

Barnard College, Department of Political Science

**POLS BC3332 Exploring Political Leadership**

Preliminary Syllabus as of August 13, 2009

Fall 2009

306 Milbank, Tues 4:10-6 pm

Professor Flora S. Davidson e-mail: fdavidson@barnard.edu  
416 B Lehman Hall (Barnard Library building) phone: 212 854-6181  
Office Hours: Mon 3-4 pm; Wed 4:10-6 AND by appointment

**Course Description**

An exploration of the relationship between political leadership and political outcomes in the United States, with special attention to how individual traits like personality, political style, ideology, gender, race and class interact with the political environment in shaping political behavior and outcomes. Beginning with an examination of classic political case studies and typologies of American presidents, we then turn to more recent studies which have incorporated issues of gender, race, and class into the study of leadership. We also look at the outcome of the 2008 Presidential election campaign and consider to what extent it foreshadows a fundamental transformation in the recruitment and composition of future candidates for national office.

**Course Goals**

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to debates in the political science literature on assessing political leadership; to provide you with tools for analyzing American politics in preparation for your senior thesis; and to provide a forum for the further development of your critical thinking, reading, writing and speaking skills.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Participation and weekly written responses to the assigned readings                        | 30% |
| Essay and presentation on one week's assigned reading                                      | 10% |
| Research Paper (20-25 pages)   | 50% |
| (Topic statement = 5%; Annotated draft bibliography = 5%<br>Outline = 5% and Paper = 35%.) |     |
| Class presentation of research paper   | 10% |

***Participation and Weekly responses:***

The success of the colloquium depends on the active participation of each and every member, meaning attendance at every session and thoughtful contribution to our discussion based on thorough preparation of the assigned readings for each week. Since we meet only once a week, more than one unexcused absence will affect your grade for the course.

By 9am on each Tuesday morning before class, each student will send Prof. Davidson (via e-mail) a two-paragraph response to the assigned readings (no more than one page double spaced). The first paragraph should be a brief summary of what you believe the major points of the readings are; what has each author tried to say. The second paragraph should be a list of questions

that you would like to discuss in class that day and a brief explanation of why those questions are interesting to you.

***Essay and Presentation on Assigned Reading***

At least once during the semester, each student will write a short (4 to 5 pages double spaced) essay on the assigned weekly reading, due at the start of the class on the assigned day. Topics will be chosen by students at the second class meeting. On the assigned day, this student will start the class with a 5-7 minute presentation. You SHOULD NOT simply summarize the readings (the assumption is that everyone will come to class having completed the assigned reading). You should offer your reasoned interpretation of what you read, supported by page references. Include reactions, critical observations, or commentaries on the themes, topics and questions that are brought up by the readings and merit further discussion.

***Research Paper***

Students will write a major research paper (20-25 pages double spaced) on a topic chosen in consultation with Prof. Davidson during her office hours. Detailed instructions will be provided separately.

Summary due dates:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Topic Statement (1-2 pages)           | Monday, September 28 at 9am  |
| Annotated draft bibliography          | October 13   |
| Outline (3 pages)                     | Between Oct 26 - Nov 10 (bring & discuss with Prof. Davidson, during scheduled appointment.) |
| Paper (posted on Courseworks)         | 9am on Nov 30 or Dec 7   |
| Class presentation of research papers | Dec 1 or Dec 8   |
| Revised paper (posted on Courseworks) | Dec 11   |

***Extra Credit Opportunities:***

Attendance and submission of a one page response paper for up to two public events relevant to this course during the semester.

***Honor Code:*** This course will observe the Barnard College Honor Code. Approved by the student body in 1912, the Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by refraining from every form of dishonesty in our academic life. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any papers or books not authorized by the instructor in examinations, or to present oral work or written work which is not entirely our own, unless otherwise approved by the instructor. We consider it dishonest to remove without authorization, alter, or deface library and other academic materials. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

The issue of academic integrity is taken very seriously. If you have any questions about any aspect of doing honest academic work, please don't hesitate to ask Prof. Davidson. No question is too minor. Any student found to have violated the Honor Code will face the disciplinary rules of her or his home college.

***Disabilities:*** Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to see Prof. Davidson during her office hours as soon as possible. Students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Barnard, or the Columbia equivalent.

## **Classroom Etiquette**

The colloquium is an intimate setting where we will be analyzing texts in-depth, so please do not bring any laptops to class. The emphasis will be on group discussion and engagement with each other's ideas; laptops are not necessary or conducive to this purpose.

Each class session will begin promptly at 4:10; as a matter of respect for your peers and the instructor, please be on time.

Please do not bring your lunch, dinner, or noisy, aromatic foods to class. Water and beverages in sealed containers are fine.

All cell phones and beepers must be turned off for the full duration of the class. Students whose phones ring during class will be asked to leave.

## **Readings**

*Additional articles and other selections may be added to this reading list. Changes will be announced well in advance in class and by e-mail. All reading assignments are required. Required readings are on reserve at the Barnard Library Reserve Room, and most articles and short selections in other books will also be available as PDF files which can be accessed via Courseworks. Some selections will be distributed in class. Most journal articles are also available on-line through CLIO as E-Journals on the Library web site.*

## **Books**

The following books have been ordered at Book Culture, 536 West 112<sup>th</sup> Street (between Broadway and Amsterdam) and are also on reserve at the Barnard Library Reserve Room.

George A.L. and J.L. *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study*, Dover paperback, 1964.

James D. Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1992.

Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Barack Obama*, 3rd edition, Princeton University Press, 2009.

Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father – A Story of Race and Inheritance*, Three Rivers Press, 2004 edition

Gwen Ifill, *The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama*, Doubleday, 2009.

## **Course Schedule**

### **September 8, 2009 – Introduction**

*Women, Power & Politics*, a documentary originally broadcast on Sept 19, 2008 on PBS Program “Now.” (screened in class)

### **I. Studying American Presidents – early work**

#### **September 15, 2009 – A classic single case study**

George A.L. and J.L. *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study*, Dover paperback, 1964, pp. 3-315.

#### **September 22, 2009 – Theoretical Underpinnings and critiques of the Georges**

Fred I. Greenstein, “Can Personality and Politics be Studied Systematically?” *Political Psychology*, Vol. 13, No.1, 1992, 105-128. (PDF on Courseworks)

Stanley A. Renshon, “Psychoanalyzing Presidents Without a Couch” Working Papers 2004, Center for Public Leadership, JFK School of Government, Harvard University. (PDF on Courseworks)

Georges, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House.....*, Preface to Dover edition (pp. v-xiv) and Research Note (pp 317-322).

Weinstein, Anderson and Link, “Woodrow Wilson’s Political Personality: A Reappraisal,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 78-79, Vol. 93, No.4, 585-598. (PDF on Courseworks)

George, J & A. Woodrow Wilson & Col. House: A Reply to Weinstein, Link and Anderson,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 81-82, Vol. 96, No.4, 641-665. (will be distributed to class)

### **II. Gender and Leadership**

#### **September 29, 2009 – Why Gender Matters.**

#### **Research Paper – Topic Statement Due Monday, September 28 at 9 am.**

Lori Cox Han, *Women and American Politics: the Challenges of Political Leadership*, New York: McGraw Hill, 2007. Chapters 1,2,4,6 & 8. ( to be distributed )

Georgia Duerst-Lahti and Rita Mae Kelly, editors, *Gender Power, Leadership, and Governance*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1996 (paper). Intro, Chapters 1, 3, and 11. (to be distributed)

### **III. Studying American Presidents – other models**

#### **October 6, 2009 – A Classic Typological Study – Part I**

James D. Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1992; Chapters 1 thru 7.

## **October 13, 2009 – A Classic Typological Study – Part II**

### **Research Paper – Annotated Bibliography Due**

James D. Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition; Chapters 9 thru 11; *Beyond Character* (pp 397) and Ch. 15.

## **October 20, 2009 – A More Recent Typological Study**

Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Barack Obama*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Princeton University Press, 2009. (paperback)

## **October 27, 2009 - Alternative Approaches**

**Research Paper – 3 page Outline due between October 26 - November 10. Bring to meeting with Prof. Davidson that you schedule during that time period.**

Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1982, Houghton Mifflin paperback. Chapters 1, 2, 6 and 8 thru 11. (to be distributed)

Richard M. Pious, “Why do Presidents Fail?,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Dec 2002; 32,4; 724-742. (PDF on Courseworks)

## **November 3, 2009 (Fall Election Break – No Class)**

### **IV. Race, Gender and Leadership**

## **November 10, 2009 – Barack Obama – Early Impressions**

Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father – A Story of Race and Inheritance*, Three Rivers Press, 2004 edition (paper).

Ryan Lizza, “Making It; The Political Scene: Where Barack Obama learned to be a pol.” *The New Yorker*, July 21, 2008, Vol 84, Issue 21. (PDF on Courseworks)

## **November 17, 2009**

Ronald W. Walters and Robert C. Smith, *African American Leadership*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999. pp. 69-86 and pp. 223-258. (to be distributed)

Matt Bai, “Is Obama the End of Black Politics?” *The New York Times*, August 10, 2008. (PDF on Courseworks)

David Remnick, “The Joshua Generation; A Reporter at Large” *The New Yorker*, November 17, 2008, Vol. 84, Issue 37. (PDF on Courseworks)

## **November 24, 2009**

Gwen Ifill, *The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama*, New York: Doubleday, 2009. Chapters 1- 4 and 7-10 + Conclusion.

## V. Class Presentations

**December 1 and December 8, 2009: Research Papers Due (posted on Courseworks) by 9am on Monday before assigned class.**

The Class will be divided into groups. Each class will feature a panel of students. Each participant will make a brief presentation of her research paper, which will be followed by discussion with other class members.

**Reading Assignment:** Student Papers posted on Courseworks by 9 am Monday morning before class.

G:\Political Leadership Fall 2009\FSD Syllabus BC3332 Fall 09-Aug13-09.doc