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; *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* by Doris Kearns Goodwin; *The Presidential Difference and Inventing the Job of President* by Fred I. Greenstein; *George W. Bush and the Redemptive Dream* by Dan P. McAdams; *Abraham Lincoln* by James M. McPherson; *Where They Stand* by Robert W. Merry; 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 Tuesday’s or Thursday’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 Thursday, February 25.

4. There will be an exam on the material from the second part of the course on Tuesday, April 19. 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 Thursday April 28 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.

6. The class is going to visit Mount Vernon, George Washington’s home on the Potomac River, on Friday April 8. All students must take this trip. We leave on a bus at 9:00 AM and depart Mount Vernon at 3:00 PM. With any luck, we’ll be back at UR by 5:00 PM. Lunch will be served at Mount Vernon.

Your course grade will be based on each of the first five requirements above, weighed equally, and any relevant consideration from Mount Vernon.

Class Schedule and Readings

Tuesday, January 12

Introduction

Thursday, January 14

Meet the Presidents


Tuesday, January 19 (Odd numbers email)

The Presidential Character, Part I


Thursday, January 21 (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


Tuesday, January 26 (Odd numbers email)

FDR


Thursday, January 28 (Even numbers email)

Personality and Presidential Greatness


**Tuesday, February 2 (Odd numbers email)**

The Politics Presidents Make


**Thursday, February 4 (Even numbers email)**

Richard Nixon, Part I


**Tuesday, February 9 (Odd numbers email)**

Richard Nixon, Part II


**Thursday, February 11 (Even numbers email)**
George Washington, Part I


Tuesday, February 16 (Odd numbers email)

George Washington, Part II


Thursday, February 18 (Even numbers email)

Abraham Lincoln, Part I


Tuesday, February 23 (Odd numbers email)

Abraham Lincoln, Part II


Thursday, February 25

Midterm Exam

Tuesday, March 1 (Even numbers email)

Harry Truman, Part I


**Thursday, March 3 (Odd numbers email)**

**Harry Truman, Part II**


**SPRING BREAK, March 4 -14**

**Tuesday, March 15 (Even numbers email)**

**Dwight David Eisenhower**


**Thursday, March 17 (Odd numbers email)**

**John F. Kennedy, Part I**


Tuesday, March 22 (Even numbers email)

**John F. Kennedy, Part II**


Thursday, March 24 (Odd numbers email)

**Lyndon B. Johnson, Part I**


Tuesday, March 29 (Even numbers email)

**Lyndon B. Johnson, Part II**


Thursday, March 31 (Odd numbers email)

**Ronald Reagan**


Tuesday, April 5 (Even numbers email)

**George Herbert Walker Bush**

**Thursday, April 7 (Odd numbers email)**

**Bill Clinton**


**Tuesday, April 12 (Even numbers email)**

**George W. Bush**


**Thursday, April 14**

**Barack Obama and the Election of 2016**

Tuesday, April 19

Exam 2

Thursday, April 21

Review and Conclusions
**Awarding of Credit**

To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities.

[http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

**Disability Accommodations**

Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams.

[http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html)

**Honor System**

The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”

[http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/)

**Religious Observance**

Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.

[http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html)