

POL SCI 408-001
American Presidency

Semester Year
Class Time
Classroom

Professor Hong Min Park

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Office hours: TBD

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the *politics* of the presidency in the United States. Even though we will sometimes deal with facts and figures, the main focus is to examine the workings of the American presidency in a *scientific* way. The topics that we will intensively discuss include: 1) presidential elections; 2) presidential character and performance; 3) president's legislative role; 4) executive politics; 5) court and president; 6) president and public policy; and 7) scientific research on presidential politics.

Prerequisites

There is no official pre-requisite course except for junior standing. However, it is generally assumed that students are familiar with materials that are normally covered in POL SCI 104 (Introduction to American Government and Politics).

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- 1) Describe how the president is elected;
- 2) Understand how the president influence public opinion;
- 3) Analyze how the president competes for power with Congress and the courts;
- 4) Examine how the president influence public policy; and

This course fulfils the research requirement for L&S degree:

- 1) Students will conduct independent and original research on the American presidency;
- 2) In conducting research on the presidency, it is crucial for students to review and evaluate the relevant scholarly work in order to show the importance of their own research.
- 3) Students will share their research with their colleagues by various means including, but not limited to, oral presentation in class, author-discussant pairing, and online discussion.

This 3-credit course meets 3 hours of lecture per week during the semester. Students are expected to set aside a minimum of 6 hours each week studying the material and working on assignments to achieve the learning goals of the course.

Required Texts

The following textbook is *required*:

- Joseph A. Pika, John Anthony Maltese, and Andrew Rudalevige. 2016. *The Politics of the Presidency*. 9th ed. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.

Students will also utilize scholarly articles to enhance their *deeper* understanding of each topic. These materials will be distributed via D2L (d2l.uwm.edu).

In addition, it is strongly recommended that students regularly read national as well as local newspapers. *The New York Times* and *the Washington Post* are two excellent sources of news on politics and government. If needed, *CQ Weekly*, *Roll Call*, and the *Hill* would be nice supplements.

Course Requirements and Grading

The final course grading will be based upon four parts:

- 1) **Exam I and II** (60%): There will be two exams to ensure understanding of important lecture materials. The detailed logistics (time, format, and etc.) will be discussed later in class.
- 2) **Research** (25%): Students will conduct independent and original research on the American presidency. It should be typed and double-spaced with the 10 page-limit. The specific guidance on the research requirement will be distributed via D2L.
- 3) **Class Attendance** (15%): Attendance is extremely important, and it is mandatory for students to come to class on time and stay until the end of class time. Attendance will be checked and the grading will be:

$$\frac{\text{Min}(25, \# \text{ Times Attended})}{25} \times 15$$

This roughly means that students can “legally” miss the classes up to three (3) times throughout the semester.

- 4) **Class Participation** (Bonus, up to 5%): There will be a lot of opportunities where students can participate in class activities, and express their opinions and thoughts. Note that *quality* is more important than quantity in general.

Students who take this course under the Pass/Fail option must receive a grade of C or better in order to obtain a Pass on their final grade. A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given under exceptional circumstances and is solely at the discretion of Professor Park.

As a general rule, make-ups for exams will not be given. Students who miss exams because of scheduled activities of an official University student organization, a religious holiday, or a verifiable illness should contact Professor Park *in advance* of missing an exam so that alternative arrangements can be made.

If there is a dispute regarding a grade, re-grading is possible under two conditions:

- We will have a “cooling” period of at least TWO business days. Any complaints or disputes will NOT be considered in this period.
- Then, all complaints must be *typed* and must clearly express specific concerns. These written statements must be accompanied by citations of support from course materials, i.e. readings, textbooks, and/or lecture notes, in order to ensure accuracy.

Classroom Policies and Instructor Availability

All students are expected to behave professionally in this class. Professor Park is intolerant of disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking during lectures, reading newspapers, and especially the ringing of cell phones or pagers. Laptops may be used to take notes in class, but not for playing games, checking emails, or surfing the internet. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom in order to preserve the learning environment for other students. Class discussions are

expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of others' opinions. Please do not intimidate, patronize, or ridicule anyone else during the course of classroom activities.

If students would like to speak with Professor Park outside of class time, feel free to stop by the office (Bolton 680) during regularly scheduled **office hours (TBA)**. If students are unable to attend office hours, but would like to meet with Professor Park, make an appointment via email.

Academic Integrity and Student Disabilities

No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has detailed its policies on academic integrity (http://www3.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm). Students should acquaint themselves with policies concerning cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and academic interference. Any submission of work by a student in this course constitutes a certificate that the work complies with university policies on academic integrity.

Any student with disabilities of any kind (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact Professor Park and the Student Accessibility Center (Mitchell 112, 414-229-6287, <http://www4.uwm.edu/sac>) at the beginning of the semester.

Tentative Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule for the semester. Professor Park reserves the rights to alter the reading assignments and test dates in a timely fashion according to the progress of the class. **PMR** indicates Pika, Maltese, and Rudalevige (2016) textbook.

1. Introduction – 1/25
2. President in Context – 1/27
 - PMR 1
 - U.S. Constitution, Articles I, II, III, and Amendments
3. Presidential Elections – 1/29, 2/3, 8
 - PMR 2
 - Alan I. Abramowitz. 2008. "Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election with the Time-for-Change Model." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 41: 691-695.
 - Gregory A. Huber and Kevin Arceneaux. 2007. "Identifying the Persuasive Effects of Presidential Advertising." *American Journal of Political Science* 51: 957-977.
4. Public Politics – 2/10, 15
 - PMR 3
 - James N. Druckman and Justin W. Holmes. 2004. "Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34: 755-778.
5. Character and Performance – 2/17
 - PMR 4
 - Richard Neustadt. 1990. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: Free Press. Chapter 3.
6. President and Congress – 2/22, 24, 29
 - PMR 5
 - Terry M. Moe and William G. Howell. 1999. "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29: 850-873.

7. Selection of Research Topic – 3/2, 7
 - Students are *required* to write a one-page summary of their research topic. This includes the research question in one sentence, the research design in one paragraph, and the expected conclusion in one paragraph.
 - In classroom, we all will discuss the research idea after listening to each student’s proposal.

EXAM I – 3/9 (WEDNESDAY)

8. Executive Politics – 3/21, 23
 - PMR 6
 - Barry R. Weingast. 2005. “Caught in the Middle: The President, Congress, and the Political Bureaucratic System.” In *Institutions of American Democracy: The Executive Branch*.
9. Judicial Politics – 3/28, 30
 - PMR 7
 - Byron J. Moraski and Charles R. Shipan. 1999. “The Politics of Supreme Court Nominations: A Theory of Institutional Constrains and Choices.” *American Journal of Political Science* 43: 1069-1095.
10. President and Public Policy – 4/4, 6
 - PMR 8, 9, 10
 - William G. Howell and Jon Pevehouse. 2005. “Presidents, Congress, and the Use of Force.” *International Organization* 59: 209-232.
11. Progress in Research – 4/11
 - Students are *required* to write a one-page summary of their research progress.
 - In classroom, we all will discuss the research idea after listening to each student’s progress.
12. President and Party Polarization – 4/13
 - Reading TBA (up-to-date news articles will be distributed via D2L)

EXAM II – 4/18 (WEDNESDAY)

STUDENT IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS – 4/25, 28, 5/2, 4, 9

- The objective of sharing research with colleagues is to receive feedback and improve the quality of work. Thus, it is important for each student to make their work available at least one week in advance of their presentation dates.