Government 312L Issues and Policies in American Government Fall, 2012 Topic: The Citizen's Presidency

Unique #38610

Professor Bruce Buchanan Fall, 2012 T, Th 8-9:30 Location WEL 3.502 Office: BAT 3.122

Instructor Office Hours: T 11-2

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Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

<u>Course Purpose</u> This course seeks to help you do better the two things citizens must do well if the presidency is to work: choose and judge presidents. It tries to offer useful answers to the question, "Where should I look and what should I look for to better choose and judge?" The concepts and information presented are similar to those found in other presidency courses, but with one important difference. Here they are subordinated to the citizen's-eye-view of the presidency and tested for relevance to the evaluation of presidential performance and presidential candidate qualifications.

<u>Course Organization</u> The course is organized into the following three parts and associated lecture topics

- A. <u>Presidential Precedents</u> How do past presidents (and national experience, and changing circumstances) influence the way an incumbent chief executive performs and is judged?
 - 1. Introduction: Functions and Values
 - 2. The Presidency Defined and Launched: Washington
 - 3. The Presidency Democratized: Jefferson and Jackson
 - 4. Presidential Morality and Power: Polk and Lincoln
 - 5. The Presidency Modernized: TR, Wilson, FDR
 - 6. Why Reputations Change: Truman, Eisenhower, JFK

- 7. The Impact of Vietnam and Watergate: Johnson and Nixon
- 8. Preliminary Appraisals: From Ford to Bush II
- 9. The Lessons of Presidential History
- B. <u>Current Presidential Operations</u> What is the president's "job description", and how can we tell if the incumbent is performing well?
 - 1. Introduction: The Grounds for Judgment
 - 2. The Campaign for Office
 - 3. The Domestic Policy Arena
 - 4. Confronting Congress
 - 5. Media: The Classic Dilemma
 - 6. The Budget and Economic Policy
 - 7. Foreign Policy
 - 8. Presidential Competence and the Public Interest
- C. <u>Evaluating Presidential Candidates</u>. What are the reasons for preferring one presidential candidate to another?
 - 1. Introduction: Five Dimensions of Presidential Leadership
 - 2. Candidate Qualifications
 - 3. Character: Avoiding Troubled Candidates
- D. Course Conclusion: The Division of Labor

Student Responsibilities

- 1. Attendance is required. **More than three absences=lower course grade** (grade point reduction for each absence after 3).
- 2. Make-up exams are for emergencies only, not for scheduling convenience. Eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students facing emergencies must notify the instructor or the T.A. <u>before</u> missing an exam unless it is physically impossible.
- 3. Unexcused absences from any scheduled exam may result in a score of zero for that exam.

Grading Criteria

2 multiple choice mid-term examinations 30% each 1 combination essay/multiple choice final exam, 40%

Required Readings

J.A. Pika, and J.A. Maltese. 2013. The Politics of the Presidency, (8th Edition).

M. Nelson, ed. 2012. The Evolving Presidency. (4th Edition).

One national daily newspaper: e.g., The <u>Washington Post</u>, <u>New York Times</u>, or <u>Wall Street</u> Journal.

Other readings on Blackboard (as indicated on weekly schedule)

Fall, 2012 WEEKLY READING AND EXAM SCHEDULE

Complete readings by date indicated

1. Sept.4

P, 1-31 The Changing Presidency N, xiii-xv User's Guide

2. Sept. 13

N, 1-40 Founding Documents P, 461-478 Obama Transition Blackboard: Greenstein, Obama Leadership Style

3. Sept. 20

N, 41-79 Addresses, Debates and Doctrines P, 92-134 Public Politics

4. Sept. 27

N, 80-118 Jackson to Lincoln N, 118-134 Power Expanded, Debated and Asserted

5. Oct 4

N, 135-173 Investigations, Removals, and FDR N, 174-207 Truman to LBJ

6. October 11

FIRST MID-TERM THURSDAY Oct 11

7. Oct. 18

N, 207-282 Nixon to Clinton

8. Oct. 25

N, 283-314 Bush II P,37-92 Election Politics P, 201-249 Legislative Politics

9. Nov. 1

P, 250-303 Executive Politics P, 304-340 Judicial Politics

10. Nov. 8

SECOND MID-TERM THURSDAY Nov. 8

11. Nov. 15

P, 341-377 The Politics of Domestic Policy N 314-326, Obama Campaign Speech on Race N, 326-339 Obama Health Care Speech

P, 378-429 The Politics of Economic Policy Blackboard: Obama House on a Rock Speech

Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Holiday

12. Nov. 29

P, 430-477 The Politics of National Security Policy Blackboard: Obama West Point Speech

13. Dec. 6 Last Gov 312L class day

P, 146-200 Presidential Character and Performance Review previous readings for final examination

FINAL EXAMINATION
TUESDAY DEC 13, 9-12