

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, SUNY

POS 332
The Presidency
MWF 10:25-11:20

Bruce Miroff
Spring 2019

These required books are available at the campus bookstore and from online book sellers:

Sidney Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development, 1776-2014*, 7th edition (CQ Press, 2016)

Michael Nelson, ed., *The Presidency and the Political System*, 11th edition (CQ Press, 2018)

Bruce Miroff, *Presidents on Political Ground: Leaders in Action and What They Face* (University Press of Kansas, 2016, 2018)

Additional readings are on Blackboard (BB)

Course description:

POS 332 is a broad survey of the American presidency. Theoretical, historical, and empirical studies will be utilized to approach the presidency from a variety of angles. The goal is for students to understand the presidency as scholars have analyzed it and to weave together in their own terms the resources provided to them by the course. The course will combine lectures, class discussions, and group work. Grades will be based upon two papers and four quizzes.

Student-focused learning objectives:

1. To gain a broad understanding of the American presidency as scholars have presented it.
2. To examine different schools of thought on the presidency with a critical eye.
3. To develop the student's own perspective based on the knowledge gained from the course.
4. To improve the student's analytical skills and writing abilities.

COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 23	Introduction to the course
Jan. 25	The constitutional presidency
28	Reading: Milkis and Nelson, <i>The American Presidency</i> , Ch. 1, 2
Jan. 30	Game #1: Redesigning the constitutional presidency
	Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Appendix (Constitution: Articles I and II, Amendments XII, XX, XXII, XXV)
	Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 3
Feb. 1	Development of the presidency from Washington to Wilson

Feb. 4 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 4, 5, 6, 8
6
8

FIRST QUIZ ON FEBRUARY 11

Feb. 11 Theories of presidential leadership
13 Reading: Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist Papers*, #68, 70, 71 (BB)
15 Richard E. Neustadt, "The Power to Persuade" (BB)
18 Skowronek, *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*, Ch. 2, 3

Feb. 20 Presidential character and personality
 Reading: Nelson, ed., *The Presidency and the Political System*, Ch. 6

Feb. 22 The institutional presidency
25 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 5, 13, 14
27

SECOND QUIZ ON FEBRUARY 27

Mar. 1 The president and Congress
4 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 15

Mar. 6 Game #2: President and Congress: Trump, Republicans, and Democrats
 No assigned reading

Mar. 8 The president and the judiciary
 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 16

FIRST PAPER DUE ON MARCH 8

Mar. 11 The president as politician
 Reading: Miroff, *Presidents on Political Ground*, Ch. 3

Mar. 13 The president as policymaker: foreign and military affairs
15 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 19
 Miroff, Ch. 5

Mar. 25 The president as policymaker: economic and domestic affairs
27 Reading: Miroff, Ch. 2, 4

THIRD QUIZ ON MARCH 27

Mar. 29 The president and the media
 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 10

- Apr. 1 The president and the public
 Apr. 3 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 1
 Miroff, Ch. 1 (additional material on Trump will be on BB)
- Apr. 5 Game #3: President Trump, the Media, and the Public
 No assigned reading
- Apr. 8 Presidential elections
 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 7

NO CLASS ON APRIL 12

- Apr. 10 Development of the presidency from FDR to Carter
 15 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 10, 11
 17
 19

NO CLASS ON APRIL 22

- Apr. 24 The presidency of Ronald Reagan
 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 12
- Apr. 26 The presidency of Bill Clinton
 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 13

FOURTH QUIZ ON APRIL 26

- Apr. 29 The presidency of George W. Bush
 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 14
- May 1 The presidency of Barack Obama
 May 3 Reading: Milkis and Nelson, Ch. 15
 Skowronek, “Barack Obama and the Promise of Transformative Leadership” (BB)
- May 6 The presidency of Donald Trump
 8 Reading: Nelson, Ch. 20
 Additional reading to be determined later

MAKEUP QUIZ ON MAY 8

SECOND PAPER DUE ON MAY 15 (NO FINAL EXAM)

GRADES will be based on papers and quizzes. There will be four multiple-choice quizzes, with questions drawn from **both** readings and lectures. Your lowest score of the four will be dropped and your grade for the quizzes will be calculated based upon the other three. Students who miss

a quiz will be able to take a makeup quiz during the final class of the semester. There will be two papers; each has a suggested length of 7-8 double-spaced pages. Topics for the papers will be handed out in class. **Hard copies of the papers are required, and late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a grade for each two days they are late.** Grades will be computed as follows:

Cumulative grade on quizzes - 1/3; Papers – 1/3 for each paper

A-E grading scale:

A = 3.85-4.0; A- = 3.5-3.84; B+ = 3.15-3.49; B = 2.85-3.14; B- = 2.5-2.84; C+ = 2.15-2.49; C = 1.85- 2.14; C- = 1.5-1.84; D+ = 1.15-1.49; D = 0.85- 1:14; D- = 0.5-0.84; E = below 0.5

University policy on incompletes:

Incomplete. No graduation credit. A temporary grade requested by the student and assigned by the instructor ONLY when the student has nearly completed the course requirements but because of circumstances beyond the student's control the work is not completed. The incomplete should only be assigned on the basis of an agreement between the instructor and the student specifying the work to be completed and establishing a general timeline in which the work will be completed. Incompletes may NOT be resolved by auditing or registering again for a subsequent offering of the course. The date for the completion of the work may not be longer than one month before the end of the semester following that in which the incomplete is received. Once the work is completed, the instructor assigns the appropriate academic grade. The instructor may extend an incomplete for a maximum of one semester beyond the original deadline providing that the student has made contact with the instructor to request the extension. Additional extensions are NOT permitted. Any grade of *I* existing after the stated deadline shall be automatically changed to *E* or *U* according to whether or not the student is enrolled for *A-E* or *S/U* grading. Except for extenuating circumstances approved by the Office of Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, these converted grades may not be later changed. (NOTE: Students receiving financial assistance through state awards should refer to Academic Criteria for State Awards in the expenses and financial aid section of this bulletin before requesting grades of *I*.)

STUDENTS ARE REMINDED THAT ALL WORK HANDED IN MUST BE THEIR OWN. CHEATING ON QUIZZES OR PLAGIARISM ON PAPERS WILL BE SEVERELY PUNISHED.

University policy on reasonable accommodations:

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in any Department of Literacy Teaching and Learning class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (BA-120, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.

Office hours:

Rockefeller College Contact Office (Humanities 16): Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:30-12:30

Downtown Campus (Milne 216): by appointment

It is easiest to contact me by email. bmiroff@albany.edu