

**Vorlesung: The American Presidency
Winter Semester 2005**

Prof. Paul Rundquist

Wednesday 12-14

Meeting: Mel. HS XXI (19.10.2005---Löw, HS XII)

Sprechstunde: Wednesday, 11-12, Institute for Politics, R-103, and other times by appointment.

Course Description:

This course is an introductory examination of the post of president of the United States. The lecture topics will examine the presidency from its origins in the constitutional convention to its current status, with a focus on the various roles performed by the American chief executive: political and electoral leader, manager and administrator, financial planner, military chief, policy innovator, legislative tactician, diplomat, and public spokesman. As a Vorlesung, students do not normally receive a grade for taking this course. However, a student may elect to take this course for a grade. Additional coursework for a grade will be expected, typically the completion of a course paper or the completion of a final examination. Please see me for such arrangements.

Grades:

As this is a *Vorlesung*, grades are not normally assigned. If you wish to take this course for a grade, please see the professor about extra course work in order to receive a grade.

Course Books:

The assigned text books will be available on reserve at the library on Lessingstrasse.

Michael Nelson. *The Presidency and the Political System* (Washington, CQ Press, 1995). 4th edition, although other editions are acceptable as well.

Charles O. Jones. *The Presidency in a Separated System* (Washington, Brookings, 1994).

If you wish to read more, these books will also be on reserve.

Alan Brinkley and Davis Dyer. *The American Presidency* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2004). Contains biographical essays on all president from Washington to Bush.

George C. Edwards III. *Readings in Presidential Politics* (Toronto, Thomson, 2006).

Richard E. Neustadt. *Presidential Power*. (numerous editions, first published 1963)

Useful Internet Sites:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>

Electronic link to the full text of the Federalist Papers. Articles originally written by three drafters of the Constitution to explain and promote the Constitution. Several articles specifically deal with the presidency, and relations between the president and other branches of the Federal government.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov>

The official homepage of the White House and the President. Through it, you can have access to historical materials, descriptions of presidential functions, and electronic copies of documents as well as transcripts of recent presidential press conferences.

<http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/zenaf/usa/fsusa.htm>

Uni-Frankfort Website of links to American government and politics sources. See especially links to other parts of the Federal government: the Congress, the Federal judicial branch, the major executive branch departments, and to the mass media. Daily free access to some major American newspapers.

www.ourdocuments.gov

A website which collects a variety of primary source documents on American history. Items are shown in facsimile reproductions, and in full, ordinary text. Documents include the text of important laws, Supreme Court decisions, and---for modern times---voice recordings of major speeches.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>

The American Memory website includes reproductions of the most significant official government documents of the United States up through 1877.

www.opencrs.com Congressional Research Service reports are not normally available directly to the public. A group of organizations have joined together on this website to put on the web the electronic text of many CRS reports and make them available to the public. Use the search system to find useful reports on such topics as "electoral college," "campaign finance," or "judicial nominees."

Weekly Lecture Topics:

- 19 Oct. Introduction and course overview.
- 26 Oct. The evolution of the presidency from the 19th through the 20th Century.
- 2 Nov. Presidential election campaigns: the politics of deciding to run, getting the nomination, and actually winning,
- 9 Nov. Presidential elections: the legal mechanics: public finance laws, election laws, the electoral college, and the 2000 presidential election.
- 16 Nov. The president-elect and getting ready to govern: transitions from politics to government. Additional comments about the selection of and role of the vice president.
- 23 Nov. Setting policy priorities: the president in budget planning and in legislative initiatives.
- 30 Nov. Foreign policy. The dominant role of the president and the continuing conflicts with Congress over foreign policy priorities.
- 7 Dec. The contemporary president and the issues of homeland security.
- 14 Dec. The President as commander in chief of the armed forces. the nature of civil-military relations in the United States: the War Powers Act and its usage by Congress.
- 21 Dec. The president and the nominations process, the role of the Senate. and special attention to judicial nominees.
- 11 Jan. The president and the uses of the media, evolution of and modern practices of presidential relations with the mass media.
- 18 Jan. The presidency in unusual situations: impeachment, resignation, presidential disability, and operation of the government in catastrophic circumstances.
- 25 Jan. Conclusions and final observations.