Trump’s First 100 Days

Summer Session I
Each weekday from 9 AM to Noon
In Lab Sciences 301
May 22 to June 9
http://bit.ly/First100DaysofTrump

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What will we learn?

The first one hundred days of a presidential administration is a common benchmark by which to judge presidential success. As a candidate, Donald Trump promised a host of new policies on areas ranging from immigration to the environment as well as a new orientation to international affairs. To what extent has the Trump administration been successful in accomplishing these goals? How have unexpected events domestically and abroad shaped the agenda of Donald Trump? In this class, we will consider the successes and failures of the Trump administration’s first hundred (or so) days in office. We will consider the role that public opinion, Congress, the Supreme Court, and the political context itself shaped the successes and failures of Trump’s first 100 days.

What will we do each day?

Every day, you will be expected to attend class having read the assigned material for the day. In class, you’ll work on projects in groups, discuss topics as a class, and listen to me lecture. You will spend a good deal of time in small groups doing short research projects that we will discuss as a whole class. For instance, in groups of 2 or 3, you might trace the
proposal and enactment of a particular policy from the campaign through the first 100 days. Then, each group might present their findings. As a group, we would discuss how the campaign proposals were translated into policy proposals and the factors that affected their passage. There will be very few formal lectures to the class.

How will I grade you?

If you have questions about your grade, please contact me. I am happy to discuss your grade. Please do not contact me at the end of the semester asking for extra credit or to receive a higher grade. This behavior is unfair to your peers.

Attendance 25%

I will take attendance each day. More than one absence will have an adverse effect on your grade. For one absence, you may write a 500-word essay in reaction to the topic and readings you missed. That essay must be turned in to me within 48 hours of the start time of the missed class (e.g., if you miss class on Monday, the essay must be submitted by 9AM on Wednesday).

Group assignments 25%

Most days, you’ll be asked to complete some in class research and to present your findings to the class.

Group presentations 25%

In groups of 3 or 4, you will give a 30 to 45 minute presentation on the Trump administration’s accomplishment with respect to one policy area.
Short paper 25%

You will write a short paper (2 to 3 pages) in response to a prompt that I will provide in class. Turn the paper in to me in hard copy at the beginning of class on Friday.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

You should adhere to all ethical codes set forth by Washington University. Please carefully review the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code. See me if you have any questions.

Late work

Late work is not accepted and exams will be rescheduled only under extraordinary (and well-documented) circumstances. Rescheduled exams will be taken as soon as possible and may be in a different format from the in-class exam (most likely as an essay exam).

Accommodations for disabilities

If you are qualified for learning, testing, or access accommodations, inform me during the first week of class. For further information see http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/disability-resources/.

Accommodations based upon sexual assault

The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation,
such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a
no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other
academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request
such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb
(kim_webb@wustl.edu), Director of the Office of Sexual Assault and
Community Health Services. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource;
however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the
appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will
maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures
provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability
to provide such measures.

Mental health resources

Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to
resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect
the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about
friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings
of anxiety and depression. See: http://shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth

Meeting Dates

1. Monday, May 22
2. Tuesday, May 23
3. Wednesday, May 24
4. Thursday, May 25
5. Friday, May 26
Monday, May 29 (Memorial Day, no meeting)
6. Tuesday, May 30
7. Wednesday, May 31
8. Thursday, June 1
9. Friday, June 2
10. Monday, June 5
11. Tuesday, June 6
12. Wednesday, June 7
Schedule and Readings

Please be sure to have done the reading listed before the beginning of each class.

Meeting 1: Promises, Promises

No readings are required for today’s class.

In class, I will provide you with an overview of the class. We’ll watch “The Learning Curve” from The Circus. We’ll review some of Trump’s campaign promises and see what became of them. We’ll consider the relevance of the first 100 days of a presidency.


→ “What Trump Has Done: A 100-days check-up on policies, from health care to immigration,” FiveThirtyEight.

Meeting 2: The Personal Presidency

→ Michelle Dean, March 26, 2016, “Making the man: to understand Trump, look at his relationship with his dad,” The Guardian.


In class, we’ll talk about the role of character and personality in presidential politics. You can take your own personality profile based on the same concepts from the article by McAdam. In class, you’ll read selections from James Barber’s Presidential Character. In groups, you’ll
consider whether Trump fall into any of Barber’s categories. You’ll also find examples of how Trump’s personality reflects what we’ve seen thus far in his administration.

**Meeting 3: What Do Presidents Want and How Do They Get it?**

→ Douglas Kriner and Andrew Reeves, 2015, *The Particularistic President*, Chapters 1 and 2.

In class, we’ll discuss what motivates presidents. We’ll also discuss the tools available to the president. We’ll take a look at the formal powers enumerated in the *U.S. Constitution* as well as unilateral powers not specifically defined in Article II.

**Meeting 4: What Has Donald Trump Done and How Did He Do It?**

→ Andrew Rudalevige, April 28, 2017, “*Trump may have the ‘most executive orders’ since Truman. But what did they accomplish?’*” Washington Post’s Monkey Cage Blog.
→ David Mayhew, April 28, 2017, “*Two factors help a president get a lot done in 100 days. Trump has only one.*” Washington Post’s Monkey Cage Blog.
→ Rachel Augustine Potter, “*Why Trump can’t undo the regulatory state so easily.*” Brookings Institution, Center on Regulation and Markets.

In class, we’ll watch “Shocking but not Surprising” from *The Circus*. 
Meeting 5: Work on Group Presentations

Meeting 6: Trump and the Media

→ Thomas E. Patterson, “News Coverage of Donald Trump’s First 100 Days,” Harvard Kennedy School’s Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics, and Public Policy.


Meeting 7: Trump and Congress

→ “Tracking Congress In The Age Of Trump,” FiveThirtyEight.


In class, we’ll watch “Checking and Balancing” and “Recess Reset” from The Circus. In small groups, we’ll consider the congressional Republicans who have opposed President Trump. Why have they done so? Who are his staunchest supporters in Congress? Some resources you might consult: https://www.nationaljournal.com/almanac/

Meeting 8: Trump and the Public

→ “How unpopular is Donald Trump?” FiveThirtyEight.
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In class, we’ll watch “The Resistance” from The Circus. In small groups, you will consider the extent to which President Trump cares about public opinion. Who supports the president? Which of his initiatives are popular and which are not?

Meeting 9: Work on Group Presentations

Short Paper #1 Due

Meeting 10: Trump on the International Stage


→ Aleksandar Matovski, May 16, “Trump claims he wants closer ties with Russia. Here are 3 reasons that won’t fly,” Washington Post’s Monkey Cage Blog.

→ David A. Wirth, August 29, 2016, “Is the Paris Agreement on Climate Change a Legitimate Exercise of the Executive Agreement Power?” Lawfare Blog.

→ [a late addition] Elizabeth Saunders, April 28, 2016, “100 days in, Trump’s foreign policy appears to be all show. Is there enough substance?” The Washington Post’s Monkey Cage Blog.

In class, we’ll watch “The Whole World is Watching” from The Circus.

Meeting 11: Are We in a Constitutional Crises?

→ The U.S. Constitution

In class, you’ll assess the extent to which America finds itself in the midst of constitutional crises. What is the definition of a constitutional crisis? In groups, you’ll propose a revision to the U.S. Constitution.

**Meeting 12: Removal**


In class, you’ll assess the strengths and weakness of arguments to remove President Trump. In particular, you’ll consider both impeachment and removal under the 25th Amendment. We will watch an explainer video from **Vox**.
Meetings 13 and 14: Group Presentations

Final Presentations

For your final class presentations, you will present a 30 to 45 minute briefing on one policy area of Trump’s presidency. In your presentation, you should be sure to answer the following questions:

1) What did Donald Trump promise during the campaign?
2) How did the Trump administration address the issue? What form did the action take? What was the elite (e.g., senators, members of congress, media personalities)/popular reaction? What is the current status of the action?
3) Based on what we have read about the presidency, why do you think Trump has pursued the course of actions that he has. What are the advantages / disadvantages of his approach?
4) What are the sources of presidential power that the Trump administration has used to accomplish its goals? (e.g., constitutional, personal power to persuade, unilateral)

You should be specific in providing the answers to each of the questions above. You should provide citations to reputable sources with respect to facts related to the issue. You should also cite two or three academic sources from the syllabus. Each group member should participate equally in the presentation. You may use Powerpoint or Keynote for your presentation. Your presentation will be followed by a few minutes for questions.

The group assignments are:

- Immigration: Jake, Atajah, Pascale (Thursday)
- Economic Policy: Audria, George, Liam
- Criminal Justice: Chandler, Sean, Ben, Daniel
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Foreign Policy: Tina, Judy, Arin, Felix (Thursday)
Healthcare: A.J., Tracey, Deb (Thursday)

Some resources:
- Polling Report: http://www.pollingreport.com/
- CQ Researcher: http://library.cqpress.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/cqresearcher/

Paper Topic

You will write a two to three page (no longer) on one of the two prompts below. The paper should be 10 to 12 point font, double spaced, with 1 to 1.25 inch margins. You should properly cite any materials that you consult for the paper using any standard formatting for your bibliography, footnotes, or endnotes. You are welcome to include appendices, which will not count toward the page limit. Turn your paper in hard copy to me by the beginning of class on Friday, June 2.

Though you are not required to (though you may) cite additional academic resources beyond those on the syllabus (like peer reviewed journals or academic press books), you should support your arguments with legitimate sources.

Follow a standard method of citation. Do not exceed the page limit.

Prompt #1:
Imagine that Donald Trump is removed from office, and Vice President Pence ascends to the presidency. Write a memo outlining the main policy goals that President Pence should pursue in his first hundred days and outline the ways that he should achieve them. Since Pence did not campaign to be president, he is not bound by campaign promises. Advise Pence on the goals that he can obtain and how he can do it as quickly as possible.

Prompt #2:
Much has been made of the extraordinary presidency of Donald Trump. How is his presidency exceptional based on how political scientists understand the office of the presidency? In what ways does the Trump presidency accord with theories of presidential politics?