

Course Information

Title: Leadership and the American Presidency

Course Number: Government 308

Course Facilitators:

Dr. Joshua Walker

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Credits: Three credit course that meets once per week

Class Meetings: Class sessions are scheduled on Tuesday from 4:30-7:00pm and Fridays from 9:00am
12:00pm

Semester/Year: Summer 2019

Meeting Location: Hall of the States - 444 N Capitol St. NW + various locations as noted

TA Contact Information

Teaching Assistant: Emma Leach

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"The presidency had made every man who occupied it, no matter how small, bigger than he was; and no matter how big, not big enough for its demands."

- Lyndon B. Johnson

"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."

-Ronald Reagan

Course Description:

Leadership and the American Presidency will help students advance their own leadership development by examining the leadership journeys of the individuals who have held the office of the President. While there is no single course that can create a leader, this course through experiential learning, lectures, readings, guest speakers and real world application will help develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a responsible citizen leader. This course examines selected theories and research on presidential leadership.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

The ultimate purpose of this course is to help students advance in their personal leadership journey through studying real history, real leaders and real world examples. Students will embark on a Presidential Leadership Journey, paralleling the experiences and challenges of the men who held the executive office with their own development. This hands on and interactive course will introduce the building blocks of successful leadership through presidential case studies, interaction and access to

prominent leaders and a variety of leadership challenges and scenarios. Using Washington, DC as their classroom, students will cultivate themselves as leaders through study, reflection and action.

By the end of this course, students will have an understanding of the different models and styles of leadership that have been effectively implemented in the oval office. Students will be able to cite relevant case studies, primary sources and examples from across the history of the American Presidency. Students will be able to assess their assets, deconstruct decision making, and implement a toolkit to meet challenges. Students will be able to compare and analyze different approaches to leadership grounded in history, theory and real life.

Assessment

Students will be expected to write reflections, speeches and proposals. Students grades will be based on participation and performance on assignments throughout the semester. Refer to appendices at end of syllabus for explanations and expectations of each assignment.

Weekly Participation & Reflection Pieces	25%
Opinion Editorial "OpEd" See Appendix 1 <i>Due: Tuesday, June 28 by 11:59pm</i>	20%
Final Presentation Outline <i>Due: Friday, July 12 by 11:59pm</i>	10%
Presidential Leadership Symposium Assignment <i>Due: Monday July 22 by 11:59pm</i> See Appendix 2	20%
Final Presentation <i>Due: Friday, July 26</i>	25%

Late assignments will be penalized 5 points for each day late. Incompletes will not be allowed. Problems with technology are not an acceptable reason for late work (backup your work!)

Grading Scale

The grading scale observed for this course is reflective of George Mason University's standard.

100-94: A	79-77: C+
93-90: A-	76-73: C
89-87: B+	72-70: C-
86-83: B	69-63: D
82-80: B-	62 or less: F

Policies

All assigned readings are to be completed before class to participate in discussions and activities.

Course Expectations and Requirements

All students are expected to attend class and to come fully prepared to participate having read all required readings as outlined. Absences will negatively affect your participation grade.

1. *Expect Respect. Agree to Disagree* - A student's personal leadership journey always is accompanied by support and discourse. While we encourage students to challenge each other on substance we expect the highest degree of respect for each other and for people's opinions.

2. *Be a Presence* - Attending class must be a priority for you and if it is not, this is the wrong course for you. We all encounter situations where events overtake us. If you will not make it to class please let us know ahead of time – not after the fact. In this age of mobile phones, email, Facebook and Twitter, there are rarely excuses for not informing us ahead of time. If you miss a class we may ask you to prepare an 800 word overview of the readings to be submitted before the start of the next class. This is not punitive. This is so that we can evaluate whether you have understood the readings for that week's class.

3. *Anticipate Need* - Do not come to class unprepared. We expect that you will complete the assigned reading and that you will be able to summarize them and address specific issues raised in those readings when called upon in class. We expect you to have an understanding of the current leadership challenges faced by policymakers and legislators here in Washington DC. If you need recommendations for further reading beyond what is assigned or recommended, please feel free ask.

4. *Contribute* - Class participation is about what and how you contribute, not just your attendance. We expect you to read with a critical eye and consider the arguments the authors are making in their pieces. Participation is also more than asking the occasional question and thus you will be evaluated on the quality of your contribution and how it furthers the discussion. We also hope that you will share your own assessments, experiences and analysis of the issues we are discussing. In the end you will learn as much (if not more) from your peers and colleagues as from your professors.

5. *Seek to Understand* - Understanding is not about finding a good range of sources but about your analysis of those sources and the arguments you develop based on those sources. We are fair but tough graders and expect your work to be the product of significant effort. This means we expect thoroughly researched, thought-through and well-written pieces to include -- proper grammar, correct spelling, and correct citations. Last minute work rarely meets these standards, so please plan ahead.

Course Materials

Most readings will be available online through Blackboard, but it is recommended that you purchase the required readings below. Kindle versions are acceptable as well. Readings should be completed prior to the class under which they are listed.

Textbooks

- Nye, Joseph S. (2013). *Presidential leadership and the creation of the American era*. Princeton University Press.
- Doris Kearns Goodwin - *Leadership: In Turbulent Times** Provided

Course Outline

This course is designed around the Presidential Leadership Journey that coincides with a student's trajectory of learning and their own leadership potential. Recognizing that leadership is not linear, this course will integrate case studies, experiences and self reflection in order to develop a holistic leadership development experience.

The Presidential Leadership Journey

The Leadership Journey was developed as an opportunity to discover personal leadership through the lens of the American presidency and the exemplary men who have served in office. Themes are reflective

of the Presidential leadership journeys, but also representative of the leadership journeys that we all embark upon throughout life. Washington, DC will serve as an experiential classroom as we engage in off site, hands-on learning opportunities aligning with Leadership Journey themes.

1) **The Origins** – The Foundations of a Leader

Students will examine the origins of our nation’s leaders and the lessons learned in their formative years including inspiration for character, values, and the other building blocks of leadership. They will analyze which elements of their story most shaped their experiences in the White House. Students will then identify personal values and defining moments as well as issues and causes that they find important and compelling.

2) **The Team** – From Kitchen Cabinet to Team of Rivals

This theme explores the critical process by which leaders find, select, develop and maintain the relationships that help or hinder their ability to lead. Students will examine their personal team and how this contributes to their overall effectiveness as a leader.

3) **The First 100 Days** – Crafting, Sharing and Launching the Vision

This theme considers the crucial importance of first impressions and the start of any leadership position in establishing the tone of an administration and laying the foundation on which an organization will be built. Developing a strategic plan will be a focus of The First 100 Days.

4) **The State of the Union** – Communicating, Agenda Setting and Messaging

The State of the Union is the culmination of an administration’s efforts to develop systems, prioritize goals, set an agenda, and then communicate those to the American people. Students will examine presidential strategy and communication and how it can launch or cripple an administration’s agenda. They will communicate their own plans, and inspire others to action.

5) **The Challenges** – The Opposition, Press and Pressure

No matter how effective or popular a leader may be, challenges will arise that will hinder their vision. Students will explore how leaders have navigated challenges throughout their tenures and what success or failure in the face of adversity may look like.

6) **The Inevitable Crisis** – From Controversy to Tragedy

This theme examines challenges to leadership that occur with very little lead time (if any) and require immediate action. Building emotional intelligence can help leaders to respond in times of crisis. As students have built a “tool kit” they will be prepared to tackle ambiguous and challenging crises.

7) **The Renewal** – Adapting, Reflecting and Reprioritizing

This theme acknowledges that despite best efforts, plans may go awry. Resilience will be examined as students understand the importance of adapting and emerging from challenges or a crisis.

8) **The Legacy** – The Farewell Address

The lesson for students in this theme is not to work to create a legacy, but to do those things that will carry on beyond their time as leaders and leave their organization or country in a better place. In a forward-thinking way, students will thoughtfully reflect on the skills they have built and the growth they’ve experienced throughout their journey.

Prologue: Legacy - The Farewell Address

How do I want to be remembered?

Beginning with the end in mind, the course will look at the legacy of a President and contemplate their own desired impression or mark they want to leave on the world.

Week 1: Introductory Class

Sunday, June 9: 10:00am-12:30pm

Class Location: George Washington University - District House Rm. TBD

Introductions by staff, professors and students. Review of expectations and experiences for the course.

Readings:

1. The Constitution and Presidential Prerogative. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (Pgs. 3-11).
2. Nye Jr, J. S. (2013). Preface & Chapters 1-2 *Presidential leadership and the creation of the American era*. Princeton University Press. (pp. 1-74).
3. [Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution](#)
4. [Washington's Farewell Address](#)

Optional:

1. Whitney, G. (2003). *American Presidents: Farewell Messages to the Nation, 1796-2001*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
2. [Eisenhower's Farewell Address](#)
3. [Nixon's Farewell Remarks to White House Cabinet and Staff](#)
4. [Reagan's Farewell Address](#)
5. [Obama's Farewell Address](#)

The Origins – The Foundations of a Leader

What in my life has shaped me?

Students will examine the origins of our nation's leaders and the lessons that they learned during their formative years that shaped their experiences in the White House. They will then identify personal values and strengths as well as issues and causes that they find important and compelling.

Week 1: Core Values

Friday, June 14 - 9:30am-1:00pm

Class Location: Mount Vernon

*depart from GW at 8:45am - details to follow

Please wear LTAP tshirts

Readings:

1. Abshire, D. (1998). *The Character of George Washington*. Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of the Presidency.

Optional:

1. Landy, M. & Milkis, S. (2000). *Presidential Greatness*. Chp. 2: George Washington: Greatness and the Limits of the Constitutional Presidency (pp. 12-39).

The Team – The Company You Keep

With whom do I surround myself?

All Presidents model the critical process by which leaders find, select, develop and maintain the relationships that help or hinder their ability to lead. Students will identify and analyze their own support network or “Kitchen Cabinet” and also begin to build coalitions based on common interests or varied strengths, and collaborate with individuals who may offer new perspectives or expertise.

Week 2: The Team

Tuesday, June 18: 4:30pm-7:00pm

Class Location: George Washington University - District House Rm. TBD

Readings:

1. Goodwin, Doris Kearns. Chapter 9: Transformational Leadership. *Leadership in Turbulent Times*.
2. Johnson, Whitney. “Build an A-Team”. *Harvard Business Review*.
<https://hbr.org/webinar/2018/12/https-hbrwebinars-wins-net-hbr1214181mweb>

Due:

Participation: Complete feedback form #1 (google form) as directed in weekly email by 11:59pm

Week 2: The Team

Friday, June 21- 9:30am-1:00pm

Class Location: President Lincoln’s Cottage
140 Rock Creek Church Rd NW, Washington, DC 20011

Readings:

1. "An Uneasy Alliance, Presidents and Their Party" Simendinger, Alexis (pg. 82-88)
2. Excerpt of July 4th Message to Congress (July 4, 1861)
3. <http://millercenter.org/president/lincoln/speeches/speech-3508>
4. [Revoking General Hunter’s Order of Military Emancipation \(May 19, 1862\)](#)
5. [Emancipation Proclamation \(January 1, 1863\)](#)
6. [Letter to Nathaniel Banks \(August 5, 1863\)](#)
7. [Gettysburg Address \(November 19, 1863\)](#)

Optional:

1. [Letter to James Conkling \(August 26, 1863\)](#)

Due:

Assignment: Submit op-ed topic by 11:59pm

The First One Hundred Days - Crafting, Sharing and Launching a Vision

What is my vision for a better world?

This theme will look at the importance of the student of any leadership position in establishing the tone of an administration and laying the foundation on which the organization will be built. This beginning has everything to do with crafting a vision, communicating it, and launching that vision in the best way possible.

As agents of change, good leaders will set lofty goals and then empower others to help carry out that vision. The importance of a strong (though not necessarily flashy) start for any leader can not be overstated.

Week 3: Vision Plans

Tuesday, June 25 - 4:30pm-7:00pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.233/235

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings:

1. Pfiffner, James. The First Hundred Days Myth and Mystique (p. 91-96). Found in Angerholzer et. al (2016). *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, Case Studies in Presidential Leadership, 2nd Edition.
2. The Original Hundred Days: Franklin D. Roosevelt. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (Pgs. 97-103)
3. The First Hundred Days: Ronald Reagan. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (pg. 128-130)

The State of the Union – Communicating, Agenda Setting and Messaging

How do I call others to action?

The State of the Union examines the crafting of a vision and the means of communicating the goals and ideals of a presidential administration. Students will examine presidential communication and how it can launch or cripple an administration's agenda. Forged upon their understanding of their personal strengths and values, students will then craft a larger vision and mission, communicate their plan, and inspire others to action.

Week 3: Oratory Workshop

Friday, June 28 - 9:30am-1:00pm

Class Location: Ford's Theatre

Readings:

1. Smith, S. (2014, November). Radio: FDR's 'Natural Gift.' Retrieved from: <http://www.americanradioworks.org/segments/fdr-radio/>.
2. Cannon, L (2004, June 6). Why Reagan was the 'great communicator.' *USA Today*. Retrieved from: http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2004-06-06-cannon_x.htm.

Optional:

1. [President Reagan's Westminster Speech](#)

DUE:

Assignment:

Op-Ed Due by 11:59pm

Week 4: Presidential Context

Tuesday July 2 - 9:00am-11:30am

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.233/235

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings:

1. [Article II, U.S. Constitution](#) (Review)
2. Edwards, George C. III (2016). The Nature of Presidential Leadership (p. 24-29) Found in Angerholzer et. al (2016). *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*, Case Studies in Presidential Leadership, 2nd Edition.

Due:

**Participation: Complete feedback form #2 (google form) as directed in weekly email by 11:59pm
Group Assignment Topic Due by 11:59pm**

Challenges & Crisis

How do I handle adversity? What tools and assets do I have to emerge from the toughest of times?

No matter how effective or popular a leader may be, challenges will arise that will hinder their vision. Students will explore how Presidents have navigated challenges throughout their tenures and what success or failure in the face of adversity may look like.

Week 5: Challenges

Tuesday, July 9 - 4:30pm-7:00pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.233/235

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings:

1. "The 3AM Phone Call, Presidential Crisis Management" Bohn, Michael (pg. 254-259). *Triumphs and Tragedies of The Modern Presidency*
2. "Lyndon B. Johnson: Committed Warrior Undone by Vietnam". *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*.
3. Bush, George W. "Day of Fire" (pgs. 126-152). *Decisions Points*.*

Week 5: Crisis

Friday, July 12 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Class Location: Holocaust Memorial Museum

100 Raoul Wallenberg Pl SW

Readings:

1. Documents relating to the transition from Democracy to Dictatorship.
<https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20091123-ljh-dictatorship.pdf>

Due:

Participation: Complete feedback form #3 (google form) as directed in weekly email by 11:59pm

Assignment: Outline of Final Presentation Due by 11:59pm

The Renewal – Adapting, Reflecting, and Reprioritizing

How do I maintain focus through the duration of my journey?

This theme acknowledges that despite best efforts, plans may go awry and administrations will need to reset their priorities. Teams will be challenged to move forward or adjust course with their vision and final deliverable. They will ultimately present their final efforts to experts and leaders in their fields or disciplines.

Week 6: Building Resilience

Tuesday, July 16 - 4:30pm-7:00pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.233/235

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings:

1. McCullough, David (2017). *The American Spirit: Who we are and what we stand for*. Knowing Who We Are (p. 105-119). Address at Hillsdale College.
2. Crayton, Kareem. "We Shall Overcome, Presidential Leadership and Civil Rights". *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (pg. 169-179)

Week 6: The Renewal

Friday, July 19/20

Class Location: UVA Miller Center

A logistics email will be sent out for information regarding bus time, attire, etc.

Readings:

1. McCullough, David. "The Spirit of Jefferson" (Pgs. 25-33). *The American Spirit*.
2. [Washington's Farewell Address](#)
3. TBD: Readings relevant to the Presidential Leadership Symposium will be announced

Due:

Assignment: PLS Assignment due Monday, July 22nd by 11:59pm

Week 7: The Renewal

Tuesday, July 23 - 4:00pm-6:30pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.233/235

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings:

1. Keith, T. (2017, January). Retrieved from:
<http://www.npr.org/2017/01/10/509052320/obamas-farewell-address-how-presidents-use-this-moment-of-reflection>

2. Brinkley, A. (2013, August). The legacy of John F. Kennedy. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/08/the-legacy-of-john-f-kennedy/309499/>
3. Hayward, S. (2014, January). Reagan's farewell address at 25. *The American*. Retrieved from <https://www.aei.org/publication/reagans-farewell-address-at-25/>
4. [Eisenhower's Farewell Address](#)

Due:

Participation: Complete feedback form #4 (google form) as directed in weekly email by 11:59pm

Back to the Legacy – The Farewell Address

How do I want to be remembered?

Legacy is an inevitable albeit most times unplanned aspect of a President's lasting impression on the world. The lesson for students in this theme is not to work to create a legacy, but to do those things that will carry on beyond their time as leaders and leave their organization and the country in a better place. In a forward-thinking way, students will thoughtfully reflect on the skills they have built and the growth they've experienced throughout their journey.

Week 7: The Legacy

Friday, July 26 – 9:30am-12:00pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.TBD

444 North Capitol St. NW

Due:

Assignment: Final Presentation

Week 8: The Legacy

Tuesday, July 30: 4:00pm-7:00pm

Class Location: Hall of the States

Rm.285

444 North Capitol St. NW

Readings: TBD

Due: Feedback form #5 and Final End of Summer Form (Google Form) by 11:59pm

Integrity and Code of Conduct

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

A full text of the Honor Code is available at: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

A good guide to the problem of plagiarism and how to avoid it is available at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>. You will even find a useful plagiarism exercise.

Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (statement of English Department at George Mason University) Plagiarism and the Internet: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's email without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not. Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Websites have their own requirements for linking to their material. (Virginia Montecino)

Note: Student Accommodation / Disability

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703 993 2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

APPENDIX 1: Op-Ed Piece

DUE: June 20

This assignment is a chance for you to put together one of the primary documents by which national security issues are debated in the public arena – the Opinion Editorial, or “OpEd.” Most Op-Eds relate to current news events, but they may also provide a creative approach to an old problem. An OpEd is distinct from an “editorial” which is put together by an editorial board and printed as the collective view of a newspaper. An OpEd, on the other hand, is from an outside contributor. While based on your views, they should be balanced with objective factual information. While most Op-Ed’s are 500-800 words in length, for purposes of our assignment, you will write an 800 word piece, the length of a longer Op-Ed. A few more details:

1. Please submit your paper in 12pt Times New Roman font with single spacing.
2. Make sure your name is on the paper as well as the date.
3. You will need to craft a short “byline” as well. See attached for an example.

Oh, and one more thing – Op-Eds benefit from catchy titles.

As this is a course assignment we will have to make some modifications. Most OpEd writers have a decent command of their topics so their ideas are often original commentary and citations are not an issue. I suspect you all will have original ideas as well. There is no shame in the policy arena for adapting what others have done to turn ideas into action – but you must acknowledge that in your work. If you take an idea from someone else, give them credit. What I will ask for is a page following your op-ed that includes a bibliography of sources consulted. You should list the Sources Consulted using bibliographic formats found in a recognized style guide such as the Chicago Manual of Style. Citation guides may be found at: <http://libguides.gwu.edu/content.php?pid=8881>

In terms of topics, you can write on any relevant policy topic of your choosing but you must be able to argue a particular position or address a specific issue that rises to a level where senior policymakers might need to address it. This does not have to be on an inherently political issue.

If you have any questions about your topic – just ask.

APPENDIX 2: PLS Assignment

Presidential Leadership Symposium Outline

The Presidential Leadership Symposium will be a capstone experience of the Institute's Leadership and American Presidency (LTAP) summer program exploring different contexts in which President's served and led and their respective worldviews.

This assignment will serve as your final reflection with LTAP. The journey to becoming a leader is often shaped by how you view the world. Your experience in life is influenced by your beliefs. This outline will serve as a self reflection on your leadership journey. The question students will need to answer is, "How did you arrive to your world view"? Please use what you've learned throughout "The Leadership Journey" outlined through the American Presidency course to address the following questions in your final outline:

1. How did you arrive to LTAP? (your origin story)
2. What are your core beliefs and where do they come from?
3. Where does your inspiration come from? What motivates you?
4. Where will your leadership experience take you?

Throughout the semester students are responsible for submitting reflections. Students will need to incorporate their responses into their final briefing paper. Students will include original responses while explaining how they have changed since the program started, or why their responses are still the same.

The PLS Outline needs to include the following:

1. Three of the steps in the Presidential Leadership Journey
2. Previous guiding questions/reflections from the weekly surveys
3. Readings/conversations from the Presidential Leadership Symposium
4. Previous readings/class discussions

1-2 pages, Times New Roman Font, size 12