POLI 463. The American Chief Executive
Department of Political Science
University of South Carolina
Fall 2022

Lecture Times:
12- 12:50 pm, M-W-F
Close-Hipp 201

Instructor: Dr. Joshua Meyer-Gutbrod (Dr. MG)
meyerguj@mailbox.sc.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-1:30
Gambrel 342
Digitally By Appointment

Course Overview

Academic Bulletin Description
Constitutional, statutory and political powers and roles of the American chief executive.

Course Description
Over the course of American history, and particularly during the past several decades, the presidency has become the focal point of our national government. Not surprisingly, the presidency has also become a prime concern of political scientists. As we will see this semester, political scientists focus on a variety of substantive questions when studying the presidency. This variety of topics is driven by, and mirrors, the many different dimensions of the modern presidency, including the president as commander in chief, party leader, and public spokesperson, and differences between the president as an individual actor and the executive branch as a bureaucratic institution.

In this course, we will examine these many different dimensions of the presidency. We will begin where all presidencies begin: with the election of the president and the role presidents play in shaping and responding to public opinion. Next, we will examine how the president interacts with the various institutions of government, including previous presidents, the bureaucracy, political parties, Congress, and the courts. Finally, we will cover some of the scope of the president's extensive policy powers looking at both domestic policy and foreign policy.

Courses are dynamic arrangements and I reserve the right to change this syllabus at my discretion at any point during the semester.

Prerequisites
There are no prerequisites for this course

Learning Goals
Official Goals
By the end of the course students will be able to:
- Compare and contrast differing perspectives on the proper rhetorical role for presidents and the potential influence presidents should hold on public opinion.
- Identify the complicated interactions between the unitary executive and the other branches and institutions within national government.
- Compare and contrast the different mechanisms and tools presidents have for creating public policy and identify the obstacles to those tools.

My Goal for the Course
- Learn to effectively participate in American politics by navigating our existing political institutions with the goal of effecting change and making your voice heard!

Course Materials
Readings
There is only one required textbook for this course:

The Presidency and the Political System, 12th Edition, ed. Michael Nelson. 2021. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

In addition to the required textbook reading, there are additionally scholarly articles designed to engage you in active research within the discipline of political science. All of these readings can be found on Blackboard. Students should view lectures after having read the assigned readings for that section of the course. This approach will greatly help with understanding the material in class.

Software
Required access to online platform: Packback Questions: ISBN- 978-0-692-09460-0. Cost $25 (on website).

Packback Questions is an online discussion platform powered by artificial intelligence. This platform is specifically designed to encourage curiosity and increase critical thinking & writing skills. On Packback, students will be required to apply reading and lecture topics to pose and respond to questions related to current issues in American politics.

How to Register on Packback: An email invitation will be sent to your email on record from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam, or you use a different email), you may register by following the instructions below:

- Create an account by navigating to https://questions.packback.co/login and clicking "Sign up for an Account" Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can login with your credentials.
- Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Join a Community" module in Packback.
  Community Lookup Key: 6ed06123-0b1f-44c2-bf28-a8928f48bc3d
- Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

Packback may require a paid subscription. Refer to www.packback.co/product/pricing for more information.

Office Hours

Office hours will be held from 11:30-1:30 on Tuesdays in my office, Gambrel 342. Additional appointments will be available digitally by request

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Requirements

Midterm Exams (2 @ 15%)

The midterms will be assigned at the end of the first two modules and will cover lectures and readings from that module. Midterms will be conducted online using blackboard.

Midterm Dates:

       Midterm Exam – 1 – **Monday, September 26**

       Midterm Exam 2– **Monday, October 31**

Midterm Paper (1 @ 20)

The midterm paper (5-6 pages + footnotes) will be a response to a question to be circulated. Papers must be typed and double-spaced with reasonable fonts (10-12) and margins (1-1.25"). ***Paper Due – TBD***

Final (25%):

The final will be scheduled in accordance with university policy and will act as the exam for the third and final module. Unlike the midterms, the final will be cumulative, covering material for the entire course. The final will be conducted online using blackboard at the University appointed time.

Final Date and Time:

       Monday, Dec. 5 - 12:30 p.m.

Packback Participation (15%):

We will be making use of the online software Packback for discussions. Packback allows students to contribute questions and respond to the questions of other students. Students are responsible for posting 1 question per module and 6 responses per module. Responses are due by the midterm/final exam for that module. Questions are due at intervals during the module, as noted in the schedule. Late posts will not be accepted.

Question Due Dates:
    First Packback Question Due – **Friday, September 2**
    Second Packback Question Due – **Friday, October 7**
    Third Packback Question Due – **Friday, November 11**

Class Attendance   (10%)
Class attendance is mandatory for this course. For full credit, students must attend all lectures. Students are afforded 5 unexcused absences across the entire semester. I will provide lecture slides and will provide lecture recordings at my discretion. Students are responsible for obtaining information on missed lectures either from their peers or by attending office hours. This policy applies to classes missed due to COVID related symptoms. However, if you are sick, I encourage you to stay home.

Packback Platform

Packback and Online Discussions
Students are responsible for posting 1 question per module and 6 responses per module. All responses are due by the module midterm. Question due dates are listed below.

To post a Packback Question
Find a current news article from the list of online news sources (listed below) about a subject that is related to the Presidency or the Executive Branch. The article has to have been posted within the last 15 days.

- First, write a brief summary of the article. What is it talking about?
- Then, post a question / discussion / counterpoint, that emerges from the article. It may be something that intrigued you, or something that sparked your curiosity by reading the article. It may be some personal reflection if the article is related close to you, your lifestyle, or your hometown, etc.… It may be a view that the article did not consider but you think it is relevant. Add something to the article!
- Finish the article by posting a question that could be addressed with material from the course. The question should relate directly to your discussion of the article!

The entire paragraph (summary and question) should be at least 100 words. In addition to the word count, the paragraph should include the URL of the article, the title of the article and the original author (if available).

To post a Packback Response
You need to respond to six of your fellow students' posts during the module. You should provide thoughtful and well-developed arguments that engage with the original question and the answers posted by your peers by incorporating arguments and material from the course. You can include references from other news sites to support your point of view / response.

Grading
Grading is based on the "curiosity" points students are awarded per Packback's AI scoring system. The required points for completion are 60 "curiosity points" for your question and 60 for your answers. The Packback system will help guide you to achieve this score.

Approved online news sources

BBC	Los Angeles Times	USA Today
Bloomberg	New York Times	NPR
Fox News	Wall Street Journal	The Guardian
Washington Post	The Hill	Politico

Reminder: If the article you want to access is behind a Paywall, use the Library to gain access.

Some advice for posting
- **Use the course material to help you engage with the news.**
- **Check your partisanship at the door.** We all have opinions on the policies. The goal is not to debate the policies but to understand the politics.
- **Get some perspective.** Think like a politician, your peers, a voting constituent. How would they react to what is being said.
- **Broaden your search.** Bring in an article from a different news sources that covers the same material. Compare the frames being used and understand the motivation for those frames
- **Add something personal.** How does this relate to you and your peers?

Class Schedule
<u>Module 1: Presidents and the Public</u>
The Foundations– Aug. 22– Aug. 26
- The Federalist Papers, #67-77
- The Constitution, Article II

Nominating a President – Aug. 29– Sept. 2
- Brown, Lara M.. Chapter 7 - The Presidency and the Nominating Process: Aspirants, Parties, and Elections. p 229-255 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Cohen, M., Karol, D., Noel, H., & Zaller, J. (2009). The party decides: Presidential nominations before and after reform. University of Chicago Press. - Chapter 6

First Packback Question Due – September 2

*Electing a President – Sept. 5– Sept. 9 (**No Class Monday Sept. 5**)*

- Han, Lori Cox. Chapter 8 - The Presidency and the General Elections. p 255-279 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Vavreck, Lynn. The message matters: The economy and presidential campaigns. Princeton University Press, 2009. Chapter 3

Presidents and Public Opinion – Sept. 12 – Sept. 16
- Miroff, Bruce. Chapter 9 - The Presidential Spectacle. p 279-307 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Kernell, S. 2006. Going public: New strategies of presidential leadership. Cq Press. - Ch. 2

Presidents and the Media – Sept. 19 – Sept. 23
- Hershey, Marjorie Randon. Chapter 10 - The President and the Media: The Case of Donald Trump. p 307-335 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Meyer-Gutbrod, Joshua, and John Woolley. "New Conflicts in the Briefing Room: Using Sentiment Analysis to Evaluate Administration-press Relations from Clinton through Trump." Political Communication (2020): 1-19.

Midterm Exam - 1 – September 26
Six Packback Responses Due – September 26

Module 2: Politics the Presidents Make

Presidents Challenging Presidents – Sept. 26 – Sept. 30
- Skowronek, Stephen. Chapter 3 - The Development of Presidential Power: Conservative Insurgency and Constitutional Construction. p 79-111. *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Skowroneck, Stephen. 1997. The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton. Harvard University Press - Chapter 2-3

Presidents Challenging the Bureaucracy – Oct. 3 – Oct. 7
- Burke, John P.. Chapter 13 - The Institutional Presidency. 425-453 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Lewis, David E. and Terry M. Moe. Chapter 14 - The Presidency and the Bureaucracy. 453-491 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Second Packback Question Due – October 7

*Presidents Challenging the Parties – Oct. 10 - Oct. 14 (**No Class Friday October 14**)*
- Milkis, Sidney M.. Chapter 12 – The Presidency and Political Parties. p 371-425 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Presidents Challenging Congress – Oct. 17 – Oct. 21

- Dickenson, Matthew. Chapter 15 – The Presidency and Congress. p 491-537 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Presidents Challenging the Courts – Oct 24 – Oct. 28
- Yalof, David A.. Chapter 16 - The Presidency and the Judiciary. p 537-563 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Midterm Exam 2 – October 31

Six Packback Responses Due – October 31

Module 3: Policies the Presidents Make

Domestic Policy – Oct. 31 – Nov. 4
- Quirk, Paul J.. Chapter 5 - Presidential Competence. p 155-199 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Interacting with Interest Groups – Nov. 7 – Nov. 11
- Tichenor, Daniel J. Chapter 11 – The Presidency and Interest Groups. 335-371 *in The Presidency and the Political System*

Third Packback Question Due – November 11

Unilateral Action – Nov. 14 - Nov. 18
- Porter, Roger B. Chapter 18 - Presidential Power and Public Policy. 597-633 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Moe, Terry M., and William G. Howell. "Unilateral action and presidential power: A theory." Presidential Studies Quarterly 29.4 (1999): 850-873. *in The Presidency and the Political System*

*The Veto – Nov. 21 – Nov. 25 (**No Class Wednesday, Nov. 23 or Friday, Nov. 25**)*
- Cameron, Charles, and Nolan McCarty. "Models of vetoes and veto bargaining." Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 7 (2004): 409-435.

National Security II – Nov. 28 - Dec. 2
- Farrier, Jasmine. Chapter 19 – The Presidency, War Powers, and National Security: Separation of powers in a Crucible. P 633-993 *in The Presidency and the Political System*
- Elizabeth Saunders. 2018. "Leaders, Advisers, and the Political Origins of Elite Support for War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. pp. 2118-2149.

6 Packback Responses Due Friday, December 2
Final Exam - Monday, Dec. 5 - 12:30 p.m.

Course Details

Course Format

The class structure will consist of learning modules ("Course Modules"). These modules will be divided into weekly sub-modules which will include:

- A summary of that week's material, a to-do list, due dates and other notes.
- The class notes / slides in PDF format.
- Packback response submission (through the Packback Questions link).

Assignments for each course module will include:
- A midterm exam at the end of the module. (The final exam will occur upon completion of the final module in lieu of a midterm and will be cumulative)
- One midterm paper.

General Assignment Information

- All coursework (assignments, exams, etc.) is secured in Blackboard with a username and password.
- All online tests are secured in Blackboard with a password.

Feedback on assignments

Some of the assignments are automatically graded on Blackboard, and by the Packback platform. Other assignments will be graded as soon as possible. Specific feedback will be provided as necessary through Blackboard.

Course Communication

I will be communicating with you regarding grades and assignments. If you need to get in touch with me, the best method is via email. Generally, I will reply to emails within 24 hours during the work week and will provide feedback on assignments within 72 hours.

If you are having trouble with this course or its material, you should contact me via email to discuss the issues.

Announcements will be posted to this course whenever necessary. If there is any other information I think is important, I will send it to your email address you have in Blackboard. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email account works properly in order to receive email.

Below is how you check your email address in Blackboard:
- Access blackboard.sc.edu
- Click your name on the main Blackboard navigation panel on the left
- Review your email address. By default, Blackboard uses your university-issued email address

- Your email address in Blackboard coincides with your preferred university email. If you are unsure of your preferred email, check your account (myaccount.sc.edu). For more information on setting your preferred university email, please see the How To Change Your Primary University Email Address (https://scprod.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0011464) Knowledge Base article.

Module Schedule
All course deadlines are listed in Eastern Time Zone. Blackboard will record all deadlines in this time zone. If you are in a different time zone, plan accordingly.
Each week will begin on a Monday and will end on Friday.

Technology Requirements
The PowerPoint lecture presentations, links to articles, assignments, quizzes, and rubrics are located on the Blackboard site for the course. To participate in learning activities and complete assignments, you will need:
- Access to a working computer that has a current operating system with updates installed, plus speakers or headphones to hear lecture presentations (transcripts provided);
- Reliable Internet access and a USC email account;
- A current Internet browser that is compatible with Blackboard (Google Chrome is the recommended browser for Blackboard);
- Microsoft Word as your word processing program; and
- Reliable data storage for your work, such as a USB drive or Office365 OneDrive cloud storage.

If your computer does not have Microsoft Word, Office 365 ProPlus package is available to you free of charge and allows you to install Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote, Publisher, and Access on up to 5 PCs or Macs and Office apps on other mobile devices including tablets. Office 365 also includes unlimited cloud storage on OneDrive. To download Office 365 ProPlus, log into your student (University) email through a web browser, choose Settings (top right corner), and select software. If you have further questions or need help with the software, please contact the Service Desk (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/servicedesk.php).

Minimal Technical Skills Needed
Minimal technical skills are needed in this course. All work in this course must be completed and submitted online through Blackboard. Therefore, you must have consistent and reliable access to a computer and the Internet. The minimal technical skills you have include the ability to:
- Organize and save electronic files;
- Use USC email and attached files;
- Check email and Blackboard daily;

- Download and upload documents;
- Locate information with a browser; and
- Use Blackboard.

Technical Support

If you have problems with your computer, technology, IT-related questions, support, including Blackboard, please contact the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) Service Desk at (803) 777-1800 or submit an online request through the [Self-Service Portal (https://scprod.service-now.com/sp)](https://scprod.service-now.com/sp) or visit the [Carolina Tech Zone (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/ctz.php)](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/ctz.php). The Service Desk is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM (Eastern Daylight Time). If you are located in the Columbia, SC area, the Thomas Cooper Library at USC has computers for you to use in case you encounter computer issues/problems. If you are not located in the Columbia, SC area, most regional campuses and public libraries have computers for public use.

How to Get Help for the Packback Questions platform:

If you have ANY questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.
For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Final Notes

Honor Code

Every student has a role in maintaining the academic reputation of the university. It is imperative that you refrain from engaging in plagiarism, cheating, falsifying your work and/or assisting other students in violating the Honor Code. Two important components of the Honor Code:

- Faculty members are required to report potential violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.
- When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate the Honor Code, it is their responsibility to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member.

Your enrollment in this class signifies your willingness to accept these responsibilities and uphold the Honor Code of the University of South Carolina. Any deviation from this expectation can result in a (insert academic penalty here) and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. You can learn more about the University's policies on academic integrity at:
https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_conduct_and_academic_integrity/index.php

Student Disability Resources

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Student Disability Resource Center: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email sasds@mailbox.sc.edu, or stop by LeConte College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Student Disability Resource Center.

Diversity and Inclusion

The university is committed to a campus environment that is inclusive, safe, and respectful for all persons, and one that fully embraces the Carolinian Creed. To that end, all course activities will be conducted in an atmosphere of friendly participation and interaction among colleagues, recognizing and appreciating the unique experiences, background, and point of view each student brings. You are expected at all times to apply the highest academic standards to this course and to treat others with dignity and respect.