

BOWDOIN COLLEGE

GOVERNMENT 2005 THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Fall 2018

Professor Andrew Rudalevige

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Office Hours: Monday 2:30-4:00; Thursday 9:00-10:00; or by appointment

This course analyzes the development and modern practice of presidential leadership in the United States. We will examine the creation and evolution of the presidential office, the process of presidential selection, and presidential decision making in various policy arenas -- emphasizing the interplay between individual presidents and the presidency as an ongoing institution, as well as presidents' interaction with other political actors. Those include the other branches of government but also the president's own staff, an array of organized interests, the media, and the wider public. Throughout, the stress is on the president's need to maneuver within what Richard Neustadt called a system of "separated institutions sharing powers."

Many of the required readings will come from the books below, available through Bowdoin's on-line textbook service or other booksellers. They may also be found on reserve at H-L Library. Other readings may be found on-line, normally through links on the course's Blackboard page.

You are responsible for completing all assigned readings, even (in fact especially) those we do not have time to cover fully in class discussion. But no static reading list can keep up with events -- the presidency, as a central focus of American political life, is in many ways a moving target, now more than ever. So you should be sure to keep up to date with news and political events. Low-cost daily subscriptions to the *New York Times* and other papers are available for students, for instance; and of course many news outlets have comprehensive websites. Either way, stay current: it *will* matter.

Required books:

- Michael Nelson, ed., *The Presidency and the Political System* [P&PS], 11th ed. (Sage/CQ, 2018)
ISBN: 978-1544317298
- Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents* (Free Press, 1990)
ISBN: 978-1544317298
- Richard Reeves, *President Reagan* (Simon & Schuster, 2006)
ISBN: 978-1416531913
- John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck, *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America* (Princeton University Press, 2018)
ISBN: 978-0691174198

Course requirements. *Grades will be based on:*

- *Short review assignment* (10% of your final grade): **due October 1.**
- *Take-home midterm exam* (25%): distributed in class on October 29 and **due October 31.**
- *Policy case study* (30% total): a small-group project resulting in an in-class presentation and individual paper, on a president's decision making process and involvement in a legislative initiative of interest (10% of your final grade will reflect your group's presentation, 20% your paper). **Presentations begin the week after Thanksgiving; papers are due December 7.**
- *Final Exam* (30%): **December 12 (8:30 a.m.).** This date is set by the College well in advance and *cannot* be changed by the instructor (i.e., me). To avoid heartache for all concerned, please do NOT make travel plans that conflict with this date.
- *Course attendance and participation* will also factor into your final grade (5%). Beyond regular attendance and in-class participation (the latter, obviously, cannot happen without the former), each of you will also be responsible for researching one past president and giving a brief in-class presentation on his administration and legacy. There will be prizes! Remember that 'talking' is not equivalent to 'participation.' Active listening is a key part of deliberative conversation and engaged learning.

And keep in mind...

If you are taking this course on a Credit/D/Fail basis, a 'credit' grade requires completion of all work for the course (exams, papers, etc.).

Late papers or other assignments will not receive full credit: extensions will be granted only in advance and in exigent circumstances.

Recent research universally holds that the use of computers as notetaking devices is counterproductive: the physical act of writing enables far more recall than does typing, and foregoing a computer provides far fewer potential distractions to yourself and others sitting near you. Further, my Powerpoint slides are made available to the class at regular intervals during the semester. **Thus I ask you not to use electronic devices of any kind during class.** Obviously there may be valid reasons for exceptions to this rule (for instance, see the next paragraph) and you should certainly approach me if you feel one is warranted.

Students requiring learning or testing accommodations need to be in contact with Lesley Levy in the Student Accessibility Office within the Office of Dean of Student Affairs. You are encouraged to address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. For more detail, please see the material at <https://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/accommodations/index.shtml>

I expect all students to be aware of and abide by the Bowdoin Academic Honor Code. It goes without saying – and yet I will say it! – that you are responsible for your own work. This means following the most stringent rules of quotation and citation in your written assignments. In this course we will use *footnotes* (not bibliographic references) in the Chicago Manual of Style format,

unless otherwise specified -- see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). If you have any questions or concerns about this, please consult me and/or a reference librarian. **Plagiarism is *never* acceptable** within a community of scholars (or, frankly, anywhere else); it is grounds not only for a failing grade on a given assignment or in the course but also, potentially, for dismissal from the College.

GOVERNMENT 2005, Fall 2018: Schedule of Topics and Readings

(*) indicates on-line reading available on Blackboard. Schedule and assignments are subject to change, with notice.

I. The Individual and the Office

- *Introduction and Course Themes (August 29)*
- *Creating the Presidency (September 3)*
 - (*) Forrest McDonald, *The American Presidency*, pp. 160-81
 - (*) The Constitution of the United States of America, as amended
 - (*) *Federalist Papers*, #69-73
 - (*) "Cato," letter #4
- *The Evolution of the Office (September 5, 10)*
 - Neustadt, Ch. 1
 - P&PS: Ch. 1 (Tulis)
 - (*) Norman Mailer, "Superman Comes to the Supermarket," *Esquire* (November 1960)
 - P&PS: Ch. 4 (Milkis & Landy)
 - (*) John Dickerson, "The Impossible Presidency," *The Atlantic* (May 2018)
 - (*) Charles Kesler, "So What if Trump Breaks Norms?" *New York Times* (August 27, 2018)

Recommended primary documents:

- (*) Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, "Pacificus-Helvidius letters" (excerpts)
- (*) Theodore Roosevelt, *Autobiography* (excerpt)
- (*) William Howard Taft, *Our Chief Magistrate and His Powers* (excerpt)
- (*) *Youngstown Sheet & Tube v Sawyer* (1952)
- (*) Department of Justice, "Re: Military Interrogation of Alien Unlawful Combatants Held Outside the United States," March 14, 2003 (esp. pp. 1-10, 13)
- *Studying the President: Presidents as People (September 12)*
 - Reeves, introduction and Ch. 1
 - (*) Fred Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference* (excerpt)
 - P&PS: Ch. 6 (Nelson)
 - Neustadt, Ch. 7
 - (*) John F. Kennedy, "Excerpts from Dinner Party Conversation, January 1960"
 - (*) Dan McAdams, "The Mind of Donald Trump," *The Atlantic* (June 2016)
- *Studying the President: The Power to Persuade? (September 17)*
 - Neustadt, Ch. 2-6, skim Ch. 10

- *Studying the Presidency: Institutions > Individuals?* (September 19)
 - (*) Stephen Skowronek, "Presidents and Political Time" (note: **not** his chapter in P&PS)
 - (*) Terry Moe, "Presidents, Institutions, and Theory"

SPECIAL CLASS SESSION (4:15 pm) and EVENING EVENT (7 p.m.) -- September 20:

President Obama's White House Chief of Staff, Denis McDonough, will be at Bowdoin and has agreed to meet with our class (along with students in the Bowdoin Public Service program) separately from his plenary event in Pickard Theater. This will be at 4:15-5:00 pm in the VAC's Beam Classroom. You should also plan to attend his talk in Pickard at 7:00 pm.

Reading: (*) Chris Whipple, *The Gatekeepers*, Ch. 9

II. Presidents, Politics, and Policy

- *Organizing Presidential Advising* (September 24, 26)
 - (*) Roger Porter, *Presidential Decision Making*, pp. 229-252
Neustadt, Ch. 11-13
 - (*) Robert Caro, "EOB 274," from *The Passage of Power*
- P&PS: Burke chapter
- (*) Charles Walcott and Karen Hult, "White House Structure and Decision-Making: Elaborating the Standard Model," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (June 2005)
- (*) Anne Gearan and Sarah Ellison, "Trump's Cable News Cabinet," *Washington Post* (August 29, 2018)
- *Presidents and the Public* (October 1, 3) - **review due October 1, 5 p.m.**
 - (*) D.T. Max, "The Making of the Speech," *New York Times Magazine* (October 7, 2001)
P&PS: Ch. 10 (Hershey)
 - (*) Ezra Klein, "Trump is Winning," *Vox.com* (January 29, 2018)
Reeves, Ch. 2-5

Note: There is no class October 8 (enjoy fall vacation!)

- *Presidents and their Parties* (October 10)
 - P&PS: Ch. 12 (Milkis)
 - (*) law of midterm loss
Reeves, Ch. 6-7
- *Presidential Selection* (October 15, 17)
 - P&PS: Ch. 7 (Brown)
 - (*) James Bryce, "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President"
 - (*) Jill Lepore, "How to Steal an Election," *The New Yorker* (July 4, 2016)
Reeves, Ch. 8-9

Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, *Identity Crisis*, Ch. 1-6

- *Presidential Election (October 22, 24)*

(*) *Federalist* #68

P&PS: Ch. 8 (Edwards)

Reeves, Ch. 10

Sides, Tesler and Vavreck, *Identity Crisis*, Ch. 7-9

III. Separate Institutions Sharing Powers

- *Chief Executive: President and Bureaucracy (October 29, November 5)*

P&PS: Ch. 14 (Lewis & Moe)

P&PS: Ch. 17 (Rudalevige)

(*) Dino Grandoni, "Internal Squabbling over Trump's Fuel Standards May Boost Lawsuits," *Washington Post* (August 16, 2018)

Reeves, Ch. 11-12

[Note: Midterm exam distributed in class October 29; due October 31, noon. There will be no class on October 31.]

- *The Presidency and the Courts (November 7, 12)*

P&PS: Ch. 16 (Yalof)

Excerpts from:

(*) *U.S. v. Nixon* (1974)

(*) *Clinton v. Jones* (1997)

(*) *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* (2006)

(*) *NLRB v. Noel Canning* (2014)

(*) *Trump v. Hawaii* (2018)

- *President and Congress: Legislating and Investigating (November 14, 19, 26)*

Note: There is no class on November 22 (Happy Thanksgiving!)

P&PS: Ch. 15 (Dickinson)

(*) Frances Lee, from *Beyond Ideology*

P&PS: Ch. 19 (Polsky)

(*) *Youngstown Sheet & Tube v. Sawyer* (1952)

(*) Authorization for the Use of Military Force (2001)

(*) James Goldgeier and Elizabeth Saunders, "Trump's Unconstrained Presidency," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2018)

(*) Eric Schickler and Douglas Kriner, from *Investigating the President*

(*) *Federalist* 65

P&PS: Ch. 20 (Nelson)

- *Student policymaking presentations & discussion (November 28, December 3)*

Reeves, Ch. 13-22

IV. Conclusions (*December 5*)

Neustadt, prefaces to the 1990 edition

(*) David Orentlicher, from *Two Presidents are Better Than One*

(*) William Howell and Terry Moe, from *Relic*

(*) Skowronek, "Is Transformational Leadership Still Possible? Barack Obama in Historical Perspective," from *Presidential Leadership in Political Time*
Reeves, Ch. 23 & afterword

[Note: Policymaking case study papers due December 7, 5 p.m.]

Final exam: December 12, 8:30 a.m. (room TBA)