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* and *Inventing the Job of President* by Fred I. Greenstein, *George W. Bush and Redemptive Dream* by Dan P. McAdams, *To the Best of My Ability* edited by James M. McPherson, and *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief* authored by McPherson, and *The Politics Presidents Make* by Stephen Skowronek. Assigned articles or chapters are posted on Course Reserves, and the Course Reserve number is listed next to the readings (e.g., CR1).

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, depending on whether you are assigned an odd or an even number. Be sure to include a question that you would like us to discuss in class. The comments are due by noon 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 Monday February 20.

4. There will be an exam on the material from the second part of the course on Monday April 16. Part of that exam will ask you to discuss the president or presidents about whom you are writing your paper (see 5. below).
5. A paper of approximately 15 pages is due on Friday April 27 at 5:00 PM. We will schedule meetings shortly after spring vacation for you to discuss your paper with me. 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.

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

Class Schedule and Readings

Monday, January 9

Introduction

Wednesday, January 11

Meet The Presidents


Monday, January 16 (Odd numbers email)

The Presidential Character, Part I


Wednesday, January 18 (Even numbers email)

The Presidential Difference


Greenstein, F.I. (2009) *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Barack Obama*. Chapter 1, The presidential difference, pp. 1-9; Chapter 2, The Virtuosic leadership of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, pp. 11-25; Chapter 4, The Unexpected Eisenhower, pp. 43-58; Chapter 6, Lyndon Johnson and the Primacy of Politics, pp. 75-89


Monday, January 23 (Odd numbers email)

FDR


Wednesday, January 25 (Even numbers email)

Personality and Presidential Greatness


Monday, January 30 (Odd numbers email)

The Politics Presidents Make


Wednesday, February 1 (Even numbers email)

The Presidential Character, Part II


Monday, February 6 (Odd numbers email)

Richard Nixon


Wednesday, February 8 (Even numbers email)

Image Making in Presidential Advertising

Monday, February 13 (Odd numbers email)

**Image Making in Presidential Debates**


Wednesday, February 15 (Even numbers email)

**Image Making in Presidential Campaign Journalism**


Monday, February 20

**Midterm Exam**

Wednesday, February 22 (Odd numbers email)

**George Washington, Part I**


Monday, February 27 (Even numbers email)

**George Washington, Part II**

Wednesday, February 29 (Odd numbers email)

George Washington, Part III


SPRING BREAK, March 2-March 12

Monday, March 12 (Even numbers email)

Abraham Lincoln, Part I


Wednesday, March 14 (Odd numbers email)

Abraham Lincoln, Part II


Monday, March 19 (Even numbers email)

Abraham Lincoln, Part III

Wednesday, March 21 (Odd numbers email)

Harry Truman


Monday, March 26 (Even numbers email)

John F. Kennedy, Part I


Wednesday, March 28 (Odd numbers email)

John F. Kennedy, Part II


Monday, April 2 (Even numbers email)

Ronald Reagan


Wednesday, April 4 (Odd numbers email)

Bill Clinton


Monday, April 9 (Even numbers email)

George W. Bush


Wednesday, April 11

Barack Obama and the Election of 2012

Monday, April 16

Exam 2

Wednesday, April 18

Review and Conclusions