Political Science 4036  
The American Presidency  
Fall 2010: Section 01

Professor: Kevin V. Mulcahy  
Office: 221 Stubbs Hall  
Office Hours: MWF: 1:00PM-6:00PM  
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Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide an overview of various theories on the institution of the American presidency. It is principally focused on the triune relationship between Domestic Affairs, Foreign Affairs and the Election Process that all successful Presidents must balance carefully. However, this course does not provide a historical survey of the presidents from Washington to Obama; it emphasizes the presidency as an institution.

Course Texts and Materials

The Presidential Difference* - Greenstein, Fred  
Zachary Taylor - Eisenhower, John S. D.  
Franklin Pierce - Holt, Michael F.  
Calvin Coolidge - Greenberg, David

Grading

Three non-cumulative exams - 100pts each (300pts total)  
Lectures, discussions, biographies, textbook chapters and videos  
Three presidential biography tests** - 25pts each (75pts total)  
Five (of eight) participation quizzes*** - 5pts each (25pts total)  

A: 400-358  B: 357-318  C: 317-278  D: 277-238  F: 237-000

Class Etiquette and Expectations

• The use of cell phones and/or laptop computers is prohibited in class.  
  Powerpoint slides**** will be made available to students via Moodle.  
• Class participation is expected and required.  
• As attendance is the sine qua non of participation, more than two absences will result in a letter-grade reduction of your final course grade.  
• Be a good citizen by arriving on time and staying for the entire class.  
• Absences are governed by LSU Policy Statement 22. Students are advised to educate themselves about its provisions, as they will be enforced.  
• Missed exams/tests/quizzes cannot generally be re-scheduled. A buffer is built into the quiz grade, so students should act responsibly.  
• This course touches upon several topics and issues that are controversial. Differences of opinion are natural; healthy, vigorous debate thereof - when well-considered, contributory and appropriate - is welcomed, but all members of the classroom are expected to respect the rights of others.  
• If you have questions or comments, please speak to Dr. Mulcahy in person. General queries should be e-mailed to Jonathan Hunter Walker (jwalk54).
The Domestic Policy Presidency
Aug 24: Introduction; discussion of syllabus; Thirteen Days
Aug 26: Thirteen Days (cont’d)
Aug 31: Evolution of the Presidency
Sep 02: Presidential Character & Greatness  TPD: FDR
Sep 07: The President’s Constitutional “Hats”  TPD: Carter
Sep 09: The President and Congress
Sep 14: The Cabinet and Appointments  TPD: Eisenhower
Sep 16: Zachary Taylor Biography Test
The Federal Bureaucracy
Sep 21: The Budget & Executive Office of the President  TPD: Truman
Sep 23: Exam 1

The Foreign Policy Presidency
Sep 28: The Constitution and Foreign Affairs  TPD: JFK
Sep 30: Foreign Policy: State, Defense & CIA  TPD: LBJ
Oct 05: The National Security Council  TPD: Nixon
Oct 07: Models of Foreign Policy-making
Oct 12: The Presidency in the Cold War
Oct 14: The Presidency in the Post-Cold War World
Oct 19: Franklin Pierce Biography Test  TPD: Reagan
Vietnam Documentary
Oct 21: Fall Holiday [No Classes]
Oct 26: Exam 2

The Selection / Election Process
Nov 02: Primaries and Caucuses I  TPD: Clinton
Nov 04: Primaries and Caucuses II
Nov 09: Presidential Campaigns
Nov 11: Political Parties  WP Obama article (posted on Moodle)
Nov 16: Media in Elections
Nov 18: Electoral College  TPD: Bush 43
Nov 23: Electoral College Reforms
Nov 25: Thanksgiving Holiday [No Classes]
Nov 30: Calvin Coolidge Biography Test  TPD: Bush 43
Dec 02: Fog of War
Dec 07: Final Class - Catch-Up, Review, Questions, Evaluations
Dec 07: Exam 3: 12:30pm - 2:30pm