

**HSTAA 213**  
**HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY**  
**University of Washington–Autumn 2018**  
**TTh 3:30-5:20**

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This course examines the American presidency and the men who have occupied it, from George Washington to Donald Trump. Successful completion of the course will fulfill the I&S requirement and it also may be taken as an optional W credit for students who complete additional writing assignments.

LEARNING GOALS:

- A refined understanding of how the office of the American presidency has changed over time in relation to broader economic, political, demographic, and geopolitical transformations;
- Understanding the causes and contingencies shaping the American political institutions over time, as the United States evolved from an agrarian nation to an industrial and post-industrial superpower;
- Sharpened critical thinking and writing about history, including ability to distinguish different types of sources (primary, secondary) and analyze their context and meaning; and
- An ability to apply this historical awareness to understanding present-day political, economic, and social structures.

*Note that this is an in-person lecture/discussion class with the exception of **Tuesday, November 20** (the Tuesday before Thanksgiving). To accommodate holiday travel schedules, lecture that day will be online, accompanied by short films and written assignments.*

REQUIRED READING (at the UW Bookstore as well as on reserve at Odegaard)

Joanne Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*

Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party*

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*

Margaret O'Mara, *Pivotal Tuesdays: Four Elections That Shaped the Twentieth Century*

Ann Kornblut, *Notes from the Cracked Ceiling: What It Will Take for a Woman to Win*

We also will read book chapters, articles, and primary sources, available in PDF on Canvas and as in-class handouts. Expect to read 100-125 pages per week.

### ASSIGNMENTS

The class consists of two 110-minute lectures per week. Lecture periods will consist of 70-80 minutes of lecture time and 30-40 minutes of reading, writing, discussion, and group work. Ungraded writing assignments will make a frequent appearance, and completion of these in-class assignments will count toward your participation grade.

1. Thoughtful, historically informed, and courteous **participation**, including active engagement in discussion (small group and all class) and completion of in-class writing assignments (10%). A grading rubric for this component of class work can be found at the end of this syllabus.
2. Writing and posting five **reader's reflections** over the course of the quarter (5% per post, for a total of 25%). This is more than merely a reading summary, but should be a substantive, thought-provoking comment that considers and cites examples from the reading to make your point. You may also use your post to home in on other issues in the reading that you find particularly interesting and provocative. It should be at least 300 words in length.
3. Writing **one 5-7 page paper** contextualizing one president within the major debates and transformations of his times (20% of grade). You may choose one of two possible due dates: either **Thursday, October 25** or **Tuesday, December 4**. [Students desiring a W credit should write these as 10-12 page papers that must be revised in response to instructor comments and turned in at the time of the final exam.]
4. A **midterm exam** (essays, short answer, multiple choice questions) covering the first six weeks of the quarter's lecture material and readings, to be completed online in lieu of class on **Thursday, November 15** (20% of grade).
5. A **final exam** (essays, short answer, multiple choice questions) covering the full quarter of content, but with an emphasis on the second half, to be completed online in lieu of an in-person final exam on **Thursday, December 13** (25% of grade).

### SCHEDULE:

#### **WEEK ONE - Sept 27**

George Washington and the Invention of the Presidency

#### **WEEK TWO - Oct 2 and 4**

John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and the Escalation of Partisanship; Andrew Jackson and the Populist Presidency

#### **WEEK THREE – Oct 9 and 11**

The Disunion of the 1850s; Abraham Lincoln and the Unlikely Presidency

**WEEK FOUR - Oct 16 and 18**

Impeachment and Boondoggle: Andrew Johnson, U.S. Grant, and the post-Civil War Presidency

**WEEK FIVE - Oct 23 and 25**

Labor Rights, Civil Rights, and the Gilded Age Presidency

**WEEK SIX - Oct 30 and Nov 1**

William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and the Art of Modern Campaigning

**WEEK SEVEN - Nov 6 and 8**

Franklin Roosevelt and the Fireside Presidency; Truman, Eisenhower, and the World

**WEEK EIGHT - Nov 13 and 15**

The Television President: Kennedy and beyond

MIDTERM EXAMINATION - NOVEMBER 15

**WEEK NINE - Nov 20 - THIS WILL BE AN ONLINE LECTURE**

Richard Nixon and the Imperial Presidency

**WEEK TEN - Nov 27 and 29**

Ronald Reagan and the Conservative Resurgence

**WEEK ELEVEN - Dec 4 and 6**

The Fractured Presidency: Bill Clinton to Donald Trump

**FINAL EXAM - THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13**

CLASS POLICIES

**NOTES:** Take them, either on a laptop, tablet, or by hand—whatever works best for your brain, your memory, and your penmanship. I will hand out lecture outlines each day, but these are outlines only, and should be complemented by your detailed notes on the subject at hand.

**PAPER:** Please bring paper and pen/pencil to class each day so that you can use and turn in for in-class writing assignments.

**ELECTRONICS:** If you rely on a laptop for note-taking, you may use one, but the WiFi must be turned off. Do not take notes on your phone. Phones must be on silent/do not disturb mode.

**WRITING GUIDELINES, RESEARCH RESOURCES, & OTHER HELPFUL STUFF:** I have a number of handouts and links available on my web site at [www.margaretomara.com/resources](http://www.margaretomara.com/resources). Please read and refer to these as needed.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** In all assignments you are expected to adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined by the University of Washington Student Conduct Code. In an age of internet-based research and writing, the standards for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can become unclear, and I strongly encourage all students to read UW statements and guidelines that outline acceptable practices and procedures.

**ACCESS AND ACCOMODATIONS:** Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or [uwdrs@uw.edu](mailto:uwdrs@uw.edu) or [disability.uw.edu](http://disability.uw.edu). DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

**ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES:** Assignments submitted late on Canvas will be penalized by 5%. Allow enough time before deadlines to avoid any technical/computer problems that might make your assignment late.

**ABSENCES:** Success in this course will depend on your being present and engaged in the lectures and sections. Please alert the TA to any expected absences well ahead of time so that we can make arrangements for makeup assignments. In cases of unexpected absences (illness, family emergencies), you must contact us within a week of the absence to be considered for makeup credit.

**ILLNESS:** Please follow common-sense guidelines in order to protect yourself and your fellow students. Stay home if you have a fever or any malady that might be easily communicated to those sitting near you in the lecture hall. Doctor's notes are not required for occasional absence, but they are required in cases of debilitating illnesses that result in missing a significant stretch of class sessions.

**DISCUSSION/PARTICIPATION STANDARDS:** The professor and TA calculate this work (consisting of up to 10% of your final grade) according to the following rubric:

- 10%: completes all in-class work; participates in discussion in nearly every class session; speaks and listens thoughtfully to peers, reflecting careful reading and attention to lecture content; informed, collegial contributions to group and in-class assignments.

- 9%: completes nearly all in-class work; contributes to discussion in 80-90% of class sessions, reflecting completion of reading assignments and attention to lecture content.
- 7-8%: completes most in-class work; contributes to discussion 50-70% of time, reflecting completion of assigned reading and some attention to lecture content.
- 5-6%: rarely speaks in class; low engagement in group work; missing in-class assignments.
- 4% and below: rarely or never speaks in class, could not demonstrate by comments or in-class assignments that reading had been completed or lecture content mastered; lack of collegiality to peers; not following course policies.

**FINAL GRADE SCALE:** Each assignment is worth a certain number of points, totaling 100 (the 40% grade on the final project, for example, is worth 40 points). I convert the total into a four-point scale at the end of the quarter following this rubric:

≥ 95% = 4.0	88 = 3.3	81 = 2.6	74 = 1.9	67 = 1.2
94 = 3.9	87 = 3.2	80 = 2.5	73 = 1.8	66 = 1.1
93 = 3.8	86 = 3.1	79 = 2.4	72 = 1.7	65 = 1.0
92 = 3.7	85 = 3.0	78 = 2.3	71 = 1.6	64 = 0.9
91 = 3.6	84 = 2.9	77 = 2.2	70 = 1.5	63 = 0.8
90 = 3.5	83 = 2.8	76 = 2.1	69 = 1.4	62 = 0.7
89 = 3.4	82 = 2.7	75 = 2.0	68 = 1.3	61 ≥ no credit