Course Description & Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with a survey of how the executive branch has evolved and increased its powers in American politics. Additionally, the course will investigate how the selection of a president has become more reflective of the public’s will and how the executive branch works alongside other branches of the government. At the end of the course, students should be aware of the benefits and challenges of being a staffer in the White House, the bureaucracy, as a volunteer on future campaigns.

Students who will do the best in the course will have an understanding of how the political context, nationally and locally, affect presidential power.

Required Books

All texts can be found in the UT Tyler bookstore or online.


Additional required readings can be found on the course Blackboard page.

Student Evaluation

Attendance & Participation

Active participation in discussion is an important part of a class. Therefore, class meetings allow for an open forum to ask questions and students are presented with complex questions to spark class discussion. Opportunities for peer-led discussions create opportunities to evaluate a student’s ability describe political trends after studying detailed facts.

I encourage you to challenge, respond to, & critique what you read and hear outside of class. Our goal is to learn by challenging what preconceived notions we may have.

The participation grade is a proportion of the high quality contributions to class discussion and reflection of critical thinking shown in assignments throughout the semester. Each activity will correspond with the readings and is designed to assess your ability to understand the material.
Quizzes

Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of a new section and will focus on the reading assigned for that section. The quiz will come before any classroom discussion of the topic and will be worth 30 points. Often quizzes will come at the beginning of the class period. There are no make ups given for quizzes in class. The five (5) best quiz grades will be used to calculate the grade for this portion of the class meaning a student who takes all the quizzes can drop the two lowest grades.

Simulation and Activities

The President of the United States serves at the top of the executive branch’s extensive hierarchy. Throughout the semester students have the opportunity to work with teams to simulate decisions made in the West Wing or cabinet offices. Each of these assignments give students the opportunity to apply knowledge of tools and political contexts that give presidents power. Assignments also give students the opportunity to apply knowledge of current events, as well as historical cases of past executive decisions. All Simulation Activities take place in class and announcements will be made regarding preparation that must be done ahead of time.

Debates

Each student will be required to submit a short writing assignment on the days that you are responsible for leading a class debate (50 points each). This assignment should briefly summarize and critically analyze the assigned readings. The paper should be approximately 2-3 pages in length in a typed, double-spaced format with one-inch margins. Be sure to spell check and read over your paper before submitting it for a grade.

In each presentation, students will be evaluated on the questions they raise about the selected topic for the debate and how they engage the class. Excellent presentations will identify showcase critical thinking by providing detailed support/criticism for general conclusions (25 points each).

A sign-up sheet for all presentations will be made available in class. Be sure you sign up.

Exams

There will be two exams(100 points) and a final exam (100 points), where the final exam will not be cumulative. Each exam will include a mixture of identification and essay questions, where students will be able to choose for a larger set of options. No make-up exams will be given unless an agreement is reached prior to the exam and the absence is excused.

History of Executive Action

Hard Copy Due Monday April 17, 2017

Write an inductive essay describing how the presidency (the institution not the politician) was influential to the history of a policy issue based on the research you collected. Consider the context of how presidents have galvanized support for a policy by appealing to the public or document how the president’s initial policy goal changed as a result of other factors within the legislative process. Also address how similar policy problems have been handled through different procedures by other presidents.

There is no page requirement, but most papers are somewhere between 4 and 5 pages in length to explain what you found through all of your research. The format for the paper should be typed, and double-spaced with one-inch margins. Reading your own work is helpful, as your grade will be penalized for grammatical and spelling errors, as well as omissions of important topics from the paper. Late submissions will lose 10 points for each day after the due date.
Grading
A = 900–100; B = 800–899; C = 700–799; D = 600–699; F \leq 599.

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Simulation Activities</td>
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<td>Debates</td>
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<td>Exam I (March 1)</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<td>Exam II (April 12)</td>
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<td>History of Executive Action</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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Student Conduct
I have high expectations for each student in this class, which are based on your academic performance to get to this point and my belief that you will treat each of your fellow classmates with respect. My goal is to facilitate a supportive and engaging class experience for everyone and one part of that is eliminating disruptive behavior. Using technology in a way that distracts others and demonstrates a lack of respect for the instructor is unacceptable.

Concealed Handgun Campus Policy
We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure (cover the entire trigger guard area) and concealed. More information is available at http://www.utttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php

Tobacco-Free University
All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kretteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quit-lines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.utttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Academic Honesty
It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. The University of Texas at Tyler Policies and Procedures for Student Affairs will be strictly followed and can be found here at: http://www.utttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf. Tests and assignments are designed to assess your understanding of the material – do not reference another student’s answers.

Violations of academic integrity are serious and will have a negative consequence on your classroom performance. In each instance a violation occurs, a failing grade will be assigned for the assignment or the course, require work to be redone, and have you identify what the cause of the violation was. The matter will be referred to the Dean of Students if institutional action is necessary. Reference the rights and responsibilities of students: http://www.utttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php.
Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www. uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services:

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.
**Student Absence due to Religious Observance:**

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

**Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor with official documentation at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**Social Security and FERPA Statement:**

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation:**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructors directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

If you have any questions or concerns about what is expected or permissible in this course or about academic integrity in general, please contact me.
Class Schedule

Jan 18  Class Introduction and Expectations

Jan 20  Discussion of the White House Transition.
       Readings: Read Articles on Blackboard and explore documents from the White House Transitions Project.

Jan 23-27  The Changing Presidency
       Readings: Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 1
                Federalist 69
       Recommended:

       Friday Debates:
                The Framers of the Constitution Would Approve of the Modern Presidency. – Chapter 1 in Ellis & Nelson.

Jan 30-Feb 3  Election Politics: Nomination and 538 Electoral College Votes
       Readings: Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 2

       Entertainment:
                The West Wing - Season 4: "Game On"
                Wag the Dog
                Primary Colors

       Friday Debates:
                Political parties should nominate candidates for the presidency through a national primary. – Chapter 3 in Ellis & Nelson.
                The president should be elected directly by the people. – Chapter 4 in Ellis & Nelson.

Feb 6-10  Policy Responsiveness: Electoral Consequences  First Perspective Essay Due Date
       Readings: Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 2

       Friday Debates:
                The Twenty-Second Amendment should be repealed. – Chapter 5 in Ellis & Nelson.

Feb 13-17  The Presidency, Public Opinion, and Media
       Readings: Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 3

       Friday Debates:
                Presidential Power is still the power to persuade. – Chapter 7 in Ellis & Nelson.

1Should the class schedule need to be amended, I will advise the class in advance by email and via Blackboard.
Feb 20-24  Presidential Character and Performance  
*Readings:* Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 4  

*Friday Debates:*  
*Presidential success and failure has more to do with political time than a president’s character and leadership qualities.* – Chapter 6 in Ellis & Nelson.

Feb 27-Mar 3  
First Exam Week  
**Exam on March 1**  

*No Class on March 3*

Mar 6-10  Legislative Politics  
*Readings:* Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 5  

*Activity:* Veto Bargaining Game  

*Friday Debates:*  
*Congress should be required to vote up or down on legislation prepared by the president.* – Chapter 8 in Ellis & Nelson.  
*Presidential signing statements threaten the rule of law and the separation of powers.* – Chapter 11 in Ellis & Nelson.

Mar 13-17  Spring Break - No Class

Mar 20-24  Executive Politics  
*Readings:* Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 6  

*Friday Debates:*  
*Presidential “Czars” undermine Congress and the Constitution.* – Chapter 12 in Ellis & Nelson.

Mar 27-31  Judicial Politics  
*Readings:* Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 7  

*Activity:* Which Nominees are still awaiting confirmation?

*Friday Debates:*  
*The president has too much power in the selection of judges.* – Chapter 13 in Ellis & Nelson.

Apr 3-7  Procedures related to Nominations  
*Readings:* See Readings on Blackboard  

*Friday Debates:*  
*Recess Appointments are Constitutional.*
Apr 10-14  Second Exam Week
Exam Review on April 10

Exam II on April 12

No Class on April 14, due to Southwest Social Science Meeting.

Apr 17-21  Politics of Domestic & Economic Policy
History of Executive Action Paper Due - 4/17

Readings:  Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapters 8 and 9

Friday Debates:
Special in-class debate - Congress typically follows the president’s direction in budgeting.

Apr 24-28  Foreign Policy
Readings:  Pika, Maltese, & Rudalevege, Chapter 10

Friday Debates:
Presidents have usurped the war power that rightfully belongs to Congress. – Chapter 9 in Ellis & Nelson.
President Barack Obama has followed President George W. Bush’s approach to the war on terror. – Chapter 10 in Ellis & Nelson.

May TBD  Final Exam