PSCI 465
The Executive

Texas A&M University-Texarkana
Spring 2011
Course Syllabus

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GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Catalog Description
A review of the executive branch of the United States, including the historical development, primary responsibilities, and decision making processes of the office, as well as contemporary relationships with the public, Congress, and policy making and implementation.

TIP: Understanding the class format and requirements is essential for your success in the course. Read and rely on this syllabus throughout the term—it provides detailed information followed by the professor and students.

Course Format
This is a web course; there are no face-to-face meetings. Students post topic responses and take examinations on Blackboard and submit an essay to Turnitin.com.

Books
Required:

Recommended:

COURSE OBJECTIVES & METHODS

Student Learning Objectives
• Know the historical developments of the office of the U.S. presidency.
• Know the consistent aspects of the presidency.
• Understand the debate over the executive at the time of the founding and the constitutional framers’ defense of the presidency.
• Understand and be able to describe the presidential electoral process.
• Understand relationships between citizens and the presidency.
• Comprehend interactions between the presidency and other key national policymaking institutions.
particularly Congress.

Teaching Methods
Your professor utilizes a student-centered approach to teaching. The professor endeavors to clearly communicate course expectations and learning outcomes, organize the presentation of course material, closely align examinations with course content, stimulate critical thinking, provide real-world examples, create an atmosphere conducive to learning, set high standards that challenge students, provide helpful feedback on assignments and exams, and facilitate active participation. Students are also encouraged to take advantage of additional assistance outside the course, including the University’s “ASK Center” and technology services.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

The Basics

Requirements at a Glance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Responses</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Total: 600 Points

Curves: Grades are curved upwards if no one in the class earns 100%. This is for the unit response total, quiz total, each exam, and the research essay. Additionally, if no one has earned all available points at the end of the term, then the overall course grade is curved. Any extra-credit points are added after a course curve. Your professor will email everyone in the class information about any curve. If there is no email notification, then there was no curve. Usually, someone earns 100% and there is no curve.

Unit Responses (10 at 10 Points Each) 100 Points

- Post a 1–3 paragraph response to each unit question on the discussion board.
- Your grade for this portion of the course will be based on ten randomly graded unit responses that you have made on time during the term. Grades for your responses will appear under “My Grades.”
- You may work at your own pace, posting a response to a question before the class formally covers the corresponding unit.
- Your response for each unit is due by the end of the unit’s respective week, before 5:00PM Sunday, according to the Course Schedule.
- Missed or late (5:00PM Sunday or later) responses are not eligible for points.
- Attached or emailed postings are not eligible for points. One purpose of posting your unit responses on the discussion board is to provide everyone in the class a chance to read and reflect upon your thoughts on the course material.
- Your responses need to convey thoughtful comprehension and analysis of course content.
- Your responses need to be professional. Use correct spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. Clearly cite the source of any borrowed information. Be courteous and respectful. Avoid grandstanding, ideological or partisan rhetoric, and hateful or prejudicial statements. See “Course Ethics” below.

TIP: Complete your work as early as possible to avoid missing deadlines. This course uses the University’s clock, which may differ from your clock.

Quizzes (10 at 10 Points Each) 100 Points
Course Syllabus

There unit quizzes that you will take on Blackboard (see the “Exams & Quizzes” link on our homepage).
- Each graded quiz is worth 10 points, for a total of 100 possible points.
- Each quiz has 5 multiple-choice and true-or-false questions on the material and is timed (5 minutes).
- Your grade for this portion of the course will be based on ten randomly graded quizzes that you have taken on time during the term. Grades for your quizzes will appear under “My Grades.”
- You may work at your own pace, taking a quiz before the class formally covers the corresponding unit.
- Your quiz for each unit is due by the end of the unit’s respective week, before 5:00PM Sunday, according to the Course Schedule.
- Missed or late (5:00PM Sunday or later) quizzes are not eligible for points.
- Quizzes are not cumulative; each one covers material from a specific unit as noted on the Course Schedule.
- You will need to thoroughly study the course material, such as textbook readings and suggested internet sites, to do well on the quizzes.
- For information about missed quizzes and computer, connection, or user problems, see “Missed Work, Makeups, & Incompletes” below.

**Exams (3 at 100 Points Each)**

- There are three exams for the course that you will take on Blackboard (see the “Exams & Quizzes” link on our homepage).
- Each exam has 50 multiple-choice and true-or-false questions on the material.
- Each exam is available for a week (dates are posted on the Course Schedule). You may take an exam anytime during its availability period.
- Each exam is due by 5:00PM at the end of its availability week.
- Exams are not cumulative; each one covers material from specific units as noted on the Course Schedule.
- You will need to thoroughly study the course material, such as textbook readings and suggested internet sites, to do well on the exams.
- For information about missed exams and computer, connection, or user problems, see “Missed Work, Makeups, & Incompletes” below.

**Research Essay**

The course provides students the opportunity to gain further insights into the subject matter with an evaluative essay. This assignment is due to www.turnitin.com before 5:00PM on April 24. Click on the following link for further information about the essay, including the grading criteria and our class turnitin.com ID and password: Essay.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Course Ethics**

- Be courteous and respectful to students, faculty, and staff. This etiquette is especially important in web courses since we cannot hear the tone of voice or see the facial expression of another person. Avoid personal attacks, offensive remarks, and emotional appeals.
- Avoid using the course as a platform for grandstanding, engaging in ideological or partisan rhetoric, and conveying hateful or prejudicial statements. Back up your comments with substance related to the course material.
- Understand what constitutes plagiarism (see “Academic Integrity” below). You can avoid presenting the work of others as your own by properly citing borrowed material, namely by using quotation marks and citing the author.
Missed Work, Makeups, & Incompletes

- Making up a missed assignment or exam for credit requires a compelling and unavoidable conflict and notification of the professor. The conflict must occur during the entire availability time of the missed course work.
- Computer, connection, or user problems do not excuse missed course work, including low-scored, unanswered, or unsaved exam questions.
- Please call and email the professor immediately and before the 5:00PM deadline if you encounter an uncontrollable situation while taking an exam.
- In the rare event that makeup or late work is accepted, it is not worth more than 80% of the original available points.
- Students needing to withdraw or drop the course must contact the Admissions and Registrar’s Office to complete the process.
- This course follows A&M-Texarkana’s policies regarding enrollment and incomplete grades (see University Catalog).

University Syllabus Statements

Disability Accommodations

Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of ‘F’ in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the University Catalog.

Student Technical Assistance

- Solutions to common problems and frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) for your web-enhanced and online courses are found at this link: http://www.tamut.edu/webcourses/index.php?pageid=37
- If you cannot find your resolution there, you can send in a support request detailing your specific problem here: http://www.tamut.edu/webcourses/gethelp2.php
- Blackboard Helpdesk contacts (Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8AM–5PM):
  - Kevin Williams (main contact) 903-223-1356 kevin.williams@tamut.edu
  - Frank Miller (alternate) 903-223-3156 frank.miller@tamut.edu
  - Nikki Thomson (alternate) 903-223-3083 nikki.thomson@tamut.edu

A&M-Texarkana Email Address

Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE

Course Participation

The schedule is organized on a weekly basis with “units” covering different topics. For each unit, you will find “unit notes” linked on the home page. These unit notes are equivalent to classroom lecture outlines and emphasize important information. The book and your professor can help clarify material presented in the unit notes. See the Course Schedule for details about topics and any activities, such as exam and essay due
dates. For each unit, you may find it useful to follow these steps:

1. Actively read the assigned textbook selections and suggested Internet Resources. As you read the Political Science approach to the study of the U.S. presidency, it will be helpful to reflect on the following questions throughout the term:
   - In what ways did the presidency relate to other actors of the political system, such as Congress, political parties, the cabinet, the public, state legislatures, the Supreme Court, groups, and the media?
   - How did the office of the presidency develop, especially in terms of power?
   - How did the relationship between the presidency and other actors, such as Congress, change?
   - In what ways did the presidency remain the same?
   - What accounts for the consistencies or developments of the presidency at various times: existing constitutional institutions, different personalities, or some kind of cyclical historic force or pattern?
   - Why study the history of the presidency? In other words, how does a past development, relationship, or practice matter for our understanding of the presidency today?

2. Test your comprehension of the material with a five-minute chapter quiz (located under the “Exams & Quizzes” link on our homepage).

3. Draft, proof, and post your response to each unit’s question on the discussion board as early as possible, before the class finishes covering that unit.

Get Started!
Read and understand the Syllabus, Schedule, Web Class Orientation, and Research Essay instructions, and review our textbook.

**Important Course Links**

- [Web Class Orientation](www.turnitin.com)
- [Course Schedule](Chicago Manual of Style)
- [Research Essay](Technical Assistance)
- [Internet Resources](Admissions and Registrar’s Office)