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, and *The Politics Presidents Make* by Stephen Skowronek. Assigned articles or chapters are posted on e-reserve.

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 Tuesday’s or Thursday’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 Thursday, October 12.

4. During the last three classes you will present, either individually or in groups, your assessments of the administration of one president.

5. Each student, either individually or in groups of two of three, will compose a paper of approximately 15 pages on a single presidency or a comparison of two presidencies, based on independent reading that we will plan together.
6. There will be an exam on the material from the second part of the course on Tuesday, December 5.

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

Class Schedule and Readings

Tuesday, August 29

Introduction

Thursday, August 31

The Presidential Character, Part I


Tuesday, September 5

The Presidential Character, Part II


Thursday, September 7

Motivation and Presidential Performance


Tuesday, September 12

The Presidential Difference, Part I


Thursday, September 14

The Presidential Difference, Part II


Tuesday, September 19

Presidential Personality and Presidential Greatness


Thursday, September 21

Why Presidents Succeed


Tuesday, September 26

The Politics Presidents Make


Thursday, September 28

Image Making in Presidential Advertising


Tuesday, October 3

Morality Salience and Presidential Leadership


Thursday, October 5

Image Making in Presidential Campaign Journalism


Tuesday, October 10

Image Making in Presidential Debates

Thursday, October 12

Midterm Exam

Fall Break

Thursday, October 19

George Washington, Part I


Tuesday, October 24

George Washington, Part II

Thursday, October 26

**Abraham Lincoln, Part I**


Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865

Tuesday, October 31

**Abraham Lincoln, Part II**


Thursday, November 2

**Independent Study: No Class Meeting**

Tuesday, November 7

**John F. Kennedy, Part I**


Thursday, November 9

**John F. Kennedy, Part II**

Tuesday, November 14

Ronald Reagan, Part I


Thursday, November 16

Ronald Reagan, Part II


Tuesday, November 21

Bill Clinton, Part I


Thanksgiving Vacation
Tuesday, November 28

Bill Clinton, Part II


Thursday, November 30

Student Presentations

Tuesday, December 5

Student Presentations

Thursday, December 7

Student Presentations and Wrap Up