



# The Presidency and the Executive Branch

**GVPT 475**

**Fall 2018**

## Course Purpose and Description:

Many of us can name twenty or more American presidents, but my experience suggests that few of us can name more than a half dozen Speakers of the House or Chief Justices of the Supreme Court. Though the founders clearly thought of Congress as the most powerful branch and many Anti-Federalists were most concerned about the power of the national judiciary, it is the presidents and the presidency that draw our attention and our collective political interest. In this class, we will discuss the development of the presidency, its place in our constitutional system, and the issues that a single executive raises in a democracy. We will also spend time thinking about the personal qualities associated with effective executive leadership, the extent to which our current electoral system selects individuals capable of assuming the vast responsibilities of the office, and the president's role in the policymaking process.

## Course Learning Objectives:

Students should be able to do the following:

1. Describe and explain the historical and philosophical foundations of the American presidency.
2. Articulate and evaluate the standard theories of presidential power.
3. Evaluate the president's role in the policymaking process.
4. Explain the various relationships between the president and other political actors.
5. Understand the dynamics and significance of presidential leadership.
6. Describe the presidential selection process and explain the social, economic, and demographic factors that drive presidential election outcomes.
7. Analyze the empirical claims of others related to the political dynamics associated with the presidency and the executive branch.
8. Effectively communicate—orally and in written form—the students' own independent empirical claims related to the political dynamics associated with the presidency and the executive branch.

## Course Requirements:

Beginning **August 30, 2018**, each student will be fully responsible for acquiring information sent by me through the *ELMS* website for this class (see [elms.umd.edu](http://elms.umd.edu))

**Dr. Irwin L. Morris**

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## Class Meets

Tuesdays & Thursdays  
9:30am – 10:45am  
Tydings 1102

## Office Hours

Tydings 3140B  
Tuesday & Thursday  
11:00am-12:00pm  
and by appointment

## Prerequisites

GVPT 170 & GVPT 241

## Course Communication

Time sensitive information will be distributed via ELMS announcements. You are welcome to contact me via ELMS or email. While I expect this is information you already know, helpful guidance on writing professional emails can be found at [ter.ps/email](http://ter.ps/email).

The course includes four graded components: three (3) exams (including the final exam), a group project or individual paper, and classroom/discussion section participation. Your final grade will be based on your performance on these components. The weights of the various graded components for the determination of your final grade are as follows:

Mid-term exams	40% (20% for each exam)
Final exam	25%
Group Project (or Individual Paper)	20%
Classroom participation	15%

Both exams will involve the identification of terms/concepts and one or more essay questions. Students should arrive at class with no more in their hands than a UMD student ID and pencils. Exam books will be provided. Students will not be allowed to use electronic devices such as cell phones or computers during the exam. Further information about the group project/individual paper requirement will be forthcoming. Attendance, evidence of preparation, and consistent and significant involvement in class activities and discussions are all important components of classroom participation. Also, students should be aware that make-up exams might differ from those given in class. On a related note, I do not -- as a general rule -- give Incompletes. Obviously, students are required to abide by the standards of academic integrity established by the university.

### *Grades*

Grades are not given, but earned. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually (not curved). If earning a particular grade is important to you, please speak with me at the beginning of the semester so that I can offer some helpful suggestions for achieving your goal.

All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades (including the exams), or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet in my office.

Late work will not be accepted for course credit so please plan to have it submitted well before the scheduled deadline. I am happy to discuss any of your grades with you, and if I have made a mistake I will immediately correct it. Any formal grade disputes must be submitted in writing and within one week of receiving the grade.

Final letter grades are assigned based on the percentage of total assessment points earned. To be fair to everyone I have to establish clear standards and apply them consistently, so please understand that being close to a cutoff is not the same this as making the cut (89.99  $\neq$  90.00). It would be unethical to make exceptions for some and not others.

Final Grade Cutoffs							
+	96.00%	+	86.00%	+	76.00%	+	66.00%
A	93.00%	B	83.00%	C	73.00%	D	63.00%
F	<60.0%						
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%

*Required Texts:*

- The American Presidency: A Very Short Introduction.* 2016. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Charles O. Jones. Oxford University Press. [CJ]
- The Strategic President: Persuasion and Opportunity in Presidential Leadership.* 2012 (paperback). George C. Edwards. Princeton University Press. [GE]
- The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Barack Obama.* 2009. (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Fred I. Greenstein. Princeton University Press. [FG]
- Relic: How Our Constitution Undermines Effective Government.* 2016. William G. Howell and Terry M. Moe. Basic Books. [HM]

You are also expected to read a newspaper of record on a regular basis. If you have a question about a specific paper, please see me.

## Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit [www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html](http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html) for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

## Course-Specific Policies

**No computers, phones or tablet devices are permitted during our class meetings.** I understand and have considered arguments for permitting laptop and tablet computers in the classroom. However, in my experience (and based on the research evidence) the reality is that they present an irresistible distraction and detract from the cooperative learning environment. Researchers have found that these distractions do in fact interfere with learning and active participation. For that reason, the use of computers and phones will not be permitted during class meetings (except when required for ADS accommodations). If a computer is needed to accomplish a class objective for the day I will provide it or give you advanced notice to bring one with you.

I expect you to make the responsible and respectful decision to refrain from using your cellphone in class. If you have critical communication to attend to, please excuse yourself and return when you are ready. For more information about the science behind the policy watch: <http://youtu.be/WwPaw3Fx5Hk>

## Get Some Help!

You are expected to take personal responsibility for you own learning. This includes acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. Everyone can benefit from some expert guidance on time management, note taking, and exam preparation, so I encourage you to consider visiting <http://ter.ps/learn> and schedule an appointment with an academic coach. Sharpen your communication skills (and improve your grade) by visiting <http://ter.ps/writing> and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center. Finally, if you just need someone to talk to, visit <http://www.counseling.umd.edu>.



Everything is free because you have already paid for it, and **everyone needs help...** all you have to do is ask for it.

## Names/Pronouns and Self Identifications

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit [trans.umd.edu](http://trans.umd.edu) to learn more.

Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

**General Course Outline:** With the exception of the first day's readings, you are expected to complete the readings for a particular day prior to class that day.

Tu - 8/28 - Course Introduction

Th - 8/30 - The Nature of the Social Scientific Endeavor, Part 1

--Chapters 1 and 2 from *The American Presidency: An Analytical Approach* by Irwin L. Morris (2010, Cambridge University Press).

Tu - 9/4 - The Nature of the Social Scientific Endeavor, Part 2

--Chapters 1 and 2 from *The American Presidency: An Analytical Approach* by Irwin L. Morris (2010, Cambridge University Press).

Th - 9/6 - Presidential Basics, Part 1

--CJ, Chapter 1 and 2

--Federalist Papers #10 and #51

Tu - 9/11 - Presidential Basics, Part 2

--Federalist Papers #'s 67-77

--Anti-Federalist writings:

Cato IV, *New York Journal*, 11/9/1787

Old Whig V, *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, 11/1/1787

Th - 9/13 - Presidential Elections—The Campaign for the Nomination

--CJ, Chapter 3

--Atkeson, Lonna Rae. 1998. "Divisive Primaries and General Election Outcomes: Another Look at Presidential Campaigns." *American Journal of Political Science*. 42:256-271.

--Amber, Wichowsky and Sarah E. Niebler. "Narrow Victories and Hard Games: Revisiting the Primary Divisiveness Hypothesis." *American Politics Research*. 38(6):1052-1071.

--Southwell, Priscilla L. 2010. "The Effect of Nomination Divisiveness on the 2008 Presidential Election." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 43(2):255-258.

Tu - 9/18 - Presidential Elections—The General Election

--CJ, Chapter 3

--Norpoth, Helmut. 2016. "Primary Model Predicts Trump Victory." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 49(4): 649-654.

--Abramowitz, Alan I. 2016. "Will Time for Change Mean Time for Trump." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 49(4): 659-660.

--Campbell, James E. 2016. "The Trial-Heat and Seats-in-Trouble Forecasts of the 2016 Presidential and Congressional Elections." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 49(4): 664-668.

--Erikson, Robert S. and Christopher Wlezien. 2016. "Forecasting the Presidential Vote with Leading Economic Indicators and the Polls." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 49(4): 669-672.

Th - 9/20 - 2016 Presidential Elections  
--TBA

Tu - 9/25 - 2016 Presidential Elections  
--TBA

Th - 9/27 - Exam 1

Tu - 10/2 - Insider Politics and the Power of Persuasion I  
--Chapters 1, 3-5 from *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, Richard Neustadt (1990, Free Press).

Th - 10/4 -- Taking it to the People I  
--Chapters 1, 2, and 8 from *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, Samuel Kernell (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007, CQ Press).

Tu - 10/9 - Time and the Presidency I  
--Chapters 1-3 from *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, Stephen Skowronek (1997, Belknap-Harvard University Press).  
--Nichols, Curt. 2015. "Reagan Reorders the Political Regime: A Historical-Institutional Approach to the Analysis of Change." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 45:703-726.

Th - 10/11 - Institutionalism Redux  
--Preface, Chapter 1, and Chapter 7 from *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action*, William G. Howell (2003, Princeton University Press).

Tu - 10/16 - The Unitary Executive: An *Imperial* Presidency?  
--Rudalevige, Andrew. "The Decline and Resurgence and Decline (and Resurgence?) of Congress: Charting a New Imperial Presidency." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 36:506-524.  
--Lowande, Kenneth and Thomas Gray. 2017. "Public Perception of the Presidential Toolkit." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 47:432-447.  
--Reeves, Andrew, Jon C. Rogowski, Min Hee Seo, Andrew R. Stone. 2017. "The Contextual Determinants of Support for Unilateral Action." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 47:448-470.

Th - 10/18 - Strategic Presidency  
--GE, entire

Tu - 10/23 - Strategic Presidency  
--GE, entire

Th - 10/25 - Exam 2

Tu- 10/30 - Congress and the President  
--CJ, Chapter 6  
--Binder, Sarah. 2015. "The Dysfunctional Congress." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 18:85-101.  
--Beckmann, Matthew N. 2016. "Up the Hill and Across the Aisle: Discovering the Path to Bipartisanship in Washington." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 41:269-295.

--Schorpp, Susanne and Charles J. Finocchiaro. 2017. "Congress and the President in Times of War." *American Politics Research*. 45:840-865.

Th - 11/1 - The President and the Courts

--Stiglitz, Edward H. 2014. "Appointment Politics and the Ideological Composition of the Judiciary." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. 39:27-54.

--Cameron, Charles M., Jonathan P. Kastellec, and Jee-Kwang Park. 2013. "Voting for Justices: Change and Continuity in Confirmation Voting." *Journal of Politics*. 75:283-299.

Tu - 11/6 - The Executive Branch

--CJ, Chapters 4 and 5

--Kennedy, Joshua B. 2015. "Do This! Do That! And Nothing Will Happen": Executive Orders and Bureaucratic Responsiveness." *American Politics Research*. 34:59-82.

--West, William F. 2015. "The Administrative Presidency as Reactive Oversight: Implications for Positive and Normative Theory." *Public Administration Review*. 75:523-533.

Th - 11/8 - The President and Domestic Policy

--CJ, Chapter 6

--Kriner, Douglas L. and Andrew Reeves. 2015. "Presidential Particularism and Divide-the-Dollar Politics." *American Political Science Review*. 109:155-171.

--Kriner, Douglas L. and Andrew Reeves. 2015. "Presidential Particularism in Disaster Declarations and Military Base Closures." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 45:679-702.

Tu - 11/13 - The President and Economic Policy

--Chapter 10, from *The American Presidency: An Analytical Approach* by Irwin L. Morris (2010, Cambridge University Press)

--Weatherford, Stephen M. 2009. "Comparing Presidents' Economic Policy Leadership." *Perspectives on Politics*. 7:537-560.

--Kane, John V. 2016. "Control, Accountability, and Constraints: Rethinking Perceptions of Presidential Responsibility for the Economy." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 46(2):335-364.

--Healy, Andrew and Neil Malhotra. 2013. "Retrospective Voting Reconsidered." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 16:285-306.

Th - 11/15 - Project Work Day

Tu - 11/20 - The President and Foreign Policy

--Wildavsky, Aaron. 1966. "The Two Presidencies." *Trans-Action*. 4:7-14.

--Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis. 2008. "Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Reevaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis." *Journal of Politics*. 70:1-16.

--Marshall, Bryan W. and Brandon C. Prins. 2016. "When Political Gridlock Reigns in Presidential Foreign Policy: Policy Availability and the Role of Congress." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 46:763-790.

Th - 11/22 - *Thanksgiving*

Tu - 11/27 -- Presidential Leadership I

- Chapter 1 in *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House* by James David Barber (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1992, Prentice Hall).
- FG, chapters 1-7
- Greenstein, Fred I. 2006. "Presidential Difference in the Early Republic: The Highly Disparate Leadership Styles of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 36:373-390.

Th - 11/29 - Presidential Leadership II

- FG, chapters 8-14
- Greenstein, Fred I. 2010. "The Policy-Driven Leadership of James K. Polk: Making the Most of a Weak Presidency." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 40:725-33.

Tu - 12/4 - Presidential Reform

- CJ, Chapter 7
- HM, entire

Th - 12/6 - Presidential Greatness

- Curry, Jill L. and Irwin L. Morris. 2010. "The Contemporary Presidency: Explaining Presidential Greatness: the Roles of Peace and Prosperity?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 40:515-530.
- Newman, Brian and Adrian Davis. 2016. "Polls and Elections, Character and Political Time as Sources of Presidential Greatness." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 46:411-433.

**Final Exam - TBA**

**Note:** This is a tentative schedule, and subject to change as necessary - monitor the course ELMS page for current deadlines. In the unlikely event of a prolonged university closing, or an extended absence from the university, adjustments to the course schedule, deadlines, and assignments will be made based on the duration of the closing and the specific dates missed.