

## American Presidency (PLSC 2420)

Autumn 2015  
T & F 8:00AM-9:50AM  
Sturm Hall 233

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**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 2:00PM-4:00PM

### OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the American presidency, examining its origins, the theoretical foundation for its existence, the institution's evolution over time, and the future of the office. By the end of this course, students will understand why the American presidency is unique and the role that it plays in the American and global systems of governance. In addition, students will be able to put into context the frustration associated with certain limitations (and "allowances") of the presidency. Where did the presidency begin? How has it changed? Where is it headed?

It is especially beneficial to students that this course is being offered as a new presidential election cycle begins. As such, students should be prepared to engage very real-world events and topics in real-time.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

You are required to acquire the textbooks for this course:

*Debating the Presidency*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. by Richard J. Ellis and Michael Nelson (editors) (ISBN: 978-1-4833-0776

*The American Presidency*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. by Sidney M. Milkis and Michael Nelson (ISBN: 978-1-4833-1869-1

### CLASS CONDUCT

I encourage class discussion. We will be talking about politics from numerous perspectives and within numerous contexts. As such, this will require that we discuss some potentially sensitive issues. I expect that you will come prepared to talk about these issues, as they relate to the readings, and that you do so in a respectful way. There is no room for disrespect and I will not tolerate it.

Additionally, you are expected to meet deadlines as they are assigned. I will not accept any late work unless you have a valid, documented reason for missing a deadline. This also applies to

missing an exam. You are expected to notify me IN ADVANCE AND PROVIDE DOCUMENTATION if you are going to miss an exam, unless it is an emergency. In the case of emergency, you will need to provide adequate documentation the next time you are in class.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

**No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated in this class.** Anyone found guilty of cheating or plagiarism or of any other violation of academic integrity will be assigned an automatic grade of *F IN THE COURSE* and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent through University channels. Notes on plagiarism can be found here <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>. The University of Denver policy can be found here: <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/ccs/code.html>. Be sure you know the definition and know how to avoid it. I am absolutely serious about this policy. It is indeed plagiarism to copy someone's words without citation or attribution or to copy the summary of a speech, book, article, or reading found on the web or any other source. **I will notice the plagiarism and you will fail the course. Consider this your ONLY warning.**

## READINGS, PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE

You are expected to do the readings for each week prior to class and come prepared to talk about them. It may be beneficial to come with some questions and comments to stimulate discussion. This course is designed to be equally reliant on discussion as it is on lecture. Your attendance will be taken and there will be opportunities for participation grading, as well. This means that it will not be enough to come to class and remain silent for the entire quarter.

Additionally, throughout the quarter, there will be short assignments that may require you to complete them in class, or prepare out of class for in-class discussion.

## EXAMS

There will be two exams in the course: one midterm and a final. We will discuss the format of these exams as the dates for each draw nearer.

## SERVICE LEARNING

I believe that contributing to one's community is essential to personal growth and development. In addition, I believe that it connects us with individuals that can enrich our lives and careers for years to come. "Good" citizens are those that engage with their communities in meaningful ways. As such, you will be expected to pursue some service learning throughout this quarter, and it will count towards your final grade. We will discuss this more early in the quarter.

## GRADES

Attendance/Participation	10%
Service Learning	5%
Short Assignments	20%
Mid-term Exam	30%

Final Exam 35%

### **GRADING SCALE**

The grading scale is as follows\*:

100 – 93	A
92.9 – 90	A-
89.9 – 88	B+
87.9 – 83	B
82.9 – 80	B-
79.9 – 78	C+
77.9 – 73	C
72.9 – 70	C-
69.9 – 68	D+
67.9 – 63	D
62.9 – 60	D-
59.9 – 0	F

\* The instructor reserves the right to curve grades, should the need present itself.

### **STUDENT ACCOMODATIONS**

Any students with special needs due to a physical or learning disability should see me as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs. See <http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/dsp/> for more information.

### **TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE**

#### **Week One**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapters 1 and 2  
Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 4

#### **Week Two**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapter 5  
Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 3

#### **Week Three**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapters 4 and 5  
Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 13

#### **Week Four**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapter 6  
Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 12

#### **Week Five**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapter 7

## **Oct 16: MIDTERM**

### **Week Six**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapter 8

Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 6

### **Week Seven**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapters 9 and 10

Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 5

### **Week Eight**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapter 11

Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 9

### **Week Nine**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapters 12 and 13

Ellis and Nelson: Chapters 2 and 7

### **Week Ten**

Milkis and Nelson: Chapters 14 and 15

Ellis and Nelson: Chapter 1

**FINAL EXAM:** Saturday, Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:00AM