The best of leaders
when the job is done,
when the task is accomplished,
the people will say
we have done it ourselves.
- Lao Tzu –

The Presidency is "a whole greater than and different from the sum of its parts, an office whose powers and prestige are something more than the arithmetical total of all its functions." For Theodore Roosevelt, it was a "bully pulpit." For Franklin Roosevelt, it was "preeminently a place of moral leadership." According to Lyndon Johnson, the office of the Presidency was "the only office in this land of all the people." Some have argued that "the strength of the Presidency is a measure of the strength of the America in which we now live," while others have warned that "the danger of presidential dominance lies not in presidential failure but in presidential success." In this course, we will use the tools of Social Science to examine the American presidency as an example of leadership.

I. How to find me:

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Office Hours: MW 11:50 – 1:20pm and by appointment
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II. Texts: the following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore in Tyler Haynes Commons:


In addition, I will periodically make available supplemental course materials most probably through course reserves at the Boatwright Library.

III. Course Requirements and Grading Criteria: the following assignments are required of each student enrolled in the course:

Three 2-3 page typewritten papers evenly spaced throughout the semester, each worth 25% of your final grade (see schedule below)
The remaining 25% will be based on the student’s performance in class.

Past experience shows that students earning superior grades in this class do three things: they read weekly assignments *before* class; they attend class regularly, listening attentively and taking good notes; and they come to class prepared to discuss both what they have read and what they have previously heard in class. Please note that readings, lectures and discussions complement one another, covering the same topics in slightly different ways.

IV. Schedule of Topics and Readings:

Week 1 August 22 & 24: Introduction to Leadership – The Seven Essential Competencies
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 15

Week 2: August 29 & 31: Winning the Mantle of Leader – Visions, Missions, and Goals

Week 3: September 5 & 7: The Impossibility of Leadership? – The Presidency of Barack Obama
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 14 and Appendix – Background of the Modern Presidency
[First paper assignment distributed in class]

Week 4: September 12 & 14: Empowerment and the Politics of Agenda Control – The Presidency of George W. Bush
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 13

Week 5: September 19: Power & Moral Leadership – The Presidency of Bill Clinton
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 12
[First paper assignment due in class]

Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 11

Week 7: October 3 & 5: The Outsider as Agent of Change – The Presidency of Ronald Reagan
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 10

Week 8: October 12: The Politics of Rectitude - The Presidency of Jimmy Carter
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 9
[Second paper assignment distributed in class]

Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 8

Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 7
[Second paper assignment due in class]
Week 11 October 31 & November 2: The Challenges of Moral Leadership and the Primacy of Politics– The Presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 6

Week 12 November 7 & 9: Morals for Public Officials – The Presidency of John F. Kennedy
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 5

Week 13 November 14 & 16: Unexpected Leadership – The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 4
[Third paper assignment distributed in class]

Week 14 November 21: Uneven Leadership – The Presidency of Harry S. Truman
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapter 3

Week 15 November 28 & 30: Taming Power – The Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt
Fred I Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Obama*. Chapters 1 and 2
[Third paper assignment due in class]
Leadership studies is a multidisciplinary academic field of study that focuses on leadership in organizational contexts and in human life. Leadership studies has origins in the social sciences (e.g., sociology, anthropology, psychology), in humanities (e.g., history and philosophy), as well as in professional and applied fields of study (e.g., management and education). The field of leadership studies is closely linked to the field of organizational studies.