

PPOL 4750

Political Leadership in American History

Frederick P. Hitz

Spring 2011

University of Virginia

Tues./Thurs., 0930-1045

Batten School of Leadership

Room 410, Rouss Hall

This course will consider political leadership in American history as illustrated in decisions taken by U.S. Presidents, such as Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon. Students will become familiar with concepts of strategic leadership in the public domain, with an emphasis on political, as differentiated from military or administrative leadership. After an introductory text on the practicalities of leadership and how it is accomplished as a general matter among humans, the seminar will focus on important historical attempts at political leadership in American history. We shall analyze the pressures and causative factors leading to presidential decisions. Students will be chosen weekly to lead the seminar discussions on leadership questions raised by that week's reading, and to prepare a written précis of 500 words to guide the discussion.

In addition, a 3500 word final paper will be assigned, tracking an essential element(s) of strategic political leadership.

Week One –Thurs., Jan 20

Leadership on the Line, Heifetz and Linsky, Chaps 1-5

Week Two – Tues./Thurs., Jan 25 and 27 *Leadership on the Line, Chaps 6-11*

Week Three – Feb 1 and 3

The Founding Brothers by Jos. S. Ellis

Week Four – Feb 8 and 10

Team of Rivals by Doris Kearns Goodwin, Part I

Week Five – Feb 15 and 17

Team of Rivals, Part II

Week Six – Feb 22 and 24

Paris, 1919 by Elizabeth Macmillan, Parts 1-5

Week Seven - March 1 and 3

Paris 1919, Parts 6-8

SPRING RECESS – MAR 5 -13

Week Eight – March 15 and 17

***The Woman Behind the New Deal* by Kirstin Downey**

Week Nine – March 22 and 24

***Truman* by David McCullough, Parts 1-3**

Week Ten – March 29 and 31

***Truman* by McCullough, Parts 4-6**

Week Eleven– April 5 and 7

***One Hell of a Gamble* by Fursenko and Naftali**

Week Twelve – April 12 and 14

***Presidential Command* by Peter Rodman**

Week Thirteen – April 19 and 21

***The Nine* by Jeffrey Toobin**

Week Fourteen - April 26 and 28 and May 3

***The Dark Side* by Jane Meyer**

The final paper will be due on Friday, May 6, 2010