990).

Plagiarism and Cheating: Don't Let it Happen to You!

Third, please consult the policy regarding plagiarism and cheating which is attached at the end of this document. Each of you must review the University policy on the penalties for plagiarism. The Golden Rule explains this in more detail: http://regulations.ucf.edu/~regs/pdf/notices/5.015StuAcademicBehaviorStandards_newJul09_000.pdf.

Almost every semester, one or more students, unfortunately, wrongfully appropriates the published work of someone else, and I have had the unfortunate responsibility of failing those students and seeking disciplinary action against them. You are on notice that I have failed students because they decided to risk their academic careers by choosing the easy way out. I can assure you that it is not.

Caveat Emptor

Fourth, this is an upper division course with correspondent responsibilities for you. I expect that you will devote at least fifteen (15) *hours per week* studying, reading, and meeting with other students to discuss and review the course material. **This is a difficult course.**

Conceptual Understanding Key

Fifth, class topics are best understood at the conceptual and/or abstract level. Read the course material AND THINK ABOUT ITS IMPLICATIONS. You will quickly learn that one of my favorite questions is, "what does that mean?." You are expected to read and prepare for course discussions. Prepare the material as if you were called upon to teach it to a class of otherwise unknowing students. I assume that the reading will be completed by the associated assignment's due date and time. LEARN TO PACE YOURSELF ACCORDINGLY! Begin to prioritize what is most important to you, now.

Online Decorum: Course Protocols

As this is a fully online course, there are certain rules and regulations that make the course and our asynchronous communication go more smoothly. Do not say or do anything that would otherwise do in a face-to-face context. In short, treat others as you would like to be treated, as you may have been taught previously.

Moreover, as many of you have aspirations of attending law school, now is the time to begin to adopt the canons and traditions of the learned profession of the law, one profoundly steeped in tradition and history: how would you act in a court of law? Act in a disruptive manner? Post rude and discourteous messages to a court-run blog? File documents or submit reports late?

Word Processing Required

Seventh, as this is a fully online course, all assignments must be word processed, including internet assignments. You should allocate enough time for printer cartridges to run dry and dogs to eat papers and computer disks! You laugh, but trust me: I have heard every excuse in the book! Again, **late assignments are NOT accepted**. "Late" means ANY time after the due date and time for the assignment—even if that is one minute past the deadline.

Duplicates of Assignments

Eighth, while I have never lost an assignment, I require that you retain copies of all work submitted to me in the unlikely event that something should happen. In the event that I should need a copy of the assignment, and you are not able to provide it, you will not receive credit. Even after I have returned materials to you, please hold on to the work until after you have received your grade from the Registrar. This protects you from any possibility that you might receive an erroneous grade.

Technological Tools

Ninth, I require that everyone learn how to use e-mail and the technological tools associated with the course. They can facilitate your comprehension of the course material. I have found that this encourages students to communicate with me about questions you may have regarding the material discussed in class. You are responsible for any assignments or other information that I distribute on the course's associated web sites or via email.

If you already have an e-mail account (either through the University or a commercial server), please do not sign-up for an additional account. You should check your email on a regular basis as I post any changes about class assignments to your account and/or to the course-associated web site. Beginning with the Fall 2009 semester, all students are REQUIRED to obtain a Knights Email address and use it for course-related communications. I am required to send such information to that address alone.

If your email address changes during the semester, you MUST NOTIFY ME of the new address, so that I may then direct any communications to that address. This is a course requirement. Otherwise, you will miss important course information, which could drastically impact your grade negatively.

Time-Sensitive Communications and Assignments

In past semesters, some students have had difficulty submitting assignments to me by the due date and time. This difficulty arises, in part, from their undue reliance on fragile and potentially unreliable email programs and other technologies beyond their control (such as AOL).

Accordingly, for time-sensitive communications, send me a message through the Canvas Mail tool, contact me on the telephone, or, most unconventionally of all, see me in person during office hours.

Syllabus NOT a Contract

Finally, this syllabus is **not** deemed to be a contract. I reserve the right to change any of the exam times or assignments by providing you with a forty-eight hour (48 hr.) notice of such changes. Such changes are either announced on the Canvas site, or sent via Mail message, or both. Therefore, you are responsible for any changes that may occur during the course of the semester.

If you fail to log in to the course for several days, you should check with your fellow students to determine what you have missed. As such, your virtual absence is **not deemed** a sufficient excuse as to why work is incomplete.

In the event that the University administration closes school for any reason (e.g., hurricane), any assignments or examinations that were scheduled on the days during which the University is officially closed will be due by 9:00 am on the next business day whenever the University resumes operations.

Best Allies

The professor is **not your friend**. He cannot be your friend, as he is charged with the weighty responsibility of assessing your understanding of the course material and work in an objective manner. He may act in a courteous, kind and helpful manner, but do not mistake that for friendship. You will find that your colleagues will likely have similar backgrounds and experiences and that they can be your best allies in making it through this course, just as you will discover in later life.

Your best allies in helping you make it through this course are your fellow students. They will help you understand the material better, and you will do the same for them. By teaching the material to fellow students, one begins to truly understand the concepts and ideas discussed. The learning process begins with teaching.

COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

C&G = Cronin, Thomas E., and Michael A. Genovese. 2012. *The Paradoxes of the American Presidency*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-986104-0.

K = Kennedy, David M. 1999. *Freedom From Fear: The American People in the Great Depression. Part I*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-516892-5.

Reserve = Items designated as Reserve are available under the Canvas Discussion Topic "Reserve Readings." You will need the Adobe Reader (http://www.adobe.com) to view these readings.

PROJECTED DATE/WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT
Week 1: May 16-22	Course Requirements Evaluating Websites Historical Background of the Presidency Presidential Character	Syllabus and attachments C&G, Chapts. 1-2 Barber (Reserve)	**Module 1**: Getting Started (due **Wednesday, May 18 by 23:57**). **Module 2**: Evaluating Websites (due by **Friday, May 20 by 23:57**).
Week 2: May 23-29	Presidential Selection: Primaries and General Elections	C&G, Chapt. 4	**Module 3**: Studying the American Presidency: Presidential History and Character (due **Monday, May 23, by 23:57**) **Module 4**: The Presidency Through Time: Ebb And Flow of Power (due **Thursday, May 26 by 23:57**)
Week 3: May 30-June 5	Sorting Out the Possibilities: Who Becomes "Government Personified"?	C&G, Chapt. 3	**Module 5**: Selecting the Nominees and Choosing the President (due **Tuesday, May 31 by 23:57**) **TEST I** (to be completed by **Sunday, June 5 by 23:57**: window will open at noon on Saturday, June 4. Plan accordingly).
Week 4: June 6-12	Institutional Presidency *The Executive Office* *The Congress* *The Supreme Court*	C&G, Chapts. 6, 7 and 9	**Module 6:** The Institutional Presidency: Part I (due **Monday, June 6 by 23:57**). **Module 7**: The Institutional Presidency: Part II (due **Thursday, June 9 by 23:57**).

Week 5: June 13-19	Institutional Presidency *The Bureaucracy* *The Vice Presidency*	C&G, Chapts. 2 (re-read), 7 (re-read), and 8	**Module 8**: The Vice-President: Heir Apparent or Placeholder? (due by **Monday, June 13 by 23:57**).
Week 6: June 20-26	The Public Presidency *Rhetoric and the Presidency*	C&G, Chapt. 8	**Module 9**: The Bully Pulpit: The Rhetorical Presidency in Action (due by **Monday, June 20 by 23:57**). **TEST II** (to be completed by **Sunday, June 26 by 23:57**; window will open at noon on Saturday, June 25. Plan accordingly).
Week 7: June 27-July 3	The Public Presidency (continued) President as Policy Leader *Domestic* *Economic*	C&G, Chapt. 4 (re-read)	**Module 10**: The Bully Pulpit: The Ultimate Audience (due by **Monday, June 27 by 23:57**). **Module 11**: The President as Architect of Policy: Domestic and Economic Policy Machinery (due by **Thursday, June 30 by 23:57**).
Week 8: July 4-10	President as Policy Leader *Foreign* The Expanse of Presidential Power Through Time	C&G, Chapts. 5, 10 K, All	**Module 12**: The President as Commander-in-Chief: Military and Foreign Policy (due by **Tuesday, July 5 by 23:57**). **Module 13**: Assessing Presidential Power Across History (due by **Thursday, July 7 by 23:57**).
Week 9: July 11-15	Summary and Conclusions Online Course Evaluations (available through my.ucf.edu)		**TEST III** (to be completed by **Thursday, July 14 by 23:57**; window will open at noon on **Wednesday, July 13**. Plan accordingly). **NOTE: THIS IS A DIFFERENT SCHEDULE THAN THE USUAL SAT.-SUN. SCHEDULE OF PRIOR EXAMS.**

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism

The Golden Rule: A Handbook for Students (University of Central Florida) defines academic dishonesty as including cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is defined as "unauthorized assistance; communication to another through written, visual or oral means. The presentation of material that has not been studied/learned but obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment or project constitutes a violation. The unauthorized possession or use of examination or course related material may also constitute cheating" (p. 6). Plagiarism is defined as the deliberate use of another's work "without any indication of source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own. Any student failing to properly credit ideas or materials taken from another is plagiarizing. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards (p.6-7)".

Normally, the penalty for a violation of this policy is an "F" in the course.

Statement of ADA Compliance

I cooperate with the Office of Student Disability Services to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request on or before the third class day.

[Portions of this policy were adapted from the University of North Texas Department of Political Science Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism]