

## **POL 433F / USA403F: Presidential Politics in America**

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Lawrence LeDuc, 109 Carr Hall (SMC)  
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TEXTS: Joseph A. Pika, John A. Maltese and Andrew Rudalevige.  
*The Politics of the Presidency* (10<sup>th</sup> edition)

Elizabeth A. Theiss-Morse, Michael W. Wagner, William H. Flanigan and  
Nancy H. Zingale. *Political Behavior of the American Electorate* (14<sup>th</sup> edition)

Routledge FreeBooks. *United States Election Primer* [on Quercus]

A selection of articles will also be posted on Quercus or made available by the  
instructor

### **MEDIA / INTERNET:**

Students are expected to keep up to date with the events of the election campaign using the many sources that are readily available for this purpose. The *New York Times* [[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)], despite the polarized state of American politics, is still the best overall reference for current information. A team led by Maggie Haberman has reported extensively in the *Times* on the Trump White House. The *New York Times* offers an inexpensive on-line subscription to students. Other useful sources are C-Span [[www.c-span.org](http://www.c-span.org)], Real Clear Politics [[www.realclearpolitics.com](http://www.realclearpolitics.com)], Fivethirtyeight [<http://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/>] and *Politics1.com* [[www.politics1.com](http://www.politics1.com)]. Sites maintained by the presidential campaigns or other campaign groups may also be of interest.

### **ADDITIONAL SOURCES:**

The literature on the U.S. presidency and American presidential elections is vast. The following are recommended as additional reference sources, but are only a small sampling of the Political Science literature in this area. Note that there are multiple editions of a number of these books.

John H. Aldrich et al, *Change and Continuity in the 2016 and 2018 Elections*  
James David Barber, *The Presidential Character*  
Harold D. Clarke et al, *Making Political Choices: Canada and the United States*  
Morris P. Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*  
Marc J. Hetherington & Bruce A. Larson, *Parties, Politics and Public Policy in America*

Michael Lewis-Beck et al, *The American Voter Revisited*  
 Theodore J. Lowi, *The Personal President*  
 L. Sandy Maisel & Mark Brewer, *Parties and Elections in America*  
 Thomas E. Mann & Norman J. Ornstein, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks*  
 Michael Nelson (ed), *The Presidency and the Political System*  
 Michael Nelson (ed), *The Elections of 2016 (2012, 2008. etc.)*  
 Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*  
 Lori M. Poloni-Staudinger & Michael R. Wolf, *American Difference*  
 Gerald M. Pomper & Susan S. Lederman, *Elections in America*  
 Bert A. Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency*  
 Steven A. Shull (ed.), *The Two Presidencies: a Quarter Century Assessment*  
 Paul D. Shumaker & Burdett Loomis, *Choosing a President*  
 Stephen Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*  
 Jeffrey Stonecash, *Understanding American Political Parties*  
 Martin P. Wattenberg, *The Rise of Candidate Centered Politics*  
 Stephen J. Wayne, *The Road to the White House*

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Two essays. The first essay (25%) will deal with some aspect of any one of the three areas of U.S. public policy scheduled for discussion in the classes of October 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> or November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The essay should be approximately 6-9 pages in length and should begin with (although not rely exclusively on) the readings listed on the syllabus under the topic chosen. The due date for the first essay is **Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>**, but students are expected to make a brief class presentation based on their preliminary work for the essay in one of the three class sessions mentioned above. All students should send an email (a short paragraph indicating the theme of the proposed essay, working title, and initial list of references) to the instructor no later than **October 5<sup>th</sup>**. The second essay (35%) will deal with any topic of your choice falling under one of the four broad areas scheduled for discussion in the classes of November 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and December 7<sup>th</sup>. It should be approximately 10-15 pages in length, and should address some of the themes found in the readings for the appropriate class session. Although the second essay is not due until **Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**, students should similarly expect to make a short class presentation based on their research in one of the four sessions commencing on November 16<sup>th</sup>. All students should send an email (a short paragraph indicating the theme of the proposed essay, working title, and preliminary references) to the instructor no later than **November 5<sup>th</sup>**.

Participation/seminar (20%). Students will be expected to contribute to and participate in all class discussions, and to make two short class presentations based on research undertaken for the essays (see above).

Final test (20%). An oral exam based on the required readings, seminar presentations, and written work will be scheduled in December. The exam may be conducted in person or on-line at a mutually agreed time.

COURSE SYLLABUS [\* denotes required reading for all students; + denotes required for students writing essay under that theme; “Q” indicates available on Quercus.]

### **September 14<sup>th</sup> — Introduction: Before and After November 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Theiss-Morse et al, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, ch. 1  
Stephen Medvic, “Campaigns and Elections in American Democracy” chapter 1 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [Q]

### **September 21<sup>st</sup> — Studying the Presidency and the American Political System**

\* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 1, 3, 11 and appendices  
\* Louis Fisher, “Teaching the Presidency: Idealizing a Constitutional Office.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (January 2012), pp. 17-31 [Q]

Sidney M. Milkis & Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development*  
Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*  
Stephen Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*  
Theodore J. Lowi, *The Personal President*

### **September 28<sup>th</sup> — Political Parties and Elections in 2020 America**

\* Theiss-Morse et al, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, ch. 4  
\* Matthew Glassman, “How Republicans Erased Trumpism” *New York Times*, February 2019 [Q]  
\* Matt Grossman & David A. Hopkins, “Ideological Republicans and Group Interest Democrats: The Asymmetry of American Party Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (March 2015), pp. 119-139 [Q]

Marc J. Hetherington & Bruce A. Larson, *Parties, Politics and Public Policy in America*, ch. 1, 2  
Barbara Norrander, “Presidential Nomination Politics at the Dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, chapter 2 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [Q]  
“The Republican Party: Triumph and Tragedy.” *The Economist*, June 20, 2014 [Q]  
“America’s Democrats: Where to Now?” *The Economist*, July 13, 2018 [Q]

### **October 5<sup>th</sup> — The Long, Long Campaign**

\* New York Times, *2020 Presidential Election Calendar* [Q]  
\* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 2  
\* Theiss-Morse et al, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, ch. 2, 7

William G. Mayer, “The Road to a Much Disliked General Election” and  
Marjorie Randon Hershey, “The Media: Covering Donald Trump” both in Michael Nelson, *The Elections of 2016*  
Jeffrey M. Stonecash, “Voters and the Media,” chapter 5 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [Q]

**October 12<sup>th</sup> — Thanksgiving holiday: no class**

**October 19<sup>th</sup> — Foreign Policy and National Security**

\* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 10

\* Mark Landler, “Trump, the Insurgent, Breaks With 70 Years of American Foreign Policy.” *New York Times*, December 28, 2017 [Q]

+ John Gerard Ruggie, “The Past as Prologue: Interests, Identity and American Foreign Policy.” *International Security* 21 (1997), pp. 89-125 [Q]

+ Sebastian Rosato & John Schussler, “A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (December 2011), pp. 803-19 [Q]

Alexander George, *Presidential Decision Making in Foreign Policy*

Thomas J. McCormick, *America’s Half-Century: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Cold War and After*

**October 26<sup>th</sup> — The Economy and the 2020 Election**

\* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 9

\* M. Stephen Weatherford, “Comparing Presidents’ Economic Policy Leadership.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (September 2009), pp. 537-60 [Q]

+ Michael Lewis-Beck & Mary Steigmeier, “Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000), pp. 183-219 [Q]

+ D. Sunshine Hillygus & Michael Henderson, “Political Issues and the Dynamics of Vote Choice in 2008.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 20 (2010), pp. 241-69 [Q]

Morris P. Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*

Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics: the Making of Economic Policy From Roosevelt to Reagan and Beyond*

**November 2<sup>nd</sup> — Social Policy Issues in 2020 America**

\* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 8

\* Theiss-Morse et al, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, ch. 5, 6

+ Leslie McCall & Lane Kenworthy, “America’s Social Policy Preferences in the Era of Rising Inequality.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (September 2009), pp. 459-84 [Q]

+ Russell L. Hanson, “Liberalism and the Course of American Social Welfare Policy” in Lawrence C. Dodd & Calvin Jillson, *The Dynamics of American Politics* [Q]

Andrew Rudalevige, *Managing the President’s Program: Presidential Leadership and Domestic Policy Formulation*

Michael Nelson & Russell Riley (eds.), *Governing at Home: The White House and Domestic Policymaking*

## **November 3<sup>rd</sup> — Election Day**

## **November 9<sup>th</sup> — Fall reading week: no class**

## **November 16<sup>th</sup> — Election Retrospective: What Happened and Why?**

- \* Theiss-Morse et al, *Political Behavior of the American Electorate*, ch. 3, 8
- \* Lawrence LeDuc and Richard G. Niemi, “Voting Behavior: Choice and Context” in LeDuc, Niemi and Norris, *Comparing Democracies* 4 [Q]
- + Costas Panagopoulos, “Campaign Context and Preference Dynamics in U.S. Presidential Elections.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 22 (2012), pp. 123-137 [Q]
- + Herbert F. Weisberg & Christopher J. Devine, “Partisan Defection and Change in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 20 (2010), pp. 213–240 [Q]

Stanley Kelley, *Interpreting Elections*

Robert A. Jackson, “Voter Mobilization” chapter 6 in Routledge, *United States Election Primer* [Q]

Kate Kenski et al, *The Obama Victory: How Media, Money and Message Shaped the 2008 Election*

## **November 23<sup>rd</sup> — American Politics and the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress**

- \* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 5
  - \* Gary C. Jacobson, “Congress: Nationalized, Polarized and Partisan” in Nelson, *The Elections of 2016* [Q]
  - + Kathleen Bawn et al, “A Theory of Political Parties: Groups, Policy Demands and Nominations in American Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* (September 2012), pp. 571-597 [Q]
  - + Kathryn Pearson, “Demographic Change and the Future of Congress.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* (April 2010), pp. 235-238 [Q]
- Lawrence C. Dodd & Bruce I. Oppenheimer (eds.), *Congress Reconsidered*
- Matthew J. Dickinson, “The President and Congress” in Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System*
- James A. Thurber (ed.), *Divided Democracy: Cooperation and Conflict Between the President and Congress*
- John H. Aldrich, “Did Hamilton, Jefferson, and Madison “Cause” the U.S. Government Shutdown? The Institutional Path from an Eighteenth Century Republic to a Twenty-first Century Democracy, *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (March 2015), pp. 7-23 [Q]

## **November 30<sup>th</sup> — Organizing the Trump2 [Biden] Administration**

- \* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch. 6
- + John P. Burke, “The Institutional Presidency” in Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System* [Q]
- + Andrew Rudalevige, “Rivals or a Team? Staffing and Issue Management in the Obama Administration” in Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency* [Q]

Hugh Heclo, *A Government of Strangers*  
James Pfiffner, *The Strategic Presidency*  
Stephen Hess, *Organizing the Presidency*  
Charles O. Jones, *Transitions*

## **December 7<sup>th</sup> — The Biden [Trump2] Presidency: Expectations**

- \* Pika et al, *The Politics of the Presidency*, ch.4, 7
- \* Andrew Rudalevige, “The Meaning of the 2016 Election: the President as Minority Leader” in Nelson, *The Elections of 2016* [Q]
- + Michael Nelson, “The Psychological Presidency” in Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System* [Q]
- + Joel D. Aberbach, “Change We Can Believe In Meets Reality” in Rockman et al, *The Obama Presidency* [Q]

James David Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*  
Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton*  
Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*  
James Pfiffner, *Character and the Modern Presidency*

## **December 8<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> — Final oral exams TBA**

## **January 20<sup>th</sup> — Inauguration Day**