

## **PROBLEMS OF THE PRESIDENCY**

University of South Carolina

POLI 764  
Spring, 2005  
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday  
9:30 – 11:00 a.m. and by appointment

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Amongst American political institutions, the office of the presidency is perhaps the most visible and widely commented upon. Yet, ironically, the study of the presidency by political scientists lags far behind other areas of American Politics research (e.g., voting and legislative behavior). While the prominence of the presidency as a topic of commentary lies in its ability to be personalized (we sometimes simplistically think of the presidency as merely the president), this individuation has inhibited the development of theoretically and empirically generalizable conclusions about this important political institution. Research on presidential style, personality, greatness, and other aspects of the personal presidency is wonderful fodder for coffee table conversations, but, by and large, it has provided us with little beyond descriptive and atheoretical knowledge.

The presidency remains quite different from the president – the president is the political actor constrained and aided by the presidency. Or, in the language of “new institutionalism” theory, individual preferences are constrained by political institutions – “the formal and informal rules of the game” – in order to produce political output. American presidents have never been autonomous actors within our political system, nor are they automata mechanistically responding to a predetermined sequence of operations. Instead, the individual, his (or her) interests and incentives, must work within the order provided by constitutions and norms, authority and responsibility, and hierarchy and democracy. In this view, the terms of the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 are of far greater theoretical value for understanding of the modern presidency than an examination of President Clinton’s proclivity for peccadillos ever could be.

This seminar explores contemporary, theoretical, and empirical research on the American presidency. The reading assignments in this class serve a dual purpose. One purpose is to establish the foundation of contemporary study of the American presidency. Secondly, they help train Ph.D. students in the major research questions which are now generating publications and discussion among presidential scholars and institutional theorists more broadly within the political science community.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

The main requirements for this course are simple – READ, THINK, and DISCUSS! You are expected to read all of the assigned books and articles listed on this syllabus, and do it before the class for which it is assigned. Your *full* participation in the seminar (even if you are auditing) is fundamental to its success. Silence in seminar will not be tolerated.

### **EVALUATION:**

Students will be provided with an option of taking this seminar either as a “proseminar” or as a “research seminar.” This option is essentially a choice between a take-home final exam or a research paper. Each option is worth 30% of your final course grade. *Students are required to inform me of the choice by the second class meeting, so that the Director of Graduate Studies can be notified of your status in the course.* Ph.D. students in Political Science are highly encouraged to choose the research

seminar option.

Your seminar evaluation will be based upon a final exam or research paper, a series of five-page papers, and your class participation. Those choosing the proseminar option will be required to complete a *take-home final examination*, which will take the form of a preliminary examination. The research seminar option requires the completion of a research paper, which is **due the final day of class** (No Incompletes!). The *research paper* should be a 20-30 page work of original research on the presidency. It should conform to the *APSA Style Manual* and should be potentially publishable quality. The exact topic and methodological approach of the paper is your choice, but it would be wise to make these decisions in consultation with me. If you choose this option, a two to three-page proposal is due in class during Week 7. Each student also will prepare *five critical papers* (50%) during the course of the semester. These papers should be no more than five pages long (they can be, and most often will be, shorter!), and should be mailed to seminar participants (this, obviously, includes me) no later than noon on the Sunday before class. The papers should critique the substances of the assigned readings for the week, giving suggestions for alternative perspectives or explanations, or identifying links to alternative literature. Again, these papers should be critical and analytical, not simply synthetic. Finally, your *seminar participation* accounts for the remaining 30% of your grade.

**TEXTS:** The following texts have been ordered through the Russell House Textbook Store and are required for this course:

Bond, Jon R. and Richard Fleisher. 1990. *The President in the Legislative Arena*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cameron, Charles M. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, Jeffrey E. 1997. *Presidential Responsiveness and Public Policy-Making: The Publics and the Policies that Presidents Choose*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Kernell, Samuel. *Going Public*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Light, Paul C. 1999. *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Clinton*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Rudalevige, Andrew. 2002. *Managing the President's Program: Presidential Leadership and Legislative Policy Formulation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Skowronek, Stephen. 1997. *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 1: **Researching the Presidency**

Neustadt, Richard E. 1990. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: The Free Press. Chapters 1-5.

Barber, James David. 1972. *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. Chapter 1.

Hargrove, Edwin C. 1993. "Presidential Personality and Leadership Style," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Edwards, George C., III, John H. Kessel, and Bert A. Rockman. 1993. "Introduction," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Moe, Terry M. 1993. "Presidents, Institutions, and Theory," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

King, Gary. 1993. "The Methodology of Presidential Research," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Hager, Gregory L. and Terry Sullivan. 1994. "President-centered and Presidency-centered Explanations of Presidential Public Activity." *American Journal of Political Science* 38:1079-1103.

Week 2: **The Presidency and American Political Development**

Stephen Skowronek. 1997. *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 3: **Presidential Elections**

Aldrich, John H. 1993. "Presidential Selection," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Bartels, Larry M. 1988. *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 6.

Wlezien, Christopher, and Robert S. Erikson. 2002. "The Timeline of Presidential Election Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 64:969-993.

Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich, Phil Paolino, and David W. Rohde. 1992. "'Sophisticated' Voting in the 1988 Primary Season." *American Political Science*

*Review* 86:55-69

Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Chapters 1 and 4

Rahn, Wendy, John H. Aldrich, Eugene Borgida, and John Sullivan. 1990. "A Social-Cognitive Model of Candidate Appraisal." In *Information and Democratic Processes*, ed. John F. Ferejohn and James Kuklinski. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Ferejohn, John and Randall Calvert. 1984. "Presidential Coattails in Historical Perspective." *American Journal of Political Science* 28:127-146

Week 4: **Presidential Approval**

Gronke, Paul and Brian Newman. 2003. "FDR to Clinton, Mueller to ?? A 'State of the Discipline' Review of Presidential Approval." *Political Research Quarterly* 56:501-12.

Kernell, Samuel. 1978. "Explaining Presidential Popularity." *American Political Science Review* 72:506-522.

MacKuen, Michael B., Robert S. Erikson, James A. Stimson. 1992. "Peasants or Bankers? The American Electorate and the U.S. Economy." *American Political Science Review* 86:597-611.

Clarke, Harold D. and Marianne C. Stewart. 1994. "Prospections, Retrospections, and Rationality: The 'Bankers' Model of Presidential Approval Reconsidered." *American Journal of Political Science* 38:1104-1123.

Krosnick, Jon A. and Laura A. Brannon. 1993. "The Impact of the Gulf War on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Multidimensional Effects of Political Involvement." *American Political Science Review* 87:963-75.

Gronke, Paul. 1996. "Consensus and Volatility in Presidential Approval." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Atlanta, GA.

Miller, Joanne M. and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluation: Politically Knowledgeable Citizens are Guided by a Trusted Source." *American Journal of Political Science* 44:295-309.

Newman, Brian. 2002. "Bill Clinton's Approval Ratings: The More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same." *Political Research Quarterly* 55:781-804.

*Recommended*

Mueller, John. 1973. *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion*. Lanham, MD: University

Press of America.

Brody, Richard A. 1991. *Assessing the President: The Media, Elite Opinion, and Public Support*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Week 5: **Follow the Leader?: Presidential Response to Public Opinion**

Cohen, Jeffrey E. 1997. *Presidential Responsiveness and Public Policy-Making: The Public and the Policies that Presidents Choose*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Canes-Wrone, Brandice, and Kenneth W. Shotts. 2004. "The Conditional Nature of Presidential Responsiveness to Public Opinion." *American Journal of Political Science* 48:690-706.

*Recommended:*

Brace, Paul and Barbara Hinckley. 1992. *Follow the Leader: Opinion Polls and the Modern Presidents*. New York: Basic Books.

Week 6: **Going Public**

Kernell, Samuel. 1997. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Canes-Wrone, Brandice. 2001. "The President's Legislative Influence from Public Appeals." *American Journal of Political Science* 45:313-329.

Week 7: **Congress and the Presidency: Separation of Powers and Divided Government**

Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Binder, Sarah. 1999. "The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-1996" *American Political Science Review* 93:519-533.

*Recommended:*

Mayhew, David. 1991. *Divided We Govern*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1996. *Divided Government*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1990. *The Electoral Origins of Divided Government*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Brady, David and Craig Volden. 1997. *Revolving Gridlock*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Week 8: **Congress and the Presidency: Presidential Influence**

Bond, Jon R. and Richard Fleisher. 1990. *The President in the Legislative Arena*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sullivan, Terry. 1988. "Headcounts, Expectations, and Presidential Coalitions in Congress" *American Journal of Political Science* 32:567-89.

Sullivan, Terry. 1990. "Bargaining with the President: A Simple Game and New Evidence." *American Political Science Review*, 84:1167-96.

*Recommended:*

Peterson, Mark A. 1990. *Legislating Together: The White House and Capitol Hill from Eisenhower to Reagan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Edwards, George C., III. 1990. *At the Margins: Presidential Leadership of Congress*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Week 9: **Congress and the Presidency: Presidential Authority – Veto Power**

Cameron, Charles M. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

*Recommended:*

McCarty, Nolan. 1997. "Presidential Reputation and the Veto." *Economics and Politics* 9:1-26.

Rohde, David and Dennis Simon. 1985. "Presidential Vetoes and Congressional Response: A Study of Institutional Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science* 29:397-427.

Spitzer, Robert J. 1988. *The Presidential Veto: Touchstone of the American Presidency*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Week 10: **The President and Public Policy**

Light, Paul C. 1999. *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Clinton*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Light, Paul C. 1993. "Presidential Policy Making," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman,

Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

*Recommended:*

Ripley, Randall and Franklin. 1991. *Congress, the Bureaucracy, and Public Policy*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Shull, Steven A. 1983. *Domestic Policy Formation*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Edwards, George C., III, Steven A. Shull, and Norman C. Thomas. 1985. *The Presidency and Public Policy Making*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Week 11: **The Chief Executive: Managing the Bureaucracy**

Nathan, Richard P. 1983. *The Administrative Presidency*. New York: Wiley, Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 6.

Cohen, Jeffrey E. 1985. "Presidential Control of Independent Regulatory Commissions through Appointment: The Case of the ICC." *Administration and Society* 17:61-70.

Moe, Terry M. 1982. "Regulatory Performance and Presidential Administration." *American Journal of Political Science* 26:197-224.

Wood, B. D. and R. A. Waterman. 1991. "Dynamics of Political Control of the Bureaucracy." *American Political Science Review*, 85:801-828.

Krause, George A. "Federal Reserve Policy Decision Making," *American Journal of Political Science*, 38 (February 1994): 124-144.

Howell, William G., and David E. Lewis. 2002. "Agencies by Presidential Design." *Journal of Politics* 64:1095-1114.

Lewis, David E. 2002. "The Politics of Agency Termination: Confronting the Myth of Agency Immortality." *Journal of Politics* 64:89-107.

Whitford, Andrew B. Forthcoming. "The Pursuit of Political Control by Multiple Principals." *Journal of Politics*. The paper can be downloaded from (<http://www.journalofpolitics.org/Contents/Vol67/arts671/whitford.pdf>)

Week 12: **The Chief Executive: The Presidency as Institution**

Rudalevige, Andrew. 2002. *Managing the President's Program: Presidential Leadership and Legislative Policy Formulation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ragsdale, Lyn and John J. Theis, III. 1997. "The Institutionalization of the American Presidency, 1924-92." *American Journal of Political Science* 41:1280-1318.

Dickinson, Matthew J., and Kathryn Dunn Tenpas. 2002. "Explaining Increasing Turnover Rates among Presidential Advisers, 1929-1997." *Journal of Politics* 64:434-448.

*Recommended:*

Krause, George A. and Jeffrey E. Cohen. 2000. "Opportunity, Constraints, and the Development of the Institutional Presidency: The Case of Executive Order Issuance, 1939-1996." *Journal of Politics* 62:88-114.

Walcott, Charles E and Karen M. Hult. 1995. *Governing the White House: From Hoover Through LBJ*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press. Excerpts

Feldman, Martha. 1993. "Organizational Theory and the Presidency," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Hult, Karen M. 1993. "Advising the President," in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

***Week 13: Presidential v. Parliamentary System***

Lijphart, Arend. 1992. *Parliamentary Versus Presidential Government*. New York: Oxford University Press. Excerpts

Pika, Joseph. 1981. "Moving Beyond the Oval Office." *Congress and the Presidency* 9:17-36.

Petracca, M. P. et al. 1990. "Proposals for Constitutional Reform." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 20:503-532.

Cutler, L. 1982. "To Form a Government -- On the Defects of Separation of Powers" in Thomas E. Cronin, ed., *Rethinking the Presidency*. Boston: Little Brown

Sundquist, J. L. 1990. "Response to the Petracca ...Evaluation." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 20:533-543.

King, Anthony. 1993. "Foundations of Power" in Edwards, Kessel, and Rockman, Eds. *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.