
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Political Science 4311: The Presidency
Fall 2023

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Office Hours: TR 10:30-11:30am or by appointment

Course Registration Number: 16487
Classroom: Liberal Arts Bldg #307
Date/Time: Tues/Thurs 9-10:20am

Course Overview

This course examines the modern American Presidency and the primary relationships and responsibilities that influence and explain presidential behavior and performance. We will focus on presidential influence and behavior in the context of a variety of topics, including public expectations, campaigns and elections, rhetoric and speechmaking, the permanent campaign, news coverage, decision-making on foreign and domestic policy, management and organization, and the presidency in a separated system. Throughout this course, we will concentrate on relationships that affect presidents because we want to explain presidential behavior and its consequences. As part of our class discussions, we will also consider current events as well as developments relating to the upcoming 2024 presidential elections. In all, you will learn to think more objectively, systematically, and comprehensively in a scholarly fashion about the American Presidency.

*Please also note that course assignments and assessments are developed in line with UTEP's "Edge Advantages" goals. In line with UTEP's Edge mission, portions of the class will deal with civic engagement issues and the prospects for key policy reforms in the current political environment. I look forward to working with you and encourage you to be active in our class activities and discussions.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes relevant to Social and Behavior Sciences (SBS) and in line with UTEP's Edge Mission - Students can expect to learn the following by the end of this course:

- (1) to define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of the American Presidency (Targeted Edge Advantages: Critical thinking, Problem solving)
- (2) to apply a body of factual knowledge directly relevant to understanding the role of government across a range of presidential administrations (Targeted Edge Advantages: Communication, Critical thinking, Problem solving, Leadership, Confidence, Social responsibility)
- (3) to apply a body of factual knowledge and to critique and apply major theses directly relevant to analyzing the effects of historical, social, political, economic, and global forces on the office of the presidency (Targeted Edge Advantages: Communication,

Critical thinking, Problem solving, Leadership, Confidence, Global Awareness, Social responsibility)

- (4) to recognize and formulate testable hypotheses relevant to the study of the presidency (Targeted Edge Advantages: Critical thinking, Problem solving)
- (5) to apply knowledge and general theories from the literature to evaluate the current events and conditions related to the presidency (Targeted Edge Advantages: Communication, Leadership, Confidence, Global Awareness, Social responsibility)

Objectives for Good Citizenship

As a member of this classroom it is vital that you to adhere to the following principles of professionalism:

- interpret the consequences of one’s own actions (unprofessional conduct will be dealt with swiftly through the university),
- have responsible civic engagement—that is,
 - respect different points of view and different cultures
 - work effectively as a leader and/or member of the class
 - articulate the value of a diverse and global perspective in the workplace and society

Grades

Grades will be based on two exams of multiple-choice questions and short-answer essays (each counting for 30% of the grade), a class paper worth 30% of the grade, and in-class attendance and participation that counts for 10% of the grade. Please note that I do not give out grades by telephone.

Grading/Exams	
Attendance and Participation	10%
Class Paper	30%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

Final grades are based on accumulated weighted points, rounded to the 2nd decimal:

Final Grade Scale
≥ 89.50% = A
89.49 – 79.50% = B
79.49 – 69.50% = C
69.49 – 59.50% = D
≤ 59.50% = F

I will not change grades. You have the opportunity to earn extra credit in this class so there is no reason to consider grade changes. If you are concerned about your grade, please come and see me during my office hours. This is particularly important if your grade on the first exam is not

what you expected. I will not change the grade, but I can give you feedback and suggestions on how to improve your performance in the class.

Required Textbook

The course includes one required textbook as listed below. In addition, there will be a variety of other supplemental reading materials in the form of key chapters and journal articles that I will provide as extra documents that students can download (see the course schedule below for details).

Required Textbook:

Edwards, George C. III, Kenneth R. Mayer, and Stephen J. Wayne. 2022. *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making, 12th Edition*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.*

**Available in hard copy, rental, and ebook formats – all are acceptable options.*

Classroom Policies

- In-class attendance and participation counts for 10% of the final grade. Accordingly, you must attend and participate in class to earn an “A.” Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet for each class meeting. I expect everyone to attend class on the scheduled dates and times. This means coming to class alert, willing to ask and answer questions, and prepared to contribute intellectually to the class discussions. Remember that you are expected to have completed the weekly readings before the class meeting. Coming to the class prepared is important particularly because when calculating your final grade, I will consider your class participation. In addition, exams will cover material from the readings and the lectures, so doing just one or the other will leave you at a disadvantage. If I consistently detect a pattern of only a few students reading, there will be graded “pop-quizzes,” which will account for 10% of the final grade. Note that the class participation portion of each student’s grade is non-negotiable and left solely to the discretion of the instructor.
- I will deduct a full letter grade for a late assignment for each day it is late after the due date (including weekends). For example, a “perfect” assignment turned in two days late would receive an 80 out of a 100.
- Make-up exams will only be given if you have a university excused absence and follow university guidelines (see “Excused Absences” section below for more details). If you miss a test due to an emergency or illness, or if you have a university-approved excuse ahead of time, you must notify me *as soon as possible* to arrange a make-up exam. Note that if you miss an exam, I expect you to contact me *immediately* afterward (I expect later that day or the following day at the latest). You may contact me by e-mail, telephone, or visit during office hours to arrange a make-up. If you miss a test and do not have a university acceptable excuse, you will receive a “0” on the test. Keep in mind that a make-up exam may be of a different format than the original exam.

Excused Absences

I will excuse absences only when a student participates in an official university-recognized activity, observes a recognized religious holiday of her/his faith that happens to coincide with a

class meeting, is called to and participates in active military service for a reasonably brief period, or confronts extraordinary circumstances, such as a prolonged illness, extended jury duty, or a major personal crisis. Any excused absences must be documented. Please do not ask me to excuse absences for minor illnesses or scheduling conflicts (e.g. sports practices or games, play rehearsals, meetings, conferences, appointments with other professors or advisors, student teaching, doctor's appointments, court dates, jobs, job interviews, having your cable installed, etc.). I am aware that students have other interests and obligations, but you should nevertheless make this class a priority. If you are likely to have recurring conflicts, please take another course.

See the academic regulations in the UTEP Undergraduate Catalogue for a list of excused absences: <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418>. According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of "W" before the course drop deadline and with a grade of "F" after the course drop deadline."

E-mail Protocol

When e-mailing me, please put the course and section number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name and UIN. Do not e-mail me about information you can obtain from the syllabus. I do not answer substantive material from lectures or readings via e-mail as it is not an effective means of communicating. If there is class material you are confused about, please come and see me during my office hours.

Extra Credit

If, during the semester you have zero absences, three bonus points will be added to your final grade. Having only one absence will earn you two extra points and if you have only two absences, you will get one extra point. If you have more than two absences, you will not receive extra credit points. University-excused absences will not be counted against you, so long as you provide documentation the day you return to class. Again, it is your responsibility to document excused absences in a timely fashion. Other extra credit opportunities are at the sole discretion of the instructor and may be assigned in-class.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity and standing require a respect and adherence to the grading policies, rules against cheating, and plagiarism. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be subject to disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. For further information, please refer to <http://studentaffairs.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4386>.

On Cheating and Complicity

Cheating includes looking at another student's examination, using cheat sheets or other unauthorized notes during an exam, having others conduct research or prepare work that you turn in as your own (includes the use of commercial term paper companies, buying answer sets from a tutoring company, or obtaining answers from other unauthorized sources). Complicity, meanwhile, refers to any collaboration for aiding others in the act of cheating, including allowing others to cheat off of your paper, taking an exam for another student, or providing another student's signature in their absence for in-class assignments or attendance sheets. You may also not submit work for this class that you did for another class without my expressed consent.

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the university regarding services for students with disabilities.

Copyright Statement for Course Materials

The course materials used in this course are copyrighted. By course materials, I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lecture notes and PowerPoint slides, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. This also includes any information posted on the course webpage. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to distribute the course materials, unless I expressly grant permission.

Course Schedule

<p>*Note: This is a provisional schedule of our course. With advanced notice, I may introduce specific changes based on progress in class.</p>		
Tuesday	8/29	<p>The Presidency: Welcome and Introduction Course introduction: discuss syllabus, schedule, and key requirements, including the class paper project (rubric will be posted on Blackboard). *Please order/buy your required textbook if you have not already done so.</p>
Thursday	8/31	<p>The Powers and Paradoxes of the Presidency Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i>, Chapters 1 & 2</p>
Tuesday	9/5	<p>The Nomination Process: Running for the White House Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i>, Chapter 3</p>
Thursday	9/7	<p>Presidential Elections: The Electoral College Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i>, Chapter 4 <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i>, “The Flawed Foundations of the Electoral College,” Chapter 2</p>
Tuesday	9/12	<p>Presidents, the Public, and the Expectations Gap Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i>, Chapter 5 <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i>, “Why Presidents Break Promises,” Chapter 1</p>
Thursday	9/14	<p>Presidential Power: Leader or Clerk and the Power to Persuade Readings: <i>Presidential Power</i>, Chapters 1 & 3</p>
Tuesday	9/19	<p>The Rhetorical Presidency, Going Public, and the Permanent Campaign Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i>, Chapter 6 <i>Governing by Campaigning</i>, Chapter 1</p>
Thursday	9/21	<p>On Deaf Ears: Does the Public Respond? Readings: <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i>, “Limits of the Bully Pulpit,” Chapter 7</p>

Tuesday	9/26	Presidents, Polling, Pandering, and Manipulation: Who Leads Whom? Readings: “Presidents and Polling: Politicians, Pandering, and the Study of Democratic Responsiveness” (Article)
Thursday	9/28	Presidential Network News Coverage Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 7 Villalobos 2012 (Chapter)
Tuesday	10/3	Review for EXAM 1
Thursday	10/5	EXAM 1
Tuesday	10/10	NO CLASS – CONFERENCE DAY *Review project rubric requirements and work on class paper project.
Thursday	10/12	NO CLASS – CONFERENCE DAY *Continue working on class paper project.
Tuesday	10/17	Where Does the Buck Stop? Presidential Appraisals Readings: Sirin & Villalobos 2011 (Article)
Thursday	10/19	Structure and Decision-Making: Organization, Advisory Systems, and Style Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapters 8 & 9 Villalobos et al. 2014 (Article)
Tuesday	10/24	Presidential Appointments: Politicizing the Bureaucracy Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 10 <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i> , “Why Not the Best?” Chapter 12
Thursday	10/26	Czars in the White House: The Policy Czar Debate Readings: Vaughn & Villalobos 2012 (Chapter)
Tuesday	10/31	The President in the Legislative Arena: Strategy and Skills Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 11 <i>Governing by Campaigning</i> , Chapter 5

		“Building Coalitions” (Article)
Thursday	11/2	Rhetoric vs. Policy in Presidential Leadership of Congress <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 11 Villalobos et al. 2012; Villalobos 2013 (Articles)
Tuesday	11/7	Power without Persuasion: Rethinking the Foundations of Executive Influence Readings: <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i> , “Power Without Persuasion,” Chapter 4
Thursday	11/9	Presidential Federalist Philosophies: Ironies and Paradoxes Readings: Villalobos 2013 (Chapter)
Tuesday	11/14	The President and the Supreme Court Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 12
Thursday	11/16	Presidents and Domestic/Economic Policy Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 13
Tuesday	11/21	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY *Work on class paper project
Thursday	11/23	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY *Work on class paper project
Tuesday	11/28	Foreign Policy: Presidents versus Congress on National Security Readings: <i>Presidential Leadership</i> , Chapter 14 <i>Readings in Presidential Politics</i> , “What is the Appropriate Role of Congress in National Security Policy?” Chapter 10 Sirin & Villalobos 2018 (Chapter)
Thursday	11/30	Future of the Presidency: Reappraising Power and Looking Ahead Readings: <i>Presidential Power</i> , Chapters 9 & 10 *Revisit Villalobos & Sirin 2011 (Article)
Tuesday	12/5	Prep Day - Review for FINAL EXAM

Thursday	12/7	Class Papers & Discussion *Class Papers due, in-class sharing and discussion *Final make-up work due
TBD	TBD	FINAL EXAM