THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE
POLS 3203
Fall 2016

Classroom: Brewster C-101
Class time: Mon. & Wed., 2 to 3:15 p.m.
Office hours: Mon. & Wed., 3:30 to 5:00 p.m., and
Tues., 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Peter L. Francia
Office: Brewster A-101
Telephone: 252-328-6126
E-Mail: franciap@ecu.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course provides a broad examination of the American presidency. It examines five major areas: (1) the historical development of the presidency and the presidential election process; (2) the influence of public opinion and the media on the presidency; (3) presidential styles and decision-making; (4) the president’s relationship with Congress and the judiciary; and (5) the president’s role in policymaking. As we cover each of these subjects, I encourage you to think critically about several important questions concerning the presidency: Why did the framers of the Constitution create an executive branch and why did they limit its power? How do presidential elections affect a president’s ability to govern? What leadership skills and personal qualities are necessary for a successful presidency? How do the media, the Congress, the courts, and the bureaucracy limit the power of the White House? What situations and circumstances provide opportunities for the president to shape and influence the policy-making process?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The general learning objective in this course is for you to gain a broad understanding of the presidency. To complete this class successfully, you will need to demonstrate factual, applied, and conceptual knowledge of the subjects covered in the course. I will expect you to be able to identify and define terms; interpret the significance of important events; apply principles to hypothetical scenarios; compare and contrast concepts; construct solutions to political problems and controversies; and assess the strengths and weaknesses of various different arguments and perspectives concerning the executive branch. In addition, this course is designated as a Foundations Curriculum course for the social sciences (FC:SO). Therefore, upon completion of this course, you also will be able to: identify core concepts and measures used to study politics; explain at least one approach to the study of politics; and identify the contribution of political science to our larger society. Please note that I will not share my partisan affiliation to anyone in the class and pledge to present both sides of every political argument as fairly as possible. My larger and ultimate learning objective in this course is to teach each of you not what to think, but rather how to think about the issues we address in class.

REQUIRED READINGS

The required readings in this course are: (1) Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making, 9th ed., George C. Edwards III and Stephen J. Wayne (Cengage, 2014); (2) The Modern American Presidency 2nd ed., Lewis L. Gould (University Press of Kansas, 2009); and (3) selected readings on Blackboard.
COURSE STRUCTURE

Classes begin with a lecture on the topic listed in the course outline. Everyone should come to class prepared to ask questions and to contribute to class discussions. Keeping up with the assigned weekly readings and attending class regularly throughout the semester will allow for more informed classroom discussions and for more interesting debates, as well as improve your ability to contribute to and learn from the class interactions. I also encourage everyone to read a newspaper, watch the television news, and follow current events. Doing so will broaden your interest in this course and help you better understand the importance of the material we cover. To incorporate visual learning in the classroom, and to help generate additional thought and discussion on the subjects covered in the course, I often show video material in class. This includes televised news footage of various historical events, documentaries, and political films. On occasion, I may select documentaries and films that have an “R” rating. Please see me if you have any moral, religious, political, or other objections to viewing documentaries or films with an “R” rating.

EVALUATION

Your final grade in the course will be based on your class attendance and performance on three exams. The weight assigned to each is:

(1) Exam 1 on September 26 = 25% of your overall grade.
(2) Exam 2 on November 2 = 25% of your overall grade.
(3) You have the option of choosing a take-home final exam (due on December 5) or an in-class final exam on December 12. The final exam is worth 30% of your overall grade. Please note that if you do not submit your take-home exam by the December 5 deadline, then you will have to take the in-class final exam on December 12.
(4) Class attendance is worth the remaining 20% of your overall grade.

Course averages will be converted to letter grades using the scale below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Course Average</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 and above</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>73 to 76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 to 92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>70 to 72</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 to 89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>67 to 69</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 to 86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>63 to 66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60 to 62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 to 79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Class attendance is mandatory. I will circulate an attendance sign-in sheet at the beginning of each lecture. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance sheet if you are present in class. If you arrive excessively late to class or if you leave class early, you will receive only partial credit for attendance. Your class attendance grade will be based on the percentage of classes that you attend (e.g., a student who attends every class will earn a 100; a student who attends half of the classes will earn a 50, etc.). Students who are active participants during class discussions will receive a bonus point added to their overall course grade.
EXAM RULES AND PROCEDURES

Failure to be present for any of the scheduled exams will result in an automatic “0.” On all exam dates, please come prepared with an exam book and a pen or pencil. If you cannot attend an exam, you must contact me at least 30 minutes before I have administered the test. I will grant a make-up exam only for circumstances that I deem extraordinary or for circumstances that meet university guidelines. If you miss an exam because of an illness, you are still required to contact me before the exam. You must also present me with proper verification (see below).

EXCUSED ABSENCES AND VERIFICATION

I will excuse absences, including those on exam dates, for the following reasons: (1) participation in an authorized activity as an official representative of the university (this includes athletic events, university-sponsored performances, or academic conferences); (2) participation in other activities deemed by the Dean of Students to warrant an excused absence; (3) an extreme personal emergency; (4) the death of an immediate family member; (5) participation in a religious holiday; and (6) health reasons such as an incapacitating or contagious illness or unavoidable surgery. DO NOT schedule non-emergency doctor’s appointments (such as an annual check-up visit or a dental visit) or any other personal commitments during our class time. Serious students plan their personal schedules around their academic schedules, not the other way around. If your absence meets any of the criteria mentioned above, I will need you to present me with some form of verification no later than two weeks after the absence if you wish to have your absence excused. Some acceptable forms of verification include the following: a note from Student Health Services; a note from a doctor or medical office; an obituary; or official documentation from the athletic department indicating your travel schedule. In the event of severe weather, please call the University Emergency Telephone Number at 252-328-0062 or visit the ECU emergency alert website (http://www.ecu.edu/alert) to check on whether the university has canceled classes. If the university has not canceled classes, but you commute to campus from a considerable distance and believe driving conditions may be hazardous, I will consider excusing your absence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education shared by all at East Carolina University. Consistent with this principle, I expect all students to complete their academic work honestly. I will not tolerate any student’s involvement in cheating, plagiarism, falsifying work, submitting the same assignment for more than one course, or other acts that would be in violation of the university’s academic integrity standards. If I become aware of or suspect a potential academic integrity violation, I will meet with the student under suspicion following the procedures outlined in the university’s academic integrity policy. Should I determine that an academic integrity violation has occurred, I reserve the right to assign a grade penalty up to and including an “F” for the assignment or the course. If it also comes to my attention that the student involved in such an incident has had a prior academic integrity violation, or if there are other aggravating circumstances, I will refer the case directly to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Should the Academic Integrity Board determine that the accused student committed an academic integrity violation, the penalties, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, may include a grade penalty and up to suspension from the university. For more information, please see: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/currentfacultymanual/part6section2.pdf.
CLASSROOM RULES

The classroom is a learning environment. I expect all students to observe some basic rules of courtesy and respect, which include the following: (1) please address me as “Dr. Francia” or “Professor Francia” (upon graduation, you are welcome to address me by my first name, “Peter”); (2) arrive to class on time and do not leave before class is dismissed; (3) do not pack up your things early; it is disruptive to others around you; (4) turn off cell phones and keep them put away during class; (5) no laptop use during video screenings; (6) no eating during class; (7) no reading the newspaper or listening to music through headphones during class; (8) no sleeping during class; (9) no carrying on private conversations with others in the classroom while someone else is speaking; and (10) please be courteous to your classmates and respectful of your fellow students’ views, comments, and questions. Classroom discussion is meant to allow us to hear a variety of viewpoints, and this can only happen if we respect each other and our differences. Failure to follow these rules will negatively affect your class attendance grade. Repeated or extreme offenses could result in your expulsion from the class.

E-MAIL

E-mail is a valuable tool for me to communicate announcements and information to the entire class. Please check your ECU e-mail at least once a day (weekends excluded). E-mail is also a good way for you to contact me. Please feel free to use e-mail to set up one-on-one meetings with me if my office hours conflict with your schedule. If you have specific questions about the course material, I am happy to answer them through e-mail; however, I would encourage you to set up a one-on-one meeting with me if you are having general difficulty with your understanding of the course material. I am also happy to answer any specific questions concerning academic or career advising through e-mail, but again I would encourage you to set up a one-on-one meeting with me if you need more general academic or career advice. Please do not use e-mail to request information already listed in the syllabus, such as an exam date or the weight assigned to a specific exam.

APPOINTMENTS

My office is located in the Brewster Building, Room A-101. My office hours are from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. every Tuesday. If you cannot meet with me during my office hours, please see me after class or contact me by telephone or e-mail to schedule an appointment. Every Tuesday at noon, I am also happy to have lunch with anyone who wishes to join me. If you wish to schedule a Tuesday lunch, please contact me at least one day in advance.

DISABILITY SERVICES

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-737-1016.
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1. Overview of the Presidency
August 22, 2016. Overview of the course / Importance of the presidency
August 24, 2016. Creation and constitutional powers of the executive branch
- Required reading for Week 1: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 1

Week 2. Running for President: The Nomination Campaign
August 29, 2016. History of the nomination process
August 31, 2016. Party nomination rules
- Required reading for Week 2: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 2

Week 3. Running for President: The Campaign for Resources
September 5, 2016. NO CLASS (Labor Day holiday)
September 7, 2016. Campaign finance laws and presidential campaign fundraising
- Required reading for the Week 3: Blackboard reading, “Campaign Finance”

Week 4. Running for President: The General Election Campaign
September 12, 2016. The Electoral College and the general election campaign
September 14, 2016. Voting behavior in presidential elections
- Required reading for Week 4: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 3

Week 5. The Aftermath of the Presidential Election: Leading the Public
September 19, 2016. Presidential mandates and public expectations of the president
September 21, 2016. How the president tries to lead the public
- Required reading for Week 5: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 4

Week 6. The President, the Media, and Information Control
September 26, 2016. EXAM 1 (covers all material from weeks 1-5)
September 28, 2016. How the president tries to control the media
- Required reading for Week 6: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 5

Week 7. The President’s Advisers and the Executive Branch
October 3, 2016. The Vice President, First Lady, and cabinet
October 5, 2016. The executive branch
- Required reading for Week 7: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 6, pp. 214-236, chapter 8

Week 8. Presidential Decision Making
October 10, 2016. NO CLASS (Fall break)
October 12, 2016. Organization and decision making styles
- Required reading for Week 8: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 7
Week 9. Presidential Character and the Modern Presidency  
October 17, 2016. Psychological characteristics  
October 19, 2016. Understanding the modern presidency  

Week 10. Presidential Leadership Styles from FDR to Nixon  
October 24, 2016. Assessing the leadership styles of F. Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower  
October 26, 2016. Assessing the leadership styles of Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon  
- Required reading for Week 10: *The Modern American Presidency*, chapters 4-7

Week 11. Presidential Leadership Styles from Regan to Clinton  
October 31, 2016. Assessing the leadership styles of Reagan, Bush, and Clinton  
November 2, 2016. EXAM 2 (covers all material from weeks 6-11)  
- Required reading for Week 11: *The Modern American Presidency*, chapters 9-10

Week 12. The President’s Relationship with Congress  
November 7, 2016. The president’s legislative powers  
November 9, 2016. Checks and balances: the executive branch and the legislative branch  
- Required reading for Week 12: *Presidential Leadership*, chapters 9

Week 13. The President and the Courts  
November 14, 2016. The president’s judicial powers  
November 16, 2016. Checks and balances: the executive branch and the judicial branch  
- Required reading for Week 13: *Presidential Leadership*, chapters 10

Week 14. Economic Policy  
November 21, 2016. The president’s role in shaping the federal budget  
November 23, 2016. NO CLASS (Thanksgiving holiday)  
- Required reading for Week 14: *Presidential Leadership*, chapter 12

Week 15. Domestic and Foreign Policy  
November 28, 2016. The two presidencies thesis / begin film: *Thirteen Days*  
November 30, 2016. Finish film: *Thirteen Days*  
- Required reading for Week 15: *Presidential Leadership*, chapters 11 and 13

Week 16. Evaluating Presidents  
December 5, 2016. Methods of assessing presidents and their legacies / Take-home final exam due

**FINAL EXAM:** December 12, 2016. If you decided not to complete the take-home final exam, you must take the in-class final exam. The in-class final exam is cumulative, covering all of the material listed above. It is scheduled from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Brewster C-101.