

The American President

GOV 330K 37250
Fall 2024

Instructor: Shannon Bow O'Brien, Ph.D.
Meeting Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday noon-1pm
Location: Mezes B0.306 (basement Mezes)
This class is in a room that has Lectures Online enabled. All lectures will be recorded and available via Lectures Online (or taped if necessary, by the professor) on Canvas.

This class uses the Lectures Online recording system. This system records the audio and video material presented in class for you to review after class. Links for the recordings will appear in the Lectures Online tab on the Canvas page for this class. You will find this tab along the left-side navigation in Canvas.

To review a recording, simply click on the Lectures Online navigation tab and follow the instructions on the page. You can learn more about how to use the Lectures Online system at <http://sites.la.utexas.edu/lecturesonline/students/how-to-access-recordings/>

You can find additional information about Lectures Online at:
<https://sites.la.utexas.edu/lecturesonline/>.

Student Hours: I only have scheduled(booked) 15-minute appointments (not drop in) this semester. Online office hours work best to help as many students as possible.

Online: I will have scheduled (booked) 15-minute appointments on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30am-noon. The booking link will be in the announcements on Canvas.

Any in-person scheduled meetings will be in MEZ 3.226 (my office). These can be arranged by emailing me and making an appointment (based on availability).

Email: shannonbow@utexas.edu
Be sure to include something about the American Presidency class in the subject line. I am teaching American Government, Social Movements and American Presidency this semester so an email saying 'question about class' needs to be more specific since I will have about 2200 students between the three classes.

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Your TA will hold hours to meet with you. These will be posted on Canvas when available.

Unless your question/problem directly involves my teaching assistants, I expect you to contact them first for any class assistance.

Please routinely check Canvas for this class. I post Powerpoint slides, notes and information I feel are important to the class. In addition, we will post your grades online.

Course Description:

The American Presidency can be taught in a number of ways. This semester, I have selected to teach the class through a historical approach. The presidency has changed in many dramatic and significant ways since its inception. If Joe Biden (with all his presidential powers) were to suddenly be dropped into 1789, the citizens of the day would be shocked at the amount of presidential power he wields. However, as citizens of the 21st century, most do not consider the size and scope of the presidency to be unreasonable. In fact, though some people think he has too much power, many others would be willing to grant him greater authority.

In short, the office of the presidency acted and reacted to changes in politics and society. This course will start with George Washington and end with Joe Biden. While I will likely touch on every administration, we can break them into specific eras for study. Changes in the presidency result from tumultuous events (e.g., Garfield's assassination helped spur the creation of the civil service system in federal government) which lead to governmental growth. This is not a history course where we will learn in detail about every administration. However, we can use history to better understand why certain eras of presidency are forgettable and others unforgettable. I do not expect you to be well versed on American history (if you are getting worried) because we are looking at how the presidency drives history. The core point of most topics in this class will revolve around: How was the presidency changed? How did the presidency change society? How did the presidency increase or decrease in power?

Required Readings:

The American Presidency: Origins and Development 1776-2021, Sidney M. Milkis and Michael Nelson, 9th edition, Sage/CQ Press. ISBN: 9781071824610

I also reserve the right to assign additional readings from time to time if I feel they are needed. Any additional readings will be added Canvas and also announced in class.

Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA)

The materials for this class are available through the Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA) program, a new initiative between UT Austin, The University Co-op and textbook publishers to significantly reduce the cost of digital course materials for students. You are automatically opted into the program but can easily opt-out (and back in) via Canvas through the 12th class day. If you remain opted-in at the end of the 12th class day you will receive a bill through your "What I Owe" page and have until the end of the 18th class day to pay and retain access. If you do not pay by the 18th class day, you will lose access to the materials after the 20th class day and your charge will be removed. More information about the LTA program is available at <https://www.universitycoop.com/longhorn-textbook-access>

Grades:

Grades will based on the following:

Test 1	Sept 27 (Friday)	25%
Test 2	Oct 30 (Wednesday)	25%
Test 3	Dec 9 (Monday)	25%
Short Assignment #1	September 23 (Wednesday)	5%
Submission of Topic for Longer Paper	October 4 (Friday)	1%
Longer Paper Assignment	November 15 by 11:59pm (Friday)	19%

All Tests are IN PERSON this semester in the classroom during class time on the assigned dates

Paper Assignments will be turned in ONLINE in Canvas this semester

If you become ill and cannot participate in the course, you must contact the professor and/or the Dean of Student's office about your situation.

If attendance/participation/interest becomes extremely low, I may begin to take attendance. If I exercise this option, I will announce it in class, on Canvas, and with the re-weighted grade scale. However, attendance is NOT required for this course. (Translation: I don't take attendance.)

I also reserve the right to change the grading system as I see fit during the semester. This may include but is not limited to additional paper assignments (if I determine they are needed) or moving the test dates to accommodate unforeseen circumstances (think hurricanes and natural disasters, not doctor's appointments).

Grade Scale:

This semester, the University will begin to utilize a plus/minus system. Here is the scale I will use for the class for grades. Because of the plus/minus system, grades are NOT rounded up or down. You earn your grade based on performance.

A:	93-100	C:	73-76.99
A-:	90-92.99	C-:	70-72.99
B+:	87-89.99	D+:	67-69.99
B:	83-86.99	D:	63-66.99
B-:	80-82.99	D-:	60-62.99
C+:	77-79.99	F:	Less than 60

Exams

Three tests will be given. They will multiple choice though I reserve the right to change the format. They will cover material presented in lectures and in the readings from the text, as well as any other material assigned/presented in class (including videos if I show any). The last exam is **NOT** cumulative and will only cover material presented since the previous exam. However, most of concepts in this course build upon each other so you will be expected to retain information from earlier portions of the class.

You will be expected to work independently on each exam with zero collaboration while taking the exam.

Paper Assignments

You will have **two** paper assignments. These assignments will be posted on Canvas before their due date.

The first assignment will be short assignments focusing upon elements of the executive branch.

The second assignment will be a longer paper, approximately 8-10 pages double spaced. Cover pages and citation pages do NOT count towards page counts.

The prompt for the second assignment will be released later but these are partial prompts to give you an idea (they will be more extensive):

1) Presidential power. Many presidents have changed the office in one way or another. Pick an event/situation, explain how the president/executive branch responded, and explain how it expanded or contracted presidential power.

OR

2) Scandal. Write on a well-established (translation: there is reliable documented evidence backing the event up) scandal that involved a president or impacted the presidency.

If your turned in assignment is functionally identical to another student, you will both fail the assignment with a 0 (zero) regardless of which one copied it and which one is copied from.

You will upload all your assignments to Canvas.

Late papers will be penalized. For every calendar day a paper is late (including weekends, breaks, and non-class days), it will be penalized 5% of the total grade a day until 50%. Additional late penalties will not be assessed after 50% though you may be graded lower than 50% for incorrect information.

- These papers assignment days are noted on the calendar at the back of this syllabus. They will be posted to Canvas at least a week prior to their due day.
- You will be expected to fill out the form (for paper 2) in its entirety. Incorrect information is always wrong.
- These forms introduce you to aspects of the American presidency. They are in this format this semester to facilitate grading. The information collected on the forms would mirror what would be expected if you were to research and write a short paper for the course.

Papers will be graded on a 5 point scale (yes I will give quarter and half points). 1 will be the lowest and 5 will be full points. (5=100%, 4.75=95%. 4.5=90%, 4.25=85%, etc)

All assignment grades can only be questioned or challenged for 2 weeks after the date the grades are released back to the class. If the last assignment is returned with less than 2 weeks of the semester left, then the last day of class is the last day to challenge a paper grade. Only the professor (not the TAs) has the authority to change a paper grade (unless it is a minor or obvious calculation error). If the grade is not questioned or challenged in this time frame, it stands as recorded. This is designed to encourage students to retrieve their papers and also to not question grades in December that were handed back in September because they decide they do not like their final class grade.

Late papers are only accepted until December 2, 2024.

Class Recordings: Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Academic Dishonesty/Cheating

You will be expected to adhere to the UT Honor Code: *The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.*

Though obvious, cheating is not allowed on any assignments. Plagiarism is prohibited. It refers to copying any work from any source (electronic, paper, etc.) without noting/citing its original source. It is important to note that using ideas (and not just quotes) from other sources without proper citation also counts as plagiarism. For additional information on these items, see the University General Information Catalog at:

<https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/> and <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>. Any assignments turned in will be assumed to be the final version of the assignment and any inappropriate material will be considered intentional and not accidental.

The creation of artificial intelligence tools for widespread use is an exciting innovation. These tools have both appropriate and inappropriate uses in classwork. Using artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT) in this class **is strictly prohibited**. This includes using AI to generate ideas, outline an approach, answer questions, solve problems, or create original language. All work in this course must be your own or created in group work, where allowed.

Any class materials may not be uploaded onto 3rd party websites without the professor's explicit permission. If you do so, it will be considered a violation of the honor code. The professor has the right (even after the class is completed) to submit these violations to Judicial Affairs for adjudication.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>

Canvas Stuff

I will attempt to use Canvas as a way to provide information to the class. In the past, I have regularly made RTF versions of my Powerpoint slides available prior to class. However, if I encounter problems utilizing Canvas, I may shift my materials (including test guides and other things) to another website devoted to making material available to the class. I will announce any changes of this sort to the class.

I will try to post on Canvas review sheets prior to each exam. These sheets should not be considered the definitive study guide for the test. Rather, they are a list of major concepts and ideas you should definitely know for the exam.

Additional information

Do NOT phone or email us about a grade (i.e. "What did I get?"). We will post grades electronically as soon as practical.

If you need extra time on a test and/or require special physical accommodations, please contact me in confidence as soon as possible at the beginning of the course. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs within the guidelines set forth by the University.

Students with disabilities: The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259 (Videophone: 512-410-6644) or <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

Accessible/Compliant Statement: If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). You may refer to SSD's website for contact and more information:<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations.

Accessible, Inclusive, and Compliant Statement: The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information:<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Instructor Survey/Evaluation:

An evaluation of the course and instructor will be conducted at the end of the semester using the approved UT Course/Instructor evaluation forms.

Undergraduate Student Drop Policy

From the 1st through the 12th class day, an undergraduate student can drop a course via the web and receive a refund, if eligible. From the 13th through the university's academic drop deadline, a student may Q drop a course with approval from the Dean, and departmental advisor.

Religious Holy Days: "By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence for a religious holy day as far in advance as possible of the date of observance. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence."

Emergency Evacuation Policy

In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class.

Information can be found here for preparedness: <https://preparedness.utexas.edu/safety/emergency-terms>

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>

Restricting Information: If you want your personal information restricted in the directory, the information is located here: <https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/records/restrictmyinfo>

Make-up exams/Excused Absences

Absences on exam days may be excused if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, university, or legal obligation. Unexcused absences from examinations will result in a score of zero for that exam.

I **STRONGLY** encourage you not to miss an exam. The make up may be different from the exam given to the rest of the class. It may include an essay format, but the exam format is at my discretion.

One more thing: If a true emergency occurs that you know you can document, take care of yourself first and we will sort it out later. You do not need to call me from the ER or jail to let us know you won't be there. In those situations, you have bigger problems than this class at that moment in time.

Class Calendar

The readings for this day are the readings I expect you to have done PRIOR to that day. This calendar is based on my best estimation of how long it will take to go through the material. On occasion through the semester, I *may* get behind a day or two depending on how long it takes to cover the topic. However, I will try to refrain from getting ahead, and tests will **ALWAYS** only cover the chapters noted in the syllabus.

	Classroom Schedule	Assignments
August 26 Monday	Classes start. Pass out Syllabus and Overview	
August 28 Wednesday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency	

August 30 Friday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency	
September 2 Monday	No Class, Labor Day	
September 4 Wednesday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency Chapter 3: Bringing the Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams	
September 6 Friday	Reading Day	
September 9 Monday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency Chapter 3: Bringing the Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams	
September 11 Wednesday	Chapter 3: Bringing the Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams	
September 13 Friday	Chapter 3: Bringing the Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams	
September 16 Monday	Chapter 3: Bringing the Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism	
September 18 Wednesday	Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism	
September 20 Friday	Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism	
September 23 Monday	Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism/ Chapter 5: The Age of Jackson	Assignment 1
September 25 Wednesday	Chapter 5: The Age of Jackson	
September 27 Friday	Test 1 (1,2,3,4,5)	Test 1 (1,2,3,4,5)
September 30 Monday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln	
October 2 Wednesday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln	
October 4 Friday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power	Submission of topic for longer paper due
October 7 Monday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power	

October 9 Wednesday	Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power	
October 11 Friday	Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson	
October 14 Monday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson	
October 16 Wednesday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson	
October 18 Friday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson	
October 21 Monday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism	
October 23 Wednesday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism	
October 25 Friday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism/Ch 10 if time	
October 28 Monday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism/ Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency FDR to Eisenhower	
October 30 Wednesday	Test 2 (6,7,8,9)	Test 2 (6,7,8,9)
November 1 Friday	Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency FDR to Eisenhower	
November 4 Monday	Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency FDR to Eisenhower Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter	
November 6 Wednesday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter	
November 8 Friday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and GHW Bush and Bill Clinton	
November 11 Monday	Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and GHW Bush and Bill Clinton	
November 13 Wednesday	Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power?	
November 15 Friday	Chapter 12 A Restoration of Presidential Power?/Chapter 13	Long Paper Due
November 18 Monday	Chapter 13: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Unilateral Presidential Power	

November 20 Wednesday	Chapter 13: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Unilateral Presidential Power	
November 22 Friday	Chapter 13: Chapter 13: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Unilateral Presidential Power	
November 25 Monday	No Class, Fall Break	
November 27 Wednesday	No Class, Fall Break	
November 29 Friday	No Class, Fall Break	
December 2 Monday	Chapter 13: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Unilateral Presidential Power	Last day to turn in any missing assignments
December 4 Wednesday	Chapter 14: Donald Trump, Joseph Biden, and the Struggle for a Peaceful Transfer of Power	
December 6 Friday	Chapter 14: Donald Trump, Joseph Biden, and the Struggle for a Peaceful Transfer of Power	
December 9 Monday	Test 3	Test 3 (10, 11, 12, 13, 14)