Instructor: Arielle Bennett, Department of Political Science, arielle.bennett@rutgers.edu
Course Location: Monday & Thursday, 11:30am – 12:50pm, Milledoler Hall 100
Office Hours: by appointment in the Art Library – please email or see me before/after class to schedule

Course Goals & Description:
The American presidency has an integral role in our political system and within the checks and balances between the three branches of government. The President has many responsibilities, but must at a minimum promote the wellbeing and economic stability of America, use her/his influence on lawmakers and as the chief of their political party, advocate America’s values at home and abroad, represent America as its chief diplomat, lead the Executive Branch of the government, and take charge of the armed forces as the Commander in Chief. While our founders envisioned a more simplified role for the presidency than the powerful position that it embodies today, the ever-transforming presidency is part of the unique political climate of America. We will also examine the founding of the presidency and its constitutional parameters, as well as how the “founders’ intentions” may have changed overtime.

This course will analyze each era of the American presidency, as well as the surrounding historical and current literature. Historical events, political philosophy, law, and governmental institutions and actors will help shape our understanding of the presidency. From the Federalist/Anti-Federalist debate, to the wars that have marked our history, to the social movements that have challenged the presidency, to 9/11; each new event challenges the presidency and tests its powers. We will also seek to examine the current socio-political world as it relates to the most current developments in the presidency, including from the administrations of President Obama to President-elect Trump.

Required Texts:

How Your Grade Is Calculated:
- Participation/Attendance (20%)
- Take Home Midterm – Research Paper (40%)
  - This take home midterm is an 8 to 10 page research paper. Detailed instructions will be posted to the course page so you can prepare early. You will need to turn this paper in through www.turnitin.com to verify it has not been plagiarized.
- Final Exam – essay based, in person (40%)

Absence from Final Exam:
Absence from an exam because of travel plans will not be excused. Only a note from your Dean of Students in your college at Rutgers stipulating a medical or family emergency will be acceptable as an excuse for missing an exam. If at all possible, I need to be notified before the exam of your inability to take it.

Academic Integrity:
I do not tolerate any breach of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy, which includes cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of deception. Penalties for violations will be strictly enforced. Please familiarize yourself with the policy: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml.

Disability Accommodations:
Rutgers encourages students with any needs for disability accommodations to get assistance from the university. This includes test and note taking services for approved students. Please see the Rutgers Office of Disability Services if you are interested: https://ods.rutgers.edu/my-accommodations. Please let me know if you have any questions.
Lecture and Reading Schedule

Week 1: 1/19
- Thursday, 1/19 is the first day of class
- Introductions, Syllabus, and Basics of American Government

Week 2: 1/23

Week 3: 1/30
- *The Evolving Presidency: Landmark Documents* – Chapter 3, “Anti-Federalist Essays: George Mason’s Objections to This Constitution of Government and Cato’s Letter No. 4” (1787), Chapter 4, “The Federalist Papers, Nos. 69-73” (1788), Chapter 5, “George Washington’s First Inaugural Address” (1789), Chapter 6, “James Madison’s Defense of the President’s Removal Power” (1789)

Week 4: 2/6

Week 5: 2/13

Week 6: 2/20

Week 7: 2/27

Week 8: 3/6
- Take home midterm research paper due 3/6, Monday, 11:00am on Sakai and in class today.
- No other assignments or reading due this week
Week 9: 3/13

- **SPRING BREAK THIS WEEK - NO CLASS**

Week 10: 3/20

- *The American Presidency* – Chapter 11, “Personalizing the Presidency: John F. Kennedy to Jimmy Carter”

Week 11: 3/27

- No class Monday, 3/27

Week 12: 4/3

- *The American Presidency* – Chapter 13, “Bill Clinton and the Modern Presidency”

Week 13: 4/10


Week 14: 4/17

- Article – Barack Obama, “The President’s Role in Advancing Criminal Justice Reform” (2017)

Week 15: 4/24

- Last class of the semester is Thursday, 4/27
- No other assignments or reading due this week
- Please study for your exam – we will be reviewing in class as well

**Final Examination:**

- **Date to be announced (on Sakai).** Rutgers final exams may occur anytime from May 4-10, or check your personal final exam schedule on [https://finalexams.rutgers.edu/](https://finalexams.rutgers.edu/)
- Remember, please do not book any travel until you have confirmed your final exam schedule, as we will not accommodate different test dates for travel.