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# PSC 406: The American Presidency

Sections A & C (Undergraduate): 3 credits

Sections B & D (Graduate): 4 credits

Spring 2021

Mondays, 6:00pm – 9:30pm (Remote)

**Instructor:**  Matthew Geras, Assistant Professor

**Office:**  PAC 358

**Office Hours:**  By appointment

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## **Course Description**

This course provides a modern political science perspective on the American presidency. The U.S. President is often considered one of the most powerful leaders in the world and although the president has theoretically limited power granted to them by the constitution, they have extensive influence over foreign affairs, domestic policy, and electoral politics. Throughout this course, we will use political science research to examine the powers of the presidency, the president’s relationship with the other branches of government, as well as the media and political parties, and the president’s ability to shape domestic and foreign policy. Additionally, we will also examine the process by which presidents are elected to office.

This course is designed as a modified seminar. While each class period will begin with a lecture on that week’s topic, a substantial portion of each class will be dedicated to discussing the required readings for that week and important current events related to the American presidency. Since this is in part a seminar class, you can expect to do a lot of reading and writing on a weekly basis. Additionally, active participation in class discussions is expected of all students.

## **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will:

* Understand the processes by which presidents are elected.
* Understand the powers of the president and how the president operates in the American political system.
* Be able to critically analyze scientific research on the American presidency.
* Be able to use theories discussed in class to analyze historical and current events.

**Learning Objectives**

* Students will complete the assigned readings and participate in class discussions about the readings and current events during each week of class.
* Students will construct their own discussion questions, or other talking points, on the American presidency or current events to demonstrate their ability to lead and contribute to class discussions.
* Students will write several short analytical papers that will either evaluate political science literature or apply that literature to current events and important questions about the modern American presidency.
* Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the American presidency by completing a written examination.

## **Course Expectations**

Students will use the internet to access the Canvas course site and participate in class through Zoom. Class will be held remotely, through the use of Zoom, on Monday evenings from 6:00pm to 9:30pm. Alternatively, you can participate in class asynchronously by watching the recorded class lectures and participating in an online discussion board on Canvas. For each week of class, there will be required readings, which should be completed prior to the start of class or your participation on the online discussion board. Each class session will be split into two parts. First, there will be a lecture on that week’s topic. Second, there will be a class discussion on the required readings as well as any important current events related to the American presidency. The course design is based on principles of collaborative learning and active participation.

## **UIS Academic Integrity Policy**

I support the UIS policy on Academic Integrity, which states, in part: “Academic integrity is at the heart of the university’s commitment to academic excellence. The UIS community strives to communicate and support clear standards of integrity, so that undergraduate and graduate students can internalize those standards and carry them forward in their personal and professional lives. Living a life with integrity prepares students to assume leadership roles in their communities as well as in their chosen profession. Alumni can be proud of their education and the larger society will benefit from the University’s contribution to the development of ethical leaders. Violations of academic integrity demean the violator, degrade the learning process, deflate the meaning of grades, discredit the accomplishments of past and present students, and tarnish the reputation of the university for all its members.”

Academic sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of your violation and your history of violations. Whatever the sanction, I will file a report of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Provost.

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the [UIS Academic Integrity Policy](http://www.uis.edu/academicintegrity).

Academic dishonesty in an online (remote) learning environment may include the following scenarios:

* Having a tutor or friend complete a portion of your assignments
* Having a reviewer make extensive revisions to an assignment
* Copying work submitted by another student to a public class meeting
* Using information from online information services without proper citation
* Posting any work as your own that has been written by another author(s)

## **Academic Accommodations**

If you are a student with a documented temporary or ongoing disability in need of academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 217-206-6666.

Disabilities may include, but are not limited to: Psychological, Health, Learning, Sensory, Mobility, ADHD, TBI and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In some cases, accommodations are also available for shorter term disabling conditions such as severe medical situations. Accommodations are based upon underlying medical and cognitive conditions and may include but are not limited to extended time for tests and quizzes, distraction free environment for tests and quizzes, a note taker, interpreter and FM devices.

Students who have made a request for an academic accommodation that has been reviewed and approved by the ODS will receive an accommodation letter which should be provided by the student to the instructor as soon as possible, preferably in the first week of class.

For assistance in seeking academic accommodations please contact the UIS Office of Disability Services (ODS) in the Human Resources Building, Room 80, phone number 217-206-6666.

## **Library Resources**

Get help at your library!  You can access library resources, databases, and helpful research guides from [Brookens Library](http://library.uis.edu/).

For in-depth help, please contact one of our librarians directly via email or schedule a one-on-one research consultation conducted in-person, over the phone, or online.

[View full list of librarians by subject](https://libguides.uis.edu/librarians).

**The Learning Hub**

The Learning Hub provides students on campus with many services including online and face-to-face tutoring for writing, science, exercise science, academic skills, business, computer science, and math; supplemental instruction; workshops; and online resources. Any student who is enrolled at UIS is eligible for the free services.

If you feel like you need extra help in the class, please use this service along with instructor help.

Appointments can be made by contacting The Learning Hub at (217) 206-6503, [thehub@uis.edu](mailto:thehub@uis.edu), or in person at Brookens 460. You may also use this link to access a “Make an Appointment” form to ensure you give them all the information needed to schedule an appointment. When making an appointment, please have the following information ready:

* Course number
* Instructor
* Assignment/Paper Length
* Available Days and Times

## **Required Texts**

There are no required books for this class. Instead, all course readings will be posted to Canvas.

Readings will include a combination of scientific journal articles, news articles, book excerpts,

and podcasts.

## **UIS Resources**

[University of Illinois at Springfield](http://www.uis.edu/)

[[Information Technology Services (ITS)](http://www.uis.edu/)](http://www.uis.edu/its)

[University Webmail](http://webmail.uis.edu)

[Canvas](https://go.uis.edu/canvas)

[The Learning Hub](http://www.uis.edu/thelearninghub/)

[Documentation Style Guides](http://www.uis.edu/thelearninghub/writing/handouts/#Helpful) (from The Learning Hub)

[The Career Development Center](http://www.uis.edu/career/)

## **Course Requirements**

## Complete all assigned readings and graded assignments and participate in class either through Zoom or Canvas. As a best practice, please keep a backup copy of all assignments that you submit.

## **Adhere to assignment deadlines as outlined on Canvas and the course schedule. Late submissions may be subject to partial or no credit. However, I recognize we are all living through unprecedented times and many of us are currently facing, or may in the future face, unexpected challenges. If you find yourself in a situation where your ability to meet course deadlines is compromised, please let me know. I will, to the best of my abilities, work with you to come up with a solution that will allow you to complete the required components of this course.**

## **Course Communication**

The best way to contact me is through email or through Canvas’ messenger function, but we can also schedule Zoom meetings and telephone consultations as needed. I typically respond to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday and within 48 hours on weekends. You will likely receive a response from me faster than this timeline and if you do not receive a response from me within this timeframe, it is okay to assume I did not receive your original message and you can contact me again.

Office Hours:

Since this is a remote class, I will hold office hours by appointment via Zoom. To set up a meeting, send me an email with some suggested times. I encourage all students to attend office hours whenever they wish to discuss, or ask questions about, course content and assignments. Please view my office hours as time that I have set aside to answer your questions, clarify class discussions, and help you succeed in class.

If you are an on-campus student who would prefer to meet in person for office hours, this might be a possible depending on UIS’s current policies and recommendations concerning Covid-19 mitigation.

### Netiquette

In any social interaction, certain rules of etiquette are expected and contribute to more enjoyable and productive communication. I recommend you review the following [tips for interacting online](https://www.livinginternet.com/i/ia_nq.htm) in e-mail and/or discussion board messages compiled by Chuq Von Rospach and Gene Spafford.

Everyone must plan an active role in helping to facilitate and maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment where everyone should feel free to participate, ask questions, engage the course and support one another. To do this successfully, we must remain mindful and respectful of each other’s freedom of thought and speech and provide mutual respect. Everyone should feel comfortable expressing themselves and their views. There must be a clear respect for diversity of participants including respect for gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, as well as culture, beliefs and personal values.

Here are some tips for discussing serious and potential sensitive topics with your peers:

* Be empathetic and remember that this environment is a safe place for making mistakes.
* Use nonjudgmental language and phrases that do not attack an individual. One way of doing this is to ask the individual to discuss his/her process for making the final decision he/she made.
* Use specific questions, examples, and research as a way of making your point.

Online discussions, whether through Zoom or other platforms, present unique challenges. When on Zoom it is often difficult, or impossible, to read non-verbal cues and as a result, it is easy to accidently interrupt or talk over someone else. This is often unintentional and sometimes unavoidable, but I ask everyone to be mindful of this when we are in class. One trick I have found helpful in avoiding this is to remain muted until you have something to add to the conversation and then only unmute when you are speaking. Alternately, you can use the virtual raise-hand feature on Zoom to raise your hand as you would in an in-person class. I will do my best to manage these issues as they arise, but it is everyone’s responsibility to make sure our class discussions are civil so that everyone is able to participate and feels comfortable doing so.

## **Methods of Evaluation**

## You will be assessed on several short analytical research papers, a cumulative take-home final exam, and class participation, including your contribution of weekly talking points and/or discussion questions.

Analytical Research Papers

Throughout the semester, there will be four short analytical research papers. **Undergraduate students must complete 3 of these 4 papers and graduate students must complete all 4 of these papers.** In both cases, these papers will make up 45% of your final grade. The prompt for each paper will pose a question, or ask you to analyze a theory, about some aspect of the American presidency. While the topic of each paper varies, each will require you to respond to the prompt and then use evidence to support your answers. Class readings and discussions will serve as your starting point for completing these papers, but each prompt will require you to do some of your own research to collect evidence for your arguments. Evidence might take the form of academic journal articles, books, or news articles, but regardless of where your evidence comes from, you must cite your sources of information. Each of your papers should be 4 to 6 double-spaced pages, not including your reference page. For undergraduate students, it is entirely up to you which of these papers you skip, but since some of the prompts relate to specific week(s) of class, each paper has a specific due date that must be met if that is one of the papers you select to complete. The topics for each of these papers is listed below and grading rubrics will be provided in separate assignment sheets.

Analytical Paper 1: Potential Electoral Reforms

**Due: 2/22**

In this course, we spent several weeks discussing and analyzing the process by which U.S. presidents are elected. In this paper, you will identify one potential electoral reform, for example implementing the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact or holding all primary elections on a single day, that you believe the U.S. should implement. After identifying and describing this electoral reform, you should argue why you believe this reform in necessary and discuss the potential positive and negative implications or outcomes of this reform.

Alternatively, if you support the current process by which U.S. presidents are elected, you can pick an electoral reform and argue why you believe this reform is not necessary and discuss the potential positive and negative implications and outcomes of this reform.

Analytical Paper 2: Book Review

**Due: 3/22**

Complete a book review on either a presidential biography or a book introducing and evaluating a political science theory on some aspect of the American presidency. In your review answer the following questions:

* What is the author’s main argument(s), finding(s), and/or contribution(s) to the topic they are studying?
* What evidence does the author use to support these arguments, findings, and/or contributions?
* What are some potential weaknesses of the book? (Hint: What is left unanswered? Does the author’s arguments or findings suffer from methodological or theoretical flaws?)
* Who is the intended audience of the book?

Before completing your book review, you must have your book approved by me. You are allowed to complete your book review on one of the books from which excerpts were assigned as part of the class’s required readings, but it is not necessary. Additionally, I encourage you to look up examples of professional book reviews before you begin writing.

Analytical Paper 3: Political Science Theories and Modern U.S. Presidents

**Due: 4/12**

Pick one of the theories we have discussed in class, for example Going Public or The Party Decides, and apply it to a modern presidency (Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, or Donald Trump). In your paper, you should answer the following questions and use evidence from class readings and other sources to support your answers:

* What is the theory you are evaluating? Explain the theory and briefly discuss how/why the theory was developed in the context of the larger literature on that topic. (Hint: the author of the theory you are evaluating should discuss these things.)
* Is the theory supported in your analysis of a modern president? Why or why not? (Does the theory work in the manner described by the creator of the theory?)

You cannot complete this assignment using a theory that was the subject of your book review.

Analytical Paper 4: Presidential Powers

**Due: 5/3**

Most historians and political scientists agree that over time the powers of the American presidency have expanded; however, there is disagreement as to whether this is a positive or negative development. Do you believe that modern U.S. presidents are too powerful? If so, in what ways are modern presidents too powerful? What are some implications, either positive or negative, of these aspects of presidential powers? If not, do you believe modern presidents are not powerful enough or do they have just the right amount of power? How and why did you come to this conclusion?

In this paper, you are not expected to discuss every aspect of presidential power, but you should discuss more than one aspect of presidential power. For example, maybe you think presidents are too powerful in their role as leader of their political party, but that they have the correct amount of power when it comes to influencing the legislative agenda. Make sure you use real-world examples or other evidence to support your opinions.

Final Exam

The final exam for this class will be a cumulative, take-home examination which will be worth 20% of your final grade. The final exam will mostly consist of short-answer and essay questions. The final exam will be distributed during the final week of class and will be due on **Monday, May 10th,** which is the designated day for our class’s final exam. However, since the final is a take-home exam, we will not meet via Zoom during our final exam timeslot.

Participation

Since this is in part a seminar class, I expect students to actively participate in class on a weekly basis. If you are participating in class synchronously, this means attending and participating in our weekly class meetings. While you are expected to participate in class discussions, participation can also take the form of asking and answering questions posed during lecture. If you are participating in class asynchronously, you are expected to watch the recorded class lecture, which will be posted to Canvas sometime Tuesday afternoon, and then participate in the online discussion board throughout the week. I will track participation every week, but students are allowed to miss class twice for any reason, no questions asked. If you find yourself in a situation where you need to miss more than two weeks of class, let me know and I will work with you so that you can earn your participation points through alternative assignments. Overall, participation will constitute 20% of your final grade. You will receive a grade for your participation throughout the entire semester, opposed to a score for each individual week of class. Towards the end of the semester, I will also ask you to self-evaluate your level of participation, which I will consider when determining your overall score.

Talking Points

To help facilitate class discussions, each week you will submit two talking points pertaining to the readings for that week. Talking points should be the most interesting questions, thoughts, arguments, or comments you have about the week's material. Talking points should not be restatements of discussions from previous weeks of class. They should be submitted in the form of a sentence or short paragraph. To receive credit for your talking points, you must submit them to Canvas by 11:59 pm on Sunday night. Due to time constraints and the number of students in class, we will not cover all of the talking points that have been submitted every week. However, submitting your talking points by the deadline, provided they are relatively fresh ideas not already addressed in discussions from previous weeks, is sufficient to receive credit, regardless of whether or not your talking points are used in class that week. Talking points will constitute 15% of your final grade.

**Grading Scale**

Analytical Research Papers 45%

Final Exam 20%

### Participation 20%

Talking Points 15%

| Percent Range | Letter Grade |
| --- | --- |
| 100-93 | A |
| 92-90 | A- |
| 89-87 | B+ |
| 86-83 | B |
| 82-80 | B- |
| 79-77 | C+ |
| 76-73 | C |
| 72-70 | C- |
| 69-67 | D+ |
| 66-63 | D |
| 62-60 | D- |
| 59 and below | F |

## **Course Calendar**

Below is the course calendar with assigned readings and the due dates of major assignments. Please note this schedule is subject to change.

**Monday, January 18th: MLK Day (No Class)**

**Monday, January 25th: Class Introductions & The Constitutional Foundations of the Presidency**

Readings:

* [Articles 1 & 2 of the US Constitution](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript)
* Azari, Julia R., and Jennifer K. Smith. 2012. “Unwritten Rules: Informal Institutions in Established Democracies.” *Perspectives on Politics* 10(1): 37–55.
* Abdelfatah, Rund, and Ramtin Arablouei. 2020. “Presidential Power: Throughline.” <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/09/873495248/presidential-power> (December 30, 2020). (Podcast)

**Monday, February 1st: Presidential Primary Elections**

Readings:

* Marshall, Madeline. 2020. “America’s Presidential Primaries, Explained: Why Does America’s System for Picking the President Start in Iowa?” *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/videos/2020/2/21/21147405/presidential-primaries-iowa-super-tuesday> (December 16, 2020). (Video)
* Norrander, Barbara. 2006. “The Attrition Game: Initial Resources, Initial Contests and the Exit of Candidates During the US Presidential Primary Season.” *British Journal of Political Science* 36(3): 487–507.
* Cohen, Marty, David Karol, Hans Noel, and John Zaller. 2008. *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. The University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 7: The Invisible Primary: Theory and Evidence)
* Dowdle, Andrew J., Randall E. Adkins, Karen Sebold, and Wayne P. Steger. 2020. “Fundamentals Matter: Forecasting the 2020 Democratic Presidential Nomination.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*: 1–6.

**Monday, February 8th: Presidential General Elections**

Readings:

* Devine, Christopher J., and Kyle C. Kopko. 2020. “Analysis | Do Vice-Presidential Picks Matter?” *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/08/13/do-vice-presidential-picks-matter/> (December 23, 2020).
* Grossmann, Matt. 2020 “How Presidential Debates Influence Voters.” <https://soundcloud.com/user-735940457-95015381/how-presidential-debates-influence-voters> (December 23, 2020). (Podcast)
* Hillygus, D. Sunshine, and Todd Shields. 2008. *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Chapter 2: The Reciprocal Campaign)
* Vavreck, Lynn. 2009. *The Message Matters: The Economy and Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton University Press. (Chapter 3: Context Matters: A Campaign Typology)

**Monday, February 15th: The Electoral College**

Readings:

* Alexander, Robert M. 2019. *Representation and the Electoral College*. Oxford University Press. (Chapter 1: Introduction)
* Abdelfatah, Rund, and Ramtin Arablouei. 2020. “How The Electoral College Came To Choose The President Of The U.S.” *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/30/929609038/how-electoral-college-came-to-choose-the-president-of-the-u-s> (December 16, 2020).
* Huang, Taofang, and Daron Shaw. 2009. “Beyond the Battlegrounds? Electoral College Strategies in the 2008 Presidential Election.” *Journal of Political Marketing* 8(4): 272–91.
* Stahl, Jeremy. 2020. “This Team Thinks They Can Fix the Electoral College by 2024.” *Slate Magazine*. <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/12/electoral-college-trump-popular-vote-compact.html> (December 18, 2020).

**Monday, February 22nd: Presidential Transitions**

Readings:

* Anestaki, Aikaterini, Meghna Sabharwal, Kenneth Connelly, and N. Joseph Cayer. 2019. “Race and Gender Representation in Presidential Appointments, SES, and GS Levels, During Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations.” *Administration & Society* 51(2): 197–228.
* Moore, Elena, Audrey Carlsen, and Benjamin Swasey. 2021. “Biden Administration: Here Are His Cabinet Members And Key Advisers.” *NPR.org*. <https://www.npr.org/2020/11/17/933848488/biden-administration-heres-who-has-been-nominated> (February 15, 2021).
* Wise, Alana. 2021. “Biden Pledged Historic Cabinet Diversity. Here’s How His Nominees Stack Up.” *NPR.org*. <https://www.npr.org/sections/president-biden-takes-office/2021/02/05/963837953/biden-pledged-historic-cabinet-diversity-heres-how-his-nominees-stack-up> (February 15, 2021).
* Azari, J. R. 2013. “Institutional Change and the Presidential Mandate.” *Social Science History* 37(4): 483–514.
* Moore, Elena. 2020. “Biden’s First 100 Days: Here’s What To Expect.” *NPR.org*. <https://www.npr.org/2020/11/09/932190347/bidens-first-100-days-here-s-what-to-expect> (February 15, 2021).

Assignments:

* Analytical Paper 1 Due 11:59pm

**Monday, March 1st: The Institutional Presidency and the Bureaucracy**

Readings:

* Pfiffner, James. 2015. “Cabinet Secretaries versus the White House Staff.” *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2015/03/24/cabinet-secretaries-versus-the-white-house-staff/> (December 29, 2020).
* Cohen, David B., Karen M. Hult, and Charles E. Walcott. 2016. “White House Evolution and Institutionalization: The Office of Chief of Staff since Reagan: Evolution of Office of Chief of Staff.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 46(1): 4–29.
* Lewis, David E. 2011. “Presidential Appointments and Personnel.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 14(1): 47–66.
* Haeder, Simon F., and Susan Webb Yackee. 2020. “A Look Under the Hood: Regulatory Policy Making and the Affordable Care Act.” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 45(5): 771–86.

**Monday, March 8th: The President and Congress**

Readings:

* Cameron, Charles M. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 1: Divided Government and Inter-branch Relations)
* Rutledge, Paul E., and Heather A. Larsen Price. 2014. “The President as Agenda Setter-in-Chief: The Dynamics of Congressional and Presidential Agenda Setting.” *Policy Studies Journal* 42(3): 443–64.
* Lee, Frances E. 2008. “Dividers, Not Uniters: Presidential Leadership and Senate Partisanship, 1981-2004.” *The Journal of Politics* 70(4): 914–28.
* Keneally, Meghan, and Ivan Pereira. “Trump Impeachment: Here’s How the Process Works.” *ABC News*. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/impeachment-process-works/story?id=51202880> (March 1, 2021).

**Monday, March 15th: The President and the Courts**

Readings:

* McMillion, Barry J. 2020. “Supreme Court Appointment Process: President’s Selection of a Nominee.” *Congressional Research Service*: 1–28.
* “Supreme Revenge: Battle for the Court.” 2020. *Frontline*. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/supreme-revenge/> (December 30, 2020).
* Kapur, Sahil. 2020. “McConnell Plans Final Push to Confirm Trump Judges and Seal His Legacy.” *NBC News*. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/final-push-judges-mcconnell-will-cement-lasting-legacy-trump-n1250950> (December 30, 2020).
* Detrow, Scott, Carrie Johnson, and Nina Totenberg. 2020. “What Will The Courts Look Like Under Joe Biden?: The NPR Politics Podcast : NPR.” <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/31/952411609/what-will-the-courts-look-like-under-joe-biden> (March 8, 2021).

**Monday, March 22nd: Presidential Unilateral Action**

Readings:

* Howell, William G. 2005. “Introduction: Unilateral Powers: A Brief Overview.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35(3): 417–39.
* Thrower, Sharece. 2017. “To Revoke or Not Revoke? The Political Determinants of Executive Order Longevity.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(3): 642–56.
* Potter, Rachel Augustine, Andrew Rudalevige, Sharece Thrower, and Adam L. Warber. 2019. “Continuity Trumps Change: The First Year of Trump’s Administrative Presidency.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52(4): 613–19.
* Druke, Galen, and Amelia Thomson-DeVeaux. 2020. “Politics Podcast: How Trump’s Pardons Compare With Other Presidents’.” *FiveThirtyEight*. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/politics-podcast-how-trumps-pardons-compare-to-other-presidents/> (December 27, 2020). (Podcast)

Assignments:

* Analytical Paper 2 Due 11:59pm

**Monday, March 29th: The President and the Media**

Readings:

* Barrett, Andrew W. 2004. “Gone Public: The Impact of Going Public on Presidential Legislative Success.” *American Politics Research* 32(3): 338–70.
* Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew. 2016. “Presidential Agenda-Setting of Traditional and Nontraditional News Media.” *Political Communication* 33(1): 1–20.
* Shogan, Colleen J. 2015. “The President’s State of the Union Address: Tradition, Function, and Policy Implications.” *Congressional Research Service*: 1–19.

**Monday, April 5th: The President as Party Leader**

Readings:

* Lee, Frances E. 2013. “Presidents and Party Teams: The Politics of Debt Limits and Executive Oversight, 2001-2013.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43(4): 775–91.
* Abramowitz, Alan I., and Steven Webster. 2016. “The Rise of Negative Partisanship and the Nationalization of U.S. Elections in the 21st Century.” *Electoral Studies* 41: 12–22.
* Galvin, Daniel J. 2020. “Party Domination and Base Mobilization: Donald Trump and Republican Party Building in a Polarized Era.” *The Forum* 18(2): 135–68.
* Hayes, Christal, and Nicholas Wu. 2020. “Democratic Party Waging a War over Its Future Just as Joe Biden Takes Helm.” *USA TODAY*. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2020/11/15/joe-biden-take-presidency-democrats-battle-over-future-party/6278276002/> (December 30, 2020).

**Monday, April 12th: Presidential Leadership and Domestic Policy**

Readings:

* Edwards III, George C. 2009. *The Strategic President: Persuasion and Opportunity in Presidential Leadership*. Princeton University Press. (Chapter 1: Power of Persuasion)
* Ciulla, Joanne B. 2010. “Being There: Why Leaders Should Not ‘Fiddle’ While Rome Burns.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 40(1): 38–56.
* Christensen, Michelle D. 2012. “The Executive Budget Process: An Overview.” *Congressional Research Service*: 1–16.
* “Obama’s Deal.” 2010. *FRONTLINE*. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/obamasdeal/> (December 30, 2020). (Video)

Assignments:

* Analytical Paper 3 Due 11:59pm

**Monday, April 19th: The President and Foreign Policy**

Readings:

* Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis. 2008. “Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Reevaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis.” *The Journal of Politics* 70(1): 1–16.
* Kreps, Sarah E. 2019. “Legality and Legitimacy in American Military Interventions.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 49(3): 551–80.
* Peake, Jeffrey S., Glen S. Krutz, and Tyler Hughes. 2012. “President Obama, the Senate, and the Polarized Politics of Treaty Making.” *Social Science Quarterly* 93(5): 1295–1315.
* Wright, Robin. “The Seven Pillars of Biden’s Foreign Policy.” *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-seven-pillars-of-bidens-foreign-policy> (December 28, 2020).

**Monday, April 26th: Non-Instructional Day (No Class)**

**Monday, May 3rd: Evaluating Presidents and Presidential Legacies**

Readings:

* Kreitner, Richard. 2016. “What Time Is It? Here’s What the 2016 Election Tells Us About Obama, Trump, and What Comes Next.” *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/what-time-is-it-heres-what-the-2016-election-tells-us-about-obama-trump-and-what-comes-next/> (June 22, 2020).
* Linz, Juan J. 1990. “The Perils of Presidentialism.” *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51–69.
* Nichols, Curt. 2012. “The Presidential Ranking Game: Critical Review and Some New Discoveries.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42(2): 275–99.
* “The Life of an Ex-President after Leaving Office.” 2017. *PBS NewsHour*. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/life-ex-president-leaving-office> (December 28, 2020). (Video)

Assignments:

* Analytical Paper 4 Due 11:59pm

**Monday, May 10th: Finals Week (No Class)**

Assignments:

* Final Exam Due 11:59pm