

POLS 3310 01 | Fall 2017
American Presidency

Dr. Marcus E. Hendershot,
Assistant Professor

Schreiner University
School of Liberal Arts

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Class Hours

Monday: 4:00pm to 5:15pm-Weir 202
 Tuesday:
 Wednesday: 4:00pm to 5:15pm-Weir 202
 Thursday:
 Friday:

Office Hours

Monday: 10:00am to 11:30am
 Tuesday: 11:00am to Noon
 Wednesday: 10:00am to 11:30am
 Thursday: 11:00am to Noon
 Friday: 8:00am to 9:00am

I. Course Description

It is perhaps the most coincidental timing imaginable for this course material. We as a country have just been through a bruising presidential election cycle wherein much of the conventional wisdom about how these campaigns are waged and won was disproven. We are witnessing a nascent populist movement struggle with an ingrained political structure that has been the foundation of American political debate for roughly 40 years or more. We are also beginning to see the collective influence of rapid technological changes and ongoing generational shifts that act as destabilizing forces within the societal status quo. All of that makes the material we will cover entirely relevant to our lives, but it may also prove that our collective knowledge of the presidency falls well short of explaining the stories popping up on our smart phones this semester.

With that said, we are going to do our best to distinguish the random and systematic aspects of contemporary presidential politics. We will take a critical view toward the political science literature on the presidency and attempt to understand its strengths and weaknesses in light of current events.

We will express that knowledge and critical thinking skills in different assignments and examinations throughout the semester. We will also conduct an original research project that evaluates the prospective outcome of a policy debate or utilizes historical contrast to understand a contemporary controversy.

Our learning objectives are four-fold this semester:

- 1) Gain a working knowledge of the political science literature on the presidency
- 2) Develop the analytical skills and the ability to project future policy outcomes
- 3) Develop the research skills necessary to frame a policy-debate or controversy
- 4) Learn effective ways of communicating the knowledge gained in this course

By the end of this semester, we almost certainly will not be able to authoritatively explain the sea change that envelopes presidential politics at this time. However, with some effort and skill development you will be better prepared to understand how it will affect your future career paths and life goals. That truly is the value of this type of knowledge.

II. Required Text and Readings

The following text is required and will act as a general resource for course lectures and topics:

Nelson, Michael. 2014. *The Presidency and the Political System*, 10th Edition.
Washington DC, CQ Press

ISBN: 9781452240435

Given the timeliness of our topic, this text will be supplemented with topical readings from newspapers, journals, and books. These materials will be made available to students in Adobe PDF format through the Schreiner ONE system, which provides a web-based resource for the course that will act as the current calendar of readings/lectures:

Schreiner ONE

<https://info.schreiner.edu/ICS/>

Help Desk: (830) 792-7344

III. Calendar of Topics

Wednesday	08/23/2017	<u>Lecture</u> Introduction to the Course & Political Science
Monday	08/28/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Overview of the Presidency Lyn Ragsdale, "Studying the Presidency: Why Presidents Need Political Scientists" (p.33)
Tuesday	08/29/2017	<i><u>Drop / Add Deadline</u></i>
Wednesday	08/30/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Paul J. Quirk, "Presidential Competence" (p.134)
Monday	09/04/2017	<i><u>Labor Day – No Class</u></i>
Wednesday	09/06/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Getting to the White House Lara M. Brown, "The Presidency and the Nominating Process: Aspirants, Parties and Selections" (p.191)

Monday	09/11/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> George C. Edwards III, "The Faulty Premises of the Electoral College" (p.214)
Wednesday	09/13/2017	<u>Film</u> Michael Cavanaugh, "Donald Trump will win in a landslide. The mind behind 'Dilbert' explains why" <i>Washington Post</i> , 21 March 2016 (available on S1) Eli Stokols and Ben Schreckinger, "How Trump Did It" <i>Politico</i> , 1 February 2016 (available on S1) PBS Frontline, <i>Trump's Road to the White House</i>
Friday	09/15/2017	<u>Presidential Competence Assignment due</u>
Monday	09/18/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Party Organizations & Realignment Sidney M. Milkis, "The Presidency and Political Parties" (p.304)
Wednesday	09/20/2017	<u>Lecture / Video Presentation</u> Living Room Candidate – Presidential Campaign Ads Michael Lind, "This is what the Future of American Politics Looks Like" <i>Politico.com</i> , 22 May 2016 (available on S1)
Thursday	09/21/2017	<u>4 Week Grades Due</u>
Monday	09/25/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Contemporary Issues in Campaigns Nate Silver, "The Real Story of 2016" <i>FiveThirtyEight.com</i> , 19 January 2017 (available on S1)
Wednesday	09/27/2017	Justin Levitt, "A Comprehensive Investigation of Voter Impersonation finds 31 Credible Incidents Out of One Billion Ballots Cast" <i>Washington Post</i> , 6 August 2014 (available on S1) Angie Drobnic Holan, "2016 Lie of the Year: Fake News" <i>Politifact</i> , 13 December 2016 (available on S1)
Monday	10/02/2017	<u>Midterm Examination</u>
Wednesday	10/04/2017	<u>Midterm Examination</u>
Monday	10/09/2017	<u>Fall Break – No Class</u>

Wednesday	10/11/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Midterm Results & Analysis
Thursday	10/12/2017	<u>Midterm Grades Due</u>
Monday	10/16/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> The Legislative Context Matthew J. Dickinson, "The President and Congress" (p.406) PBS Frontline: Cliffhanger (watch out of class)
Wednesday	10/18/2017	<u>Presentations / Group Think</u> Research Project Topic / Theory Development
Monday	10/23/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> The Trump Agenda Russell Berman, "John McCain's 'No' Vote Sinks Republicans' 'Skinny Repeal' Plan" The Atlantic, 28 July 2017 (available on S1) Jeff Davis, "The Rule that Broke the Senate" Politico Magazine, 15 October 2017 (available on S1) Mike DeBonis and Ed O'Keefe, "Trump's Obamacare attack heralds new health-care battles on Capital Hill" Washington Post, 13 October 2017 (available on S1)
Wednesday	10/25/2017	The Trump Agenda Daniel J. Tichenor, "The Presidency and Interest Groups: Allies, Adversaries, and Policy Leadership" (p.272) Lisa Mascaro, "Republican Lawmakers troubles deepen as Koch donors and Bannon take aim" Los Angeles Times, 16 October 2017 (available on S1)
Thursday	10/26/2017	<u>Drop Deadline</u>
Monday	10/30/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Bureaucracy & Cabinet David E. Lewis and Terry M. Moe, "The Presidency and the Bureaucracy: The Levers of Presidential Control" (p.374) Todd Purdum, "Team of Mascots" <i>Vanity Fair</i> , 6 June 2012 (available on S1)

Wednesday	11/01/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> The Relationship with the Media Elvin T. Lim, "The Presidency and the Media: Two Faces of Democracy" (p.258) James Warren, "Two Rivals, One Truth" <i>Vanity Fair</i> , September 2017 (available on S1)
Monday	11/06/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Conceptions of Presidential Power Roger B. Porter, "The Three Presidencies: Power and Policy" (p.500)
Wednesday	11/08/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Stephen Skowronek, "The Development of Presidential Power: Conservative Insurgency and Constitutional Construction" (p.66)
Monday	11/13/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Andrew Rudalevige, "The Presidency and Unilateral Power: A Taxonomy" (p.473)
Wednesday	11/15/2017	The Commander In Chief and Political Crisis Andrew J. Polsky, "The Presidency at War: The Window of Agency in Wartime Presidential Leadership" (p.525)
Monday	11/20/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis" <i>American Political Science Review</i> , September 1969 (available on S1)
Wednesday	11/22/2017	<i>Thanksgiving – No Class</i>
Monday	11/27/2017	<u>Film</u> Roger Donaldson, <i>Thirteen Days</i>
Wednesday	11/29/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Legacies and Conspiracy Theory Marc Landy and Sidney M. Milkis, "The Presidency in History: Leading from the Eye of the Storm" (p.95)
Monday	12/04/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> Philip Shenon and Larry J. Sabato, "How the CIA Came to Doubt the Official Story of JFK's Murder" <i>Politico Magazine</i> , 3 August 2017 (available on S1)

Wednesday	12/06/2017	<u>Lecture / Discussion</u> [Open Date]
Wednesday	12/13/2017	<i>Final Examination</i> 1:30pm to 3:30pm

IV. Course Requirements / Grading

Roughly half of the final course grade will be associated with a midterm and final exam. These exams will comprise of fixed answer (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, matching or diagram questions) and open answer questions (e.g., short answer or essay questions). In addition to these two examinations, we will have a short paper assignment and a research project. The first will be a short written assignment related to the literature on presidential competence. The research project will focus on a prospective policy debate or current controversy. I will be flexible on the final format for this project. I will individually negotiate the criteria for each project and want to encourage you to take advantage of Schreiner University's Center for Digital Learning when contemplating your project.

The remainder of the grade will be attributable to a measure of attendance, which will be recorded for each class session. An excused absence will be allowed per university guidelines, *but prior notice is mandatory*. Attendance will begin after the course roster is finalized following the initial drop-add deadline. I will post a complete attendance policy to the online system with additional detail.

Occasionally, a student will be traveling for academic or athletic events during a regularly scheduled examination period. Please contact me the week before the examination, so that we can arrange an alternative time/format.

Students with a documented medical excuse that conflicts with a course assignment should likewise contact me to establish an alternative time for submission / completion. All others that miss an assignment or exam deadline potentially are subject to a late penalty. Typically, I will assess a 5% penalty for each school day that it is delayed.

The breakdown of the course grade will be the following:

	Requirement	Weight
1.	Attendance	8%
2.	Competence Assignment	14%
3.	Midterm Exam	25%
4.	Research Project	28%
5.	Final Exam	25%
		100%

Numerical	Letter
100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59-0	F

V. Policies and Guidelines

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct Policies

Activity in this course is subject to the *Schreiner University Code of Academic Conduct* and the *Student Conduct Code*, both of which are located within the *Student Handbook*:

<http://www.schreiner.edu/student-life/student-handbook.aspx>

Schreiner University Code of Academic Conduct (pp. 63-65)

These rules govern the standards and penalties for violations of academic integrity, such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, collusion and other questionable practices. Broadly speaking, an incident of *academic dishonesty* occurs when a student presents another's work (in whole or part) as his or her own. More specifically, *plagiarism* is the act of stealing or using the ideas or written text of another and representing them as one's own.

These types of behaviors can occur within exam answers, research papers, and other course assignments.

You should know that plagiarism and any other forms of cheating will not be tolerated and it will be handled according to the appropriate provision within these university regulations. Student papers are subject to review by a plagiarism checking service (e.g., turnitin.com). Violations will be pursued and may result in an F grade for this course and possible expulsion from the University.

Student Code of Conduct (pp. 38-46)

The *Student Handbook* also addresses more general matters of personal conduct, such as violations of criminal law, fraud, alcohol/drug use, student hazing, and sexual misconduct or violence (see also, Title IX below). Although these particular items are less likely to be encountered within a classroom setting, an issue could present itself. To the extent that this set of policies become relevant, we will abide by the intent and purpose of Schreiner University's *Student Code of Conduct*.

Title IX: Sexual Discrimination/Harassment/Misconduct/Assault

Schreiner University is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from inappropriate conduct based on gender. As required by *Title IX*, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, and it encourages any student or employee who thinks that he or she has been subjected to sex discrimination, sexual harassment (including sexual violence) or sexual misconduct by another student, member of the faculty or staff, or campus visitor or contractor, to immediately report the incident to any of the individuals or offices listed below:

Sarah Campfield
Director of Residence Life
(830) 792-7283
scampfield@schreiner.edu

Dr. Charles Hueber
Dean of Students
(830) 792-7278
cmhueber@schreiner.edu

Wendy L. Blaettner, PHR
Director of Human Resource Services
(830) 792-7375
wblaettner@schreiner.edu

David Geherels
Director of Student Activities
(830) 792-7465
dgeherels@schreiner.edu

Dr. Diana Comuzzie
Provost & VP for Academic Affairs
(830) 792-7371
comuzzie@schreiner.edu

Schreiner University takes acts of sexual violence and sexual harassment seriously. In an effort to comply with the *Violence Against Women Act* and the Office for Civil Rights federal

guidelines, all students are required to complete training on sexual violence prevention. Along these lines, you should already be aware of these policies and understand that you are expected to abide by them.

For those who have confidentiality concerns regarding a Title IX report, you should know that faculty and staff are *Mandatory Reporters* under this act. If you discuss a potential violation with a professor, then he or she *must* report it.

You do have a couple of other options for consultation. First, you may take advantage of Schreiner University Counseling Services, which has stronger confidentiality protections. You may also utilize the Campus Conduct Hotline as an anonymous means of reporting questionable conduct:

Kim Woods

Director of Counseling Services

Mountaineer Fitness Center | CMB 6220

(830) 792-7279 | KJWoods@schreiner.edu

<https://www.schreiner.edu/student-life/counseling.aspx>

Campus Conduct Hotline

(866) 943-5787

Given this course is in the discipline of political science we will throughout the semester be discussing issues and policies that are discomfoting or controversial in some manner. We will make every attempt to take an academic orientation toward these topics, but students and faculty can and do make errors that can be insulting or off putting to others. Feel free to contact me in a confidential manner and we will address any such issue.

Matters of Accommodation

Schreiner University supports the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and welcomes requests for reasonable accommodation. The University in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability or status as a veteran in any of its policies practices or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid and educational services.

Every effort will be made to make accommodations for those who fall under the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* and the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Students desiring academic adjustments/auxiliary aids should contact:

Dr. Jude Gallik

Director of Learning Support Services/Section 504 Coordinator

(830) 792-7258 | jgallik@schreiner.edu

In terms of accommodations and this particular course, please contact me directly and we will handle it in a discrete manner according to University guidelines.

Unanticipated Events, Incomplete Grades & Withdrawals

On some occasions, a student will come down with an extended illness, or get called up for military duty, etc. These situations will be dealt with on a case by case basis and are often resolved through withdrawal from the course or through an incomplete grade agreement between the student, academic advisor and professor. I am extremely reluctant to go

forward with an incomplete grade in any course. In the event that a substantive cause is present to do so, we will proceed through the guidelines found in the *Student Handbook*.

Withdrawal from this course will be governed by the University's procedure and applicable deadlines. Students contemplating withdrawing from the university during the term, or not returning after a break, should contact the Registrar. In addition to discussing reasons for withdrawing, it is very important that the withdrawal policy be followed, so that severe financial problems can be avoided. Please refer to the *Schreiner University Catalog* for more information about withdrawals.