

## **Leadership and the American Presidency Summer 2021 Syllabus**

**Course Number:** Government 308

### **Course Facilitators:**

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**Credits:** Three credit course that meets once per week

### **Class Meetings:**

Fridays 9am-11:30am

**Semester/Year:** Fall 2021 2021

**Meeting Location:** 850 16th Street, NW and various locations in Washington, DC

**Teaching Assistant:** Collin Miller; collinmmiller@outlook.com

*“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 via virtual site experiences with partners, 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 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. With Washington, DC brought to them, 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	25%
Opinion Editorial “OpEd” - Due: September 17 <i>Topic Due: September 10</i>	20%
Reflection Assignment - Due: October 1	15%
Policy Memo - Due: October 22	15%
Final Presentation - Due: November 19 <i>Topic Due: November 10</i>	25%

Participation will include class attendance, constructive discussion and commentary during class, completion of feedback forms as directed by RRPFI, and additional “mini-assignments” as outlined in the syllabus and/or detailed in class. All participation requirements outside of attendance and discussion during class will be introduced in class and via email and are expected to be complete by class time the following week.

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.
- *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency, Case Studies in Presidential Leadership*, 2nd Edition. \*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 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.

### 4) 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.

### 5) 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 (such as the executive powers in times of war as well as economic crisis). As students have built a "tool kit" they will be prepared to tackle ambiguous and challenging crises.

### 6) 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.

### 7) 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. Students will analyze the impacts presidents leave in both their immediate departure and looking back decades and centuries later. In a forward-thinking way, students will also 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:

**Friday, August 27: 9:00am-11:30am**

**Location: RRI**

Professor(s): Glenn Nye and Gabe Scheinmann

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. The Federalist Papers
  - a. [Federalist 1](#)
  - b. [Federalist 68](#)
  - c. [Federalist 69](#)
  - d. [Federalist 70](#)
4. [Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution](#)

## 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 3:

**Wednesday, September 8 - 5:30pm-8:00pm**

**Location: RRI**

Professor: Gabe Scheinmann

#### Readings:

1. [Washington's Farewell Address](#)
2. [Reagan's Farewell Address](#)
3. [Obama's Farewell Address](#).

#### Optional:

Whitney, G. (2003). *American Presidents: Farewell Messages to the Nation, 1796-2001*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

[Eisenhower's Farewell Address](#)

[Nixon's Farewell Remarks to White House Cabinet and Staff](#)

**Friday, September 10: 9:00-11:30am**

**Location: George Washington's Mount Vernon**

**Readings:**

- a. Abshire, D. (1998). *The Character of George Washington*. Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of the Presidency.
- b. Landy, M. & Milkis, S. (2000). *Presidential Greatness*. Chp. 2: George Washington: Greatness and the Limits of the Constitutional Presidency (pp. 12-39).
- c. <https://www.societyofthecincinnati.org/about/name>

**Due:**

Assignment: Topic due to TA by 11:59pm

Participation: Feedback Form #1 on JSeptember 12 at 11:59pm

**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 4:**

**Friday, September 17 9:00am-11:30am**

**Location: RRI Building**

Professor: Glenn Nye

**Readings:**

1. Goodwin, Doris Kearns. Chapter 9: Transformational Leadership. *Leadership in Turbulent Times*.
2. Goodwin, Doris Kearns (2005). *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. Introduction - Pgs. xv-xix
1. Johnson, Whitney. “Build an A-Team”. *Harvard Business Review*.  
<https://hbr.org/webinar/2018/12/https-hbrwebinars-wins-net-hbr1214181mweb>

**Due:**

Assignment: Op-Ed Topic due at 11:59pm

**Week 5:**

**Friday, September 24-25**

**Location: UVA Away Trip**

**Readings:**

1. Various Readings will be assigned

## Week 6: The Team (Continued)

**Friday, October 1- 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: RRI**

Professor: Glenn Nye

### Readings:

1. Simendinger, Alexis, "An Uneasy Alliance, Presidents and Their Party." *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency* (pg. 82-88).
2. [Excerpt of July 4th Message to Congress \(July 4, 1861\)](#)
3. <http://millercenter.org/president/lincoln/speeches/speech-3508>

### Due:

Assignment: Reflection Assignment due at 11:59pm

## Week 7:

**Friday, October 8- 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: President Lincoln's Cottage**

### Readings:

- 1.. [Revoking General Hunter's Order of Military Emancipation \(May 19, 1862\)](#)
2. [Emancipation Proclamation \(January 1, 1863\)](#)
3. [Letter to Nathaniel Banks \(August 5, 1863\)](#)
4. [Gettysburg Address \(November 19, 1863\)](#)hundred

### Optional:

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

## 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 8: Vision Plans

**Friday, October 15- 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: RRI**

Professor: Glenn Nye

**Readings:**

1. The Original Hundred Days: Franklin D. Roosevelt. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (Pgs. 97-103)
2. The First Hundred Days: Ronald Reagan. *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*. (pg. 128-130)
3. Various State of the Union Speeches
4. 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.
5. U.S. News and World Report. Soumitra Dutta and Matthew Fraser. "Barack Obama and the Facebook Election."  
<https://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2008/11/19/barack-obama-and-the-facebook-election>
6. Anderson; Toor; Rainie; Smith. Pew Research Center. *Activism in the Social Media Age*.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/07/11/public-attitudes-toward-political-engagement-on-social-media/>
7. [Clinton Presidential Campaign Announcement](#)
8. [Trump Presidential Campaign Announcement](#)

**Optional:**

1. Rainie, Lee. Pew Research Center. *Social Media and Voting*.  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2012/11/06/social-media-and-voting/>

**Week 9:**

**Friday, October 22 - 9:00am-11:30am**

**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](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2004-06-06-cannon_x.htm).
3. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/bonus-ronald-reagans-farewell-address/id1507276251?i=1000519261279>

**Optional:**

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

**Due:**

Assignment: Policy Memo due at 11:59pm

Participation: Feedback Form #3

**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 10: Commander-in-Chief**

**Friday, October 29 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: RRI**

Professor: Gabe Scheinmann

#### **Readings:**

1. 2. Bush, George W. "Day of Fire" (pgs. 126-152). *Decision Points*. \*
2. Cohen, Eliot (2002). *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesman, and Leadership in Wartime*. Pgs. 15-52
3. Brands, H.W. (2016). *The General vs. The President: MacArthur and Truman at the Brink of Nuclear War*. Pgs. 269-381.
4. "Lyndon B. Johnson: Committed Warrior Undone by Vietnam". *Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency*.

#### **Due:**

Mini Assignment: Final Project Topic Due at 11:59pm

### **Week 11:**

**Friday, November 5 - 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: Holocaust Memorial Museum**

#### **Readings:**

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

#### **Due:**

Participation: Feedback Form #4 due at 11:59pm

Assignment: Topic for Final Presentation due on November 10 at 11:59pm

### **Week 12:**

**Friday, November 12 - 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: RRI**

#### **Readings:**

1. "The 3AM Phone Call, Presidential Crisis Management" Bohn, Michael (pg. 254-259). *Triumphs and Tragedies of The Modern Presidency*
2. Eisinger, Jesse. The Atlantic. *We're Replicating the Mistakes of 2008*.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/were-replicating-mistakes-2008/609586/>
3. Doerer, Kristen. PBS. *4 Economists Evaluate Obama's Economic Legacy*.  
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/4-economists-evaluate-obamas-economic-legacy>.

4. Egan, Matt. CNN Business. *Lehman Brothers: When the financial crisis spun out of control*. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/30/investing/lehman-brothers-2008-crisis/index.html>

**Due:**

Assignment: Policy Memo due at 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 13: The Legacy

**Thursday, November 18 - 5:00pm-7:30pm**

**Class Location: RRI**

Professor: Glenn Nye + Gabe Scheinmann

**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. [Nixon's Address of Resignation](#)
5. [Eisenhower's Farewell Address](#)

**Due:**

Participation: Feedback Form #5 and Final Feedback Form due at 11:59pm

**Friday, November 19 - 9:00am-11:30am**

**Class Location: RRI**

Final Presentations

Professors: Glenn Nye + Gabe Scheinmann

**Due:**

Final Presentations

## 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**

#### Disability Accommodations

*Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474*

### **Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence**

*As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” TFAS is required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s [Title IX Coordinator](#) per [university policy 1412](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (703-380-1434) or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from [Mason’s Title IX Coordinator](#) (703-993-8730; [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu)).*

### **Privacy**

*Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.*

## APPENDIX 1: Op-Ed Piece

This assignment is a chance for you to put together one of the primary documents by which key national 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: Policy Memo

**Background:** The “policy memorandum” is the principal vehicle by which issues are teed up to senior leadership and interagency working groups. Some memoranda are designed to tee up a decision or recommend a course of action and others are designed quite simply to inform. As such, an information memorandum must be exceedingly clear and succinct as senior policy makers may see several memos a day. An information memo can be any length but they tend to be one to two pages long. They tend to be part of a “read ahead” package that will include supporting material such as biographies, maps, or even more detailed analysis. There is a real art to the one or two page memo and if you can master that art this will improve your ability to make things happen in a bureaucracy.

**Your Assignment:** In this assignment you will use a policy memorandum to prepare your boss for an important meeting. Depending on the issue and scenario you choose, your boss may need to convince another senior official, a Member of Congress, a foreign Minister or Head of State to take a particular position or make a particular decision on an issue of your choice. Your “read ahead” package needs to prepare your boss to make a compelling argument during this meeting and should include the following:

- 1-2 page policy memo
- One page of talking points
- Tabs with supporting material (as appropriate)

This is not a “long” writing assignment but you will spend significant time because writing clearly and concisely will take time and there is less room for error. An information memo will prioritize the presentation of facts and help your boss get up to speed on the issue. It should also help your boss understand who agrees and disagrees with the proposed position and what the competing arguments are. The “talking points” should be written in a fairly scripted way so that your boss can actually use them in a meeting.

We would prefer that you pick a current topic / issue rather than a historical one – but will consider exceptions if there is a case to be made.

More guidance will be provided early on in the course.

### **APPENDIX 3: Final Project**

You will analyze a recent political event that is relevant to current conversations through the lens of the ideas discussed in class this summer. You have great flexibility in terms of what event you will discuss, but should pick one that allows you to discuss the presidential response in terms of the leadership principles and concepts included in class readings and discussions.

Each student will choose their own topic within a general area which will be determined at random. **Air Force One** students will choose a topic in the realm of foreign policy, **The Governor** students will choose some domestic-level topic. **The Gipper** students will choose an issue where the president has been required to inspire others to take action.

Each student will prepare a 5-7 **minute presentation** providing some background on their topic and analyzing presidential action within that area, focusing on the president's usage of their Team, the Challenges faced before, during, and after the event, and discussing the successes and failures of the presidential strategy chosen, as well as attempts at Renewal post-event.

As with the topic, students can pursue this presentation in any way they choose – a PowerPoint, a dramatic reenactment with commentary, a poster presentation, or anything else. This is a chance for you to engage in professional analysis and criticism – you can be critical, but be fair as well.

You must also **interview a professional/practitioner** in your general area regarding the recent political event and presidential response. The content of the interview should be incorporated into your presentation as you see fit. Choose the notable portions; you do not have to include the entire conversation.

Topic areas will be determined by RRI staff, professors, and the TA for the course.