Introduction

This course examines selected theories and research on presidential leadership and presidential campaigning, and the lives and administrations of selected presidents. We consider an eclectic set of materials contributed by psychologists, political scientists, historians, communication scholars, and journalists. Our goal is to review a number of varied approaches to understanding presidential leadership and applying those treatments to understanding the careers of specific presidents.

Below is a calendar listing topics and readings for each day the class meets. The assigned books for the course are *The Presidential Character* by James David Barber, *His Excellency: George Washington* by Joseph J. Ellis, *Eyewitness to Power* by David Gergen, *The Presidential Difference* by Fred I. Greenstein, *To the Best of My Ability* edited by James M. McPherson, and *The Politics Presidents Make* by Stephen Skowronek. Assigned articles or chapters are posted in the course pack (CP), on Blackboard (BB), or on e-reserve (ER), as indicated below.

Course Requirements

1. All students are expected to attend class and to come fully prepared to participate in discussion.

2. Each week you should email me brief—about 150 words—questions or comments on either Monday’s or Wednesday’s reading. We will coordinate the email assignments in class. The comments are due 1:00 PM on the day of the class. I will respond to them, ordinarily within a day or two.

3. There will be an exam on the material from the first part of the course on Wednesday, October 10.

4. A paper of approximately 15 pages is due before Thanksgiving, on Wednesday November 21, at 5:00 PM. You may write the paper by yourself or team up with one other person. The paper should discuss a single presidency or a comparison of two presidencies, based on reading that we will plan together. Those who do the paper in pairs must submit assessments of the
relative contributions of each member of the pair.

5. During the last two weeks of classes you will present, either individually or in pairs, your assessments of the presidency or presidencies discussed in your paper.

Your course grade will be based on the five requirements above, each weighted equally.

Class Schedule and Readings

Monday, August 27

Introduction

Wednesday, August 29

The Presidents


Monday, September 3 (Odd numbers email)

The Presidential Character, Part I


Wednesday, September 5 (Even numbers email)

The Presidential Character, Part II

Monday, September 10  (Odd numbers email)

**The Presidential Difference, Part I**


Wednesday, September 12  (Even numbers email)

**FDR**


Monday, September 17  (Odd numbers email)

**The Presidential Difference, Part II**


Wednesday, September 19  (Even numbers email)

**Presidential Personality and Presidential Greatness**


Monday, September 24  (Odd numbers email)

Image Making in Presidential Debates


Wednesday, September 26  (Even numbers email)

Image Making in Presidential Advertising


Monday, October 1  (Odd numbers email)

Image Making in Presidential Campaign Journalism


Wednesday, October 3  (Even numbers email)

George Washington, Part I

Monday, October 5  (Odd numbers email)

**George Washington, Part II**


Wednesday, October 10

Midterm Exam

Fall Break

Wednesday, October 17  (Even numbers email)

**The Politics Presidents Make**


Monday, October 22  (Odd numbers email)

**Abraham Lincoln, Part I**


Wednesday, October 24  (Even numbers email)

**Abraham Lincoln, Part II**


Monday, October 29 (Odd numbers email)

John F. Kennedy, Part I


Wednesday, October 31

The Missile Crisis

A Roger Donaldson film: *Thirteen Days*

Monday, November 5 (Even numbers email)

John F. Kennedy, Part II


Wednesday, November 7 (Odd numbers email)

Ronald Reagan, Part I


Monday, November 12  (Even numbers email)

Ronald Reagan, Part II


Wednesday, November 14  (Odd numbers email)

Bill Clinton, Part I


Monday, November 19  (Even numbers email)

Bill Clinton, Part II


Thanksgiving Vacation

Monday, November 26; Wednesday, November 28; Monday, December 3

Student Presentations

Wednesday, December 5

Conclusions