**THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY**

POL: 790:306:01 Instructor: Nicole M. Bizzoco, MA

Rutgers University Office Hours: Tues / Thurs 1:15 – 2:15PM

Fall 2014 Office: 303 Hickman Hall

Class Hours: Tuesday / Thursday, 2:50 – 4:10PM Email: [nmb130@rutgers.edu](mailto:nmb130@rutgers.edu)

Room: Scott Hall 135

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

While this course will focus on a variety of topics, there are six major areas of concern which underlie it: (1) Presidential Selection. Operating on the assumption that the kind of president we get depends in part upon how we choose him or her, it is essential that we consider how we go about selecting our presidents. Specifically, we shall be concerned with how effective the selection process is in yielding candidates who have the requisite skills and experience necessary to govern. (2) Presidential Powers. We shall examine the President's relationship with other power centers (Congress, Court, Bureaucracy, Public and Media) in the political system and attempt to ascertain what factors enhance and constrain his leverage over them. (3) Presidential Decision-Making. To govern is to choose. Presidents are, above all else, elected to make choices, and it is by those choices that history will judge them. We shall consider how presidents organize themselves to make decisions and also how their decision-making styles can help us to understand some of the great successes and failures in presidential decision-making. (4) Presidential Personality. Here we shall focus upon whether the nature of a president's personality can help us to understand the tone and style of his presidency and also whether it is possible to identify certain personality types which are especially suited or unsuited for the office. (5) Presidential Leadership. Although this topic will necessarily insinuate itself at various points, we shall address it more directly at the end of the course. We tend to view leadership as being synonymous with the presidency and yet experience has shown that some presidents have led better than others. In addressing the matter of leadership, we shall consider if it is possible to identify a set of objective criteria by which the leadership performance of presidents can be evaluated.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. DiClerico, Robert E. 2013. The Contemporary American President. New York: Pearson.
2. Additional reading selections posted to Sakai

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING**

Your final grade is a product of three components:

1. **Two Exams (70% combined):** 
   1. **Midterm Exam (35%):** consisting of short answer and application (essay) questions
   2. **Final (35%):** non-cumulative, same general format as midterm
2. **Critical Analysis Paper (30%):** Students are required to complete a **10-12** page (double-spaced) paper which critically analyzes a topic related to the American Presidency. Paper topic to be submitted to instructor for approval via Sakai by **\*\*INSERT DEADLINE DATE HERE\*\***

**MAKE-UP EXAMS**

If for any legitimate reason (medical or family emergency) you are unable to take an exam as regularly scheduled, you must obtain a note from your Dean in order to take a make-up exam and contact me immediately to let me know that you are unable to take the exam as scheduled. Make-up exams apply to emergency situations ONLY. No exceptions to this policy will be made.

**CLASS CONDUCT**

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the right of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. *Respectful* expression of individual opinions related to the course discussions is greatly encouraged. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process, will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action or removal from class per university policy.

**Plagiarism and Cheating**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses at Rutgers. The minimum punishment is the receipt of a grade of an F in the course.. For further information you can consult the university’s policy

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf>

Section II specifically discusses the definitions of cheating and plagiarism. If you any questions concerning academic writing, see the Rutgers Learning Center, or come to my office hours.

**COURSE WEBSITE - SAKAI**

Our class Sakai website will have a variety of resources to help you throughout the semester. Here you will find assigned readings that are not in the text book, supplemental recommended readings, and lecture notes (found in the “Resource” section). The Sakai site also contains a discussion forum and chat room. Please use these areas to post materials you may find to be helpful to others as well as any questions you may have about the course. If you have a question, chances are that other people will as well, so please post them in the chat room so everyone can benefit from them. I check the chat room regularly and will answer any questions then.

To access the class Sakai website, (1) sign on to sakai.rutgers.edu, (2) sign in using your RU screen name, and (3) click on the class tab at the top of the page.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**Week 1 (Sept 2 & 4)**

COURSE INTRODUCTION / HISTORY OF THE PRESIDENCY INSTITUTION

\*No required reading for Week1, though some short recommended readings will be available on Sakai.

**Week 2 (Sept 9 & 11)**

PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch.1

*The Federalist Papers*, 68 and 71: <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>

**Week 3 (Sept 16 & 18)**

FOREIGN POLICY POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 2

**Week 4 (Sept 23 & 25)**

PRESIDENTIAL POWERS – THE PRESIDENT & CONGRESS

Required Readings

DiClerico Ch. 3

**Week 5 (Sept 30 & Oct 2)**

PRESIDENTIAL POWERS OF PERSUASION – BARGAINNING WITH CONGRESS

Required Readings

Matthew Beckman, *Pushing the Agenda*, (selected chapters on Sakai)

**Week 6 (Oct 7 & 9)**

THE PRESIDENT, THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Required Reading

DiClerico, Ch. 4

Samuel Kernell (2006) *Going Public*, Ch. 1 (on Sakai)

**Week 7 (Oct 14 & 16)**

A RETURN TO PRESIDENTIAL POWERS OF PERSUASION - “GOING PUBLIC”

Samuel Kernell (2006), *Going Public***,** Ch. 2 (on Sakai)

Edwards (2003), *On Deaf Ears*, (selections on Sakai)

**Week 8 (Oct 21 & 23)**

\*No required readings this week

**Tuesday: Exam review**

**Thursday: MIDTERM EXAM**

**Week 9 – (Oct 28 & 30)**

PRESIDENTIAL POWERS – THE PRESIDENT & THE BUEARACRACY

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 5

**Week 10 (Nov 4 & 6)**

PRESIDENTIAL DECISION MAKING

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 6

**Week 11 (Nov 11 & 13)**

PRESIDENTIAL DECISION MAKING, PART 2

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 7

**Week 12 (Nov 18 & 20)**

EMERGENCY POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 8

**Week 13 (Nov 25 / No Class Thursday Nov 27 – Thanksgiving break)**

PRESIDENTIAL PERSONALITY

DiClerico, Ch. 9

**Week 14 (Dec 2 & 4)**

PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP

Required Readings

DiClerico, Ch. 10

**Week 15 (Dec 9/ No class Thursday Dec 11 – Reading day**

**FINAL EXAM REVIEW**

***CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE* TODAY, Dec 9th, by MIDNIGHT via Sakai!!!!**

**FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, DECEMBER 22ND, 12:00-3:00PM**