This graduate seminar is designed as an overview of major research topics pertaining to the United States Presidency. Because much of the scholarly literature on the presidency has been viewed as atheoretical, unsystematic, and/or largely descriptive, emphasis will be placed on advances in theory-building and methodological approaches. The seminar will cover substantive areas of the presidency at each meeting, including articles from the collection of essays in books edited by Shapiro et al. and Edwards et al. to discuss the application of “power,” behavioral, quantitative, and formal theoretical approaches to the presidency.

In addition to active participation in seminar discussions, students are to prepare a research paper of approximately 20-25 pages (journal length). The paper should represent an endeavor which, fully developed through additional research and analysis, could be worthy of a conference presentation or journal submission. Students are expected to theorize about a particular aspect of the presidency and set forth a substantive question or problem, a hypothesis or hypotheses, and a methodological approach to the question of inquiry. Students are encouraged to collect relevant data and undertake data analysis, as appropriate to the focus of their research.

Students may approach the research question of interest to them from a longitudinal or case study perspective. Potential topics include campaigns, public opinion, executive-legislative relations, press relations, White House organization/management, and decision-making. Students should use the various frameworks in the course readings as a springboard for developing new, creative, and innovative approaches.

The research paper will constitute 50% of the course grade (due date will be announced in class); a preliminary outline of the research paper is due on February 28 (5-7 pp) and constitutes 10% of the course grade. Weekly presentations of seminar readings comprise another 20% of the course grade. Attendance and participation will constitute the final 20% of the course grade.

Books are available at area book stores and are listed in Appendix 1. Journal articles will be available online through course reserves on the Library West web site.
January 10 – Introduction to the Course

January 17 – The Nature of Presidential Power: Neustadt, Skowronek et les autres…

- Jeffrey Tulis, “The Two Constitutional Presidencies,” in Nelson.
- Lyn Ragsdale, “Personal Power and Presidents,” in Shapiro et al.

Recommended:


January 24 – The Methodology and Future Direction of Presidency Research


January 31 – Presidential Elections

- Stephen J. Wayne, *The Road to the White House 2012*.
February 7 – The Public Presidency I

- Samuel Kernell, *Going Public.*
- Martha Joynt Kumar, “The President as Message and Messenger,” in Shapiro et al.
- Diane Heith, “Presidential Polling and the Potential for Leadership,” in Shapiro et al.

February 14 – The Public Presidency II


February 21 – The Institutional Presidency

- Bert Rockman, “Staffing and Organizing the Presidency,” in Shapiro et al.
- Karen Hult, “Advising the President,” in Edwards et al.
February 28 – Power & Policymaking: Executive Orders


March 7 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

March 14 – Power and Policymaking: Unilateral Actions & Signing Statements Controversies


March 21 - Archival Research & Approaches to Primary Sources

- Andrew Rudalevige, *Managing the President's Program.*
March 28 – Legislative Leadership: Quantitative Approaches & the “Two Presidencies”

- Jon Bond and Richard Fleisher, *The President in the Legislative Arena.*

4 April - Divided Government, The Veto Power, and the Legislative Presidency

- Charles Cameron, *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power.*
- Terry Moe, “Presidents, Institutions, and Theory,” in Edwards et al.


April 11 - The Psychological Presidency

- James David Barber, *Presidential Character.*

April 18 – Presentation of Individual Projects
Appendix

Book List


Neustadt's Presidential Power brought the study of the presidency into contact with the behavioral revolution in postwar political science. Neustadt defined power in terms of the president's persuasive or bargaining ability derived from his "professional reputation" and "public prestige." Asserting that "powers are no guarantee of power," he proceeded to show that the leadership ability of presidents was not inherent in the office but was highly personal and dependent on the President's own capabilities as a seeker and wielder of effective influence upon others involved in gover