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).

Dr. Irwin L. Morris
imorris@umd.edu

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.
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 as making the cut (89.99 ≠ 90.00). It would be unethical to make exceptions for some and not others.
Final Grade Cutoffs

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**Required Texts:**


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 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 your 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 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

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

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

Tu – 9/18 – Presidential Elections—The General Election
--CJ, Chapter 3
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

Tu – 10/9 – Time and the Presidency I

Th – 10/11 – Institutionalism Redux

Tu – 10/16 – The Unitary Executive: An Imperial Presidency?

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

Th – 11/1 – The President and the Courts

Tu – 11/6 – The Executive Branch
--CJ, Chapters 4 and 5

Th – 11/8 – The President and Domestic Policy
--CJ, Chapter 6

Tu – 11/13 – The President and Economic Policy

Th – 11/15 – Project Work Day

Tu – 11/20 – The President and Foreign Policy

Th – 11/22 – *Thanksgiving*

Tu – 11/27 – Presidential Leadership I
--FG, chapters 1-7

**Th – 11/29 – Presidential Leadership II**
--FG, chapters 8-14

**Tu – 12/4 – Presidential Reform**
--CJ, Chapter 7
--HM, entire

**Th – 12/6 – Presidential Greatness**

**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.