

SEMINAR IN AMERICAN POLITICS:

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY: RONALD W. REAGAN

**Political Science 494
Section 01 10:30-11:45 TT
Fall 2005/2006**

**Dr. William K. Hall
370 Bradley Hall**

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

Among our many efforts this semester, will be our efforts to define presidential power and understand the process of presidential policy-making. In this course we will examine the presidency in the Constitution, the process of presidential selection, presidential power, inter-branch relations, the role of public opinion, and presidential policy-making in foreign and domestic policy. Our vehicle for examining these and other topics will be the presidency of Ronald W. Reagan (1981-1989).

READINGS FOR THE COURSE

There are four books required for this course.

Cannon, Lou. President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime, 2nd edition, 2000.

Dallek, Matthew. The Right Moment: Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics, 2004.

Johnson, Haynes. Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years, 2003.

Reagan, Ronald. An American Life, 1999.

CLASSROOM METHODS

This senior seminar is designed to be a student participation-driven seminar. The success of this course will depend more on your active involvement and willingness to participate in our class discussions and other activities than on me as I will lecture very little. Departmental senior seminars are not like other classes in the PLS curriculum. They are purposely designed to impose greater responsibility on each student.

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend ALL seminar sessions.

GRADES

Your grade for the course will be weighted as follows:

Research/Analytical Project I	25%
Research/Analytical Project II	30%
Class Participation	30%
Class Leadership	15%

ANALYTICAL/RESEARCH PROJECTS

Each student will write two research-based analytical papers. One will be on Reagan's political career or his electoral success in the 1984 elections. The second project will examine some facet of Reagan's presidency. A detailed description of the first project will be given out and discussed during the early days of the semester.

Analytical/Research Project I is due on Thursday, October 20.

Analytical/Research Project II is due on Tuesday, December 6.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

I have four expectations for class participation in this senior seminar:

- (1) That you will be in attendance at each of our class sessions.
- (2) That you read the assigned readings—whether from Cannon, Dallek, Johnson, Reagan, and/or class handouts—before coming to class each day.
- (3) That you come to class prepared to make a meaningful contribution to class discussion.
- (4) That you not only come to class prepared to make a meaningful contribution to class discussion, but that you make a meaningful contribution.

CLASS LEADERSHIP

Each student—in combination with one or more other students--will assume leadership of our class on two of the seven general topic groupings. This responsibility will include (but not be limited to) providing discussion questions for class members to consider, helping to guide the class discussions during examination and consideration of that topic.

The general topics are:

Reagan in California Politics – 3 days (3 students)

The Election of 1980 – 3 days (3 students)

Organizing the Reagan presidency – 2 days (2 students)

Reagan's First Term (1981-1985) – 5 days (5 students)

The Election of 1984 – 2 days (3 students)

Reagan's Second Term (1985-1989) – 5 days (5 students)

Evaluation of the Reagan Years – 3 days (3 students)

ASSIGNED READING

This course has a fairly heavy set of reading assignments. We are going to work our way through four books. Every effort has been made to find a balanced view of Ronald Reagan and his presidency. In addition to Reagan's autobiography, there is a somewhat supportive biography of him, an examination of his first election as Governor of California, and a book critical of Reagan's presidency.

This senior seminar will very much rely on your reading what is assigned. There are no examinations scheduled for this senior seminar. However, if it seems as though seminar students are not reading what has been assigned and participating in the discussions scheduled, the instructor reserves the right to begin a fairly regular series of unannounced exams in class. It is not something your instructor wants to do, but it is something he will do—if necessary.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Absolute academic integrity is expected of every Bradley student in all academic activities. Academic integrity is founded on the concept of honesty. Submission of work by a Bradley student indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged.

In addition, Bradley students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers. A more complete statement of student responsibilities can be found in the 2005-06 Bradley University Student Handbook, pp. 35-36.

OFFICE HOURS

Although you will see me twice a week in the classroom, it is possible you will want to see me in my office (**426-C Bradley Hall**). I am available to meet with you every day of the academic week, especially at these scheduled office hours:

Monday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:30
Tuesday	9:15-10:15, 1:00-2:30
Wednesday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:30
Thursday	9:15-10:15
Friday	9:15-10:45, 2:00-3:00

Should you need to reach me by phone, my office phone is: 677-2495. If I am not available when you call, you can leave a message for me on my AUDIX or you can reach the departmental administrative assistant at 677-2502 and leave a message with her. I can also be reached by email at: hall@bradley.edu

TOPIC AND ASSIGNMENT OUTLINE

I. COURSE INTRODUCTION

August 25 – This first meeting will be used to discuss organizational matters, the instructor's expectations and hopes, and course structure. We will also begin our journey of learning to understand Ronald W. Reagan.

II. STUDYING THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY THROUGH STUDYING RONALD W. REAGAN

August 30, September 6 and 8 – Presidential Character--Ronald Reagan

Readings:

Cannon, Chapters #1 - #4 (pp. 1-44)

Barber Handout

III. ANALYTICAL/RESEARCH PROJECT I

September 1 – Explanation of Analytical/Research Project I

Handouts

IV. REAGAN IN CALIFORNIA POLITICS

September 13, 15 and 20 –

Readings:

Dallek, Chapters #1 - #10, Epilogue (pp. 1-239, 240-242)

Johnson, Chapters #4 - #8 (pp. 52-94)

Reagan, Chapters #19 - #30 (pp. 132-199)

V. THE ELECTION OF 1980

September 22, 27 and 29 –

Readings:

Johnson, Chapters #1 - #3 (pp. 19-51)

Reagan, Chapters #31 - #35 (pp. 200-222)

VI. ORGANIZING THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY

October 4 and 6 –

Readings:

Cannon, Chapters #5 - #7 (pp. 45-65)

Reagan, Chapters #36 - #40 (pp. 225-251)

******* NO CLASS ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11 *******

VII. REAGAN'S FIRST TERM

October 13, 18, 20, 25 and 27 –

Readings:

Cannon, Chapters #6 - #16 (pp. 66-433)

Johnson, Chapters #9 - #22 (pp. 97-300)

Reagan, Chapters #41 - #61 (pp. 252-467)

******* ANALYTICAL/RESEARCH PROJECT DUE *******
Thursday, October 20, at class time

VIII. THE ELECTION OF 1984

November 1 and 3 –

Readings:

Cannon, Chapter #17 (pp. 434-487)

IX. REAGAN'S SECOND TERM

November 8, 10, 15, 17 and 22 –

Readings:

Cannon, Chapters #18 - #21 (pp. 488-710)

Johnson, Chapters #23 - #27 (pp. 301-386)

Reagan, Chapters #62 - #85 (pp. 471-723)

******* NO CLASS ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24 *******

**X. EVALUATION OF THE REAGAN YEARS: WHAT KIND OF
PRESIDENT WAS REAGAN?**

November 29, December 1 and 6–

Readings:

Cannon, Chapter #22 (pp. 711-764)

Johnson, Chapters #28 - #33 (pp. 387-460)

Reagan, Epilogue (pp. 724-726)

******* ANALYTICAL/RESEARCH PROJECT II DUE *******
Tuesday, December 6, at class time