

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DIVISION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Social Sciences
Revision Date: 07-01-26

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Course Number: POLS 2270
Course Title: The Presidency
Prerequisite(s): None

Catalog Description: An in-depth survey of the evolution and transformation of the presidency by assessing the roles, legacies, and contributions of each occupant to the office and the institution. In tracing its development from inception through today, the course examines the formal and informal powers and duties of the presidency; relationships with Congress, the judiciary, and the executive bureaucracy; electoral processes; and the evolving perceptions and expectations of the office and its occupants.

Credit Hours: 3.0
Class Hours: 45
Lab Hours: 0
Total Contact Hours: 45

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: *Course will:*

- A. Analyze how each president contributed to the office and the institution
- B. Explore the impact of precedent in the expansion of presidential powers
- C. Deepen knowledge of the presidency and the executive branch
- D. Study the origins of the office and the Framers' expectations of the presidency
- E. Examine role of the legislative and judicial branches in the transformation of the office
- F. Study the formal and informal tools of the office; its powers and its limits; its opportunities and its constraints
- G. Discuss the impact of evolving political, cultural, public, and global perceptions of the office

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

- A. Student Learning Outcomes: *Student will be able to:*
 - 1. Distinguish how each president and their presidencies have contributed to the office
 - 2. Describe presidential responsibilities and powers in areas of domestic, foreign, and national security policies
 - 3. Analyze the major events and issues that have transformed the office and its expectations from inception through today
 - 4. Synthesize how legislative actions, federal court decisions, and precedents have contributed to shaping the contours of presidential powers
 - 5. Discuss how public, congressional, and global perceptions and expectations of the office have evolved over time
 - 6. Understand the formal and informal powers and duties of the office
 - 7. Describe the electoral college and the processes of presidential elections
- B. General Education Learning Outcomes
 - GELO #3: Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
 - Outcome: Collect, identify, interpret and analyze data.
 - Outcome: Synthesize information to arrive at reasoned solutions to problems.
 - Outcome: Evaluate ideas presented in writing, medial, speech, or artistic presentations.

Outcome: Evaluate the validity of arguments, alternatives, data, outcomes, and/or impacts of actions.

Outcome: Acquire and integrate knowledge and construct relationships across disciplines.

IV. CONTENT/TOPICAL OUTLINE (*course outline may provide more detailed information*)

- A. Origins and Invention of the Presidency
- B. Constitutional Requirements and Responsibilities
- C. Methods and Modes of Election
- D. Evolution of the Office Through Its Occupants
 - 1. The Inaugural Presidents: Washington, Adams, Jefferson
 - 2. The Post-Inaugural Presidents: Madison through Q. Adams
 - 3. The Seeds of the Modern President: Jackson, Q. Adams, Polk
 - 4. The Antebellum Presidents: Taylor through Buchanan
 - 5. The Civil War Presidents: Lincoln, A. Johnson, Grant
 - 6. The Gilded Age Presidents: Hayes through Cleveland
 - 7. The Pre-Modern Presidents I: McKinley through Taft
 - 8. The Pre-Modern Presidents II: Wilson through Hoover
 - 9. The Modern President Begins: FDR and Truman
 - 10. The Cold War Presidents: Eisenhower through LBJ
 - 11. The Imperial Presidents: Nixon through Reagan
 - 12. The Post-Cold War Presidents: H.W. Bush and Clinton
 - 13. The 21st Century Presidents: W. Bush through Trump

V. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- A. **Required Text:** Milkis, Sidney M. Michael C. Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development* (current edition)
- B. **Other Resources:**
 - 1. Additional assigned readings may include primary source documents, scholarly articles, and other secondary source material related to the course. These will be supplied by the instructor unless otherwise specified and/or provided for in the CID.
 - 2. Student purchase of examination books ("blue books") will be required for written exams.

VI. METHODS OF PRESENTATION/INSTRUCTION

- A. Methods of presentation typically include a combination of the following:
 - 1. Lectures
 - 2. Audiovisual clips
 - 3. Primary Source materials
 - 4. Assigned Readings
 - 5. Class discussions and student presentations

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION

- A. Methods of evaluation will include some or all of the following:
 - 1. Written examinations
 - 2. Written quizzes
 - 3. Research papers
 - 4. Short papers based on readings
 - 5. Student Presentations (Group and/or Individual)
- B. Specific weighting of assessment modalities is detailed in the CID. The instructor may also require other types of graded work, as long as it is not inconsistent with the parameters defined in the "Methods of Evaluation" section.

C. SCC STANDARD GRADING SCALE POLICY:

A+	95-100	C+	75-79	F	59 or less
A	90-94	C	70-74		
B+	85-89	D+	65-69		
B	80-84	D	60-64		

VIII. SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. In order to receive a passing grade in the course, students must complete the work assigned in the CID and/or by the instructor in a satisfactory manner.

B. Regular attendance, examinations and quizzes, reading and writing assignments, class discussions and appropriately respectful behavior are all required course components.

C. It is important for students to check requirements at the transfer institution they plan to attend.