

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY
 Political Science 220-201 – Winter 2016
 Monday – Wednesday 2:40 – 4:10 pm
 Classroom: Arts & Letters Hall, Room 112

Instructor: Zachary Cook
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Course Description

This class investigates the development of the American presidency. How can presidents effectively achieve their goals in the 21st century? What factors help explain presidential success or failure? To answer such questions, this course employs a strong historical focus, tracing presidential precedents from George Washington up through Barack Obama's second term. We study how nearly all presidents, regardless of party or ideology, have sought to expand the power of the office, and we debate the merits of those efforts. The ongoing 2016 presidential primary will be one backdrop (*though not a primary focus – this is not an elections class, as a heads up*).

You will be introduced to several narratives for thinking about the presidency, including 1) the focus on “presidential greatness”; 2) the analysis of the constitutional text and use of case examples of presidents expanding their powers; 3) historical-institutionalist theories of presidents as partisan leaders; 4) empirical analysis of presidential rhetoric (and its limits) by George Edwards. Given the times we live in circa 2016, this class will have a special focus on the growth of presidential war / national security / emergency powers (9/11, civil liberties, drone strikes, etc.). We will also get into a couple of additional issues indicated by the class during Week One.

Required Readings

Milkis, Sidney M. and Michael Nelson. 2012. *The American Presidency: Origins & Development*. Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly Press. 6th edition. The 2008 5th edition is also acceptable for this course, and can be bought for cheaper online, though order it ASAP.

Fisher, Louis. 2013. *Presidential War Power*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas. 3rd edition. In this case, you need to purchase the 3rd edition; earlier versions will not work.

There will be additional class readings available online at D2L.

Grades

Your grade for this class will be determined as follows:	PERCENT	DUE
Attendance / Participation	20%	
Midterm	15%	Feb. 1
2-3 page discussion paper	10%	Feb. 10
1-2 page final paper proposal	5%	Feb. 24
2-3 page discussion paper	10%	Feb. 29
Final 8-10 page paper (includes proposal, see description below)	20%	Mar. 14
Final Exam (same classroom)	20%	Mar. 14, 2:30 – 4:45 pm

Attendance & Participation (20%): There is a lot of text below, I know. But every DePaul instructor handles class participation differently. I want to spell out here what my expectations are, so there is no confusion later. Feel free to contact me with any questions about the below.

People disagree over what “political science” means. But a key part of the discipline includes the public discussion of issues facing we the people. At one level, poli sci is a bunch of people sitting around debating issues of public significance (but making careful use of definitions and evidence to support their arguments). For this reason, while I will lecture at times, my course also depends heavily on student input. So I assign a high portion of your grade to attendance and participation. I will eventually learn all my attending students’ names, and something about their attitudes to American government. I also try and tailor presentations to the interests of my class. But this doesn’t work if students do not come prepared.

I do not pop-quiz; I do “pop-question.” I will not spring unannounced quizzes to test whether you are doing the reading. But to get a sense of preparation, I will “call out” random students with questions about the day’s assignment. To get highest marks for participation, you want to be able to summarize readings. I do recognize that students have extracurricular and other out-of-class commitments that occasionally prevent them from having a specific reading prepared in time. For that reason, up to three times this quarter, you can approach me before the start of the class and indicate, “I didn’t read it yet.” I won’t call on you that day.

I do not care if you miss one week, as long as you are a regular and active participant the rest of the time. *If you are a non-talker*, or if you miss more than a week, there are three ways to work on this part of your grade: 1) office hours visits; 2) help update the D2L website by sending the instructor links to interesting news stories that illustrate class concepts (*though that will not earn an A grade by itself*); 3) perfect attendance. If you show up to every single class, even if you never speak, I will assume some learning and effort has taken place on your part, and you will get a minimum B for Participation. I do not keep track of excused vs unexcused absences. If you miss more than a week, a deduction is the instructor’s discretion, and you want to attend office hours sometime to show that you have mastered the readings and material you were not present for.

If you show up late to class, if you are up to twenty minutes tardy, then I will still give you credit for attendance. Obviously do not make a habit of coming late, or you and I may need to have a discussion, and I may revise this policy in your specific case. Also, it is your responsibility to make sure that I actually do mark you as present, if the train ran late that day. After twenty minutes I have often put away my attendance list, and I might not catch your late arrival. You must double-check with me *after that class*. An email later in the day is too late. If you show up more than 20 minutes late, then I still encourage your showing up to get some of that day’s material, but you may not get credit for attendance.

Midterm (15%): The midterm will be February 1. It will be terms-to-ID and two essays. There is some vocab you are expected to know coming out of a course on the modern Presidency. The list of possible terms is on page 9 of this syllabus. You will need to write a minimum of three-four detailed sentences on each term assigned. We will practice these definitions in class (and see the D2L description online, for more information). There will also be two essay questions, which will not be released in advance. You will be allowed to bring in one hand-written, double-sided 8 x 11 ½ paper with notes, to help you with the essay portion only.

First Two Short Papers (10% each): February 10 and February 29 will be all-class-discussion days, where the instructor will take a back seat. To facilitate these discussions, students will need to write a 2-3 page essay answering a question that they will discuss the answers to on this day. A

fuller description of these two assignments will be handed out on class and posted on D2L. But in a nutshell, the question for February 10 is: *In which of his four presidential categories do you think Stephen Skowronek would classify Barack Obama, based on your two assigned readings from Skowronek (make sure to reference both in your answer, and one additional outside source)? And how accurate / inaccurate do you find this classification by Skowronek (i.e. feel free to provide your own modification to his theory)?* The question for February 29 is currently: *Using at least one external source (so again think like a news story, a magazine article, etc.) do you 1) agree with the empirical statement, “Barack Obama has unconstitutionally and / or unlawfully claimed a power that belongs either to the U. S. Congress, or does not belong at all to the federal government” (the three topics you can choose from will be war powers against Libya or Syria, drone strikes against Yemen and Pakistan including on U.S. citizens there, or Obama’s recent immigration orders); 2) whether you personally (so this is more of a normative statement) that it is a bad or a good outcome, that Obama has claimed this power (i.e., maybe the law or even the Constitution in your opinion is outdated!)* Much more on this later in class.

There are many ways to answer these short essays, but for both you must research and bring in at least one additional outside class reading (you will need three, for the final paper). In both cases you also need to pay special care to and cite relevant in-class texts. You must bring a hard copy of your paper to class (or turn a hard copy in beforehand, if you cannot attend – no emailed papers), and you are allowed to make any notes / changes to the paper with a pencil or pen, during the class discussion, before you turn it in. Lastly, revising your own work is a vital component of good writing, so if you’re captured by either of these two short paper topics, you can revise and expand either of these 2-3 pagers into your 8-10 final paper described below (including incorporating some or indeed all of the 2-3 page paper text).

Final Paper Proposal (5%) and Final 8-10 Page Paper (20%): One goal of the class is to help you form your own analysis / evaluation of Obama’s presidency, using the concepts that political scientists and historians have employed to evaluate previous administrations. For this paper, due by the final exam, write an 8-10 page paper evaluating one or two case examples from the Obama presidency. Your paper should relate one of the topics / theories we have explored in class to Barack Obama’s presidency, including but not limited to: 1) how well has Obama demonstrated the qualities that may one day lead his Presidency to be considered “great”?; 2) has Obama stretched the powers granted the executive by the Constitution (and is this a good or a bad thing); 3) how would you characterize Obama’s moment in Skowronek’s “political time”; 4) how well (or poorly) has Obama used the “bully pulpit”? As you will see, we will encounter theorists / styles of arguments for all of the above. In addition to a works cited section with one some clearly-defined theoretical focus, the paper must include at least three independent sources, which could include newspaper articles, TV news stories, magazine features, public opinion polls or contemporary books / memoirs published about Obama’s presidency, or “primary sources” like complete transcripts of speeches or interviews given by Obama.

The paper should not be merely an unsupported statement of opinion, in other words, but should take the form of an argument with references to specific theorists and detailed case example(s) to justify your claims. It should also be structured around an argument that is theoretically possible to disagree with, i.e. not a mere factual summary or “book report” paper, a “so and so wrote such and such” or a “I will just describe in detail something that Obama factually did” paper. To help with this intentionally open-ended topic, I require a 1-2 page description of your paper proposal description is due as a hard copy on Wednesday, February 24. This draft should clearly establish your topic, argument and include two out-of-class sources, properly academically cited. This proposal will receive comments and be graded A / F (meaning essentially you turned it in on time as a hard copy and provided the works cited). You can change your paper topic after February 24,

but I recommend if you do so you send me a follow-up notice (this one can be by email) to let me know and to confirm that your new topic is appropriate for the class. And again if all else fails at any time, even if it was not your original plan, you can fall back on revising and expanding your February 10 or 29 short papers. The final paper is due the same day as the exam, March 14.

I encourage you to keep it narrow, and not to write a “macro-paper” about Obama’s entire presidency. If you’ve seen it, think about Spielberg’s film *Lincoln*. It got rave reviews in part because it didn’t try and summarize Lincoln’s entire life, from boyhood to assassination; the bulk of the movie concerns one month of his administration and one legislative effort (passage of the Thirteenth Amendment). The specific focus of your paper is up to you, as long as a) you clearly tie it back to our class readings; b) *with the exception of a Skowronek-style analysis (where close attention to the elections is important)*, you cannot write a paper about Obama’s 2008 or 2012 race, aka some “How did Obama win?” paper. This is again not a campaigns class, sorry.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam will follow the same pattern as the midterm, terms to ID and two essay questions. The terms to ID are cumulative. The good news here is that a list of possible final essay questions will be released in advance (they will be more philosophical / reflective than the midterm questions, which will be mainly factual recall). And again for the final you will have all the potential material to review in advance. You can again bring in one 8 x 11 ½ hand-written paper with notes, to help you complete the essay section.

Academic Honesty

Work done for this course must adhere to the University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the Student Handbook or by visiting Academic Integrity at DePaul University (<http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>). DePaul is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of University ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution.

Grading Standards

To abide by my own rules for citation, I must give credit to Dr. Wayne Steger for his clear criteria on grading. I have adopted his standards for my own courses:

“A designates work of extra-ordinarily high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; and arguments are clearly organized with supporting ideas. Participation indicates that the student is prepared at all times if asked to provide a summary of the assigned readings, asks thoughtful questions, and volunteers in class.”¹

¹ Dr. Wayne Steger, course syllabus, “American Political System PSC 120 Winter Quarter 2005.” Available at <<http://condor.depaul.edu/~wsteger/psc120/index.html>>, last checked on 9/5/06.

“B designated work of high quality; reflects a clearly organized but less than comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; presents organized arguments that are supported by ideas. Student participates as above about 75% of the time, and attends nearly all class periods.”² (*If attendance is perfect, automatic B as specified above – this is my own grading choice, not Dr Steger’s*).

“C designates work which meets the minimal requirements of the assignment; written work reflects adequate organization and development of ideas, but arguments are communicated in a superficial or simplistic manner. Student does not volunteer, but responds to direct questions, often remains silent during group discussions, and often cannot summarize readings if called upon.”³

“D designates work of poor quality which meets the minimal requirements of the assignment, but demonstrates poor organization of ideas and / or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and / or simplistic; may indicate that the student has not read assignments thoroughly. Students does not volunteer, cannot respond to direct questions, keeps silent during class discussions, and is unable to summarize readings if called upon.”⁴

“F designates work of poor quality that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or task; fails to reflect an understanding of the issues at hand; fails to present organized arguments or fails to adequately support arguments with ideas; or which is not handed in on time. Student fails to participate even minimally in class or group discussions. Student may be frequently absent and participation is inadequate (silent) when student attends.”⁵

Additional Course Policies

Special needs: Any student who has special needs should contact the instructor immediately so that arrangements can be made as soon as possible.

D2L: I make extensive use of the D2L website for my classes. I will post all Powerpoints and the lecture notes online. These notes are not comprehensive and will not substitute for doing the actual course readings when it comes to the midterm. If all you have read are the lecture notes and the terms to ID, it is quite possible to fail the midterm. But the lecture notes are a good starting point for studying. Depending on what topics arise during the course, I may post a few additional short readings that I will notify the class about in advance. Week Ten will also be updated based on early class feedback.

***** *Special Winter 2016 Instructor Notice:*** *I want my students to have advance warning, it is quite likely there will be a change in the syllabus sometime in late January or February, either a sudden guest instructor / class video or (possibly) a canceled class. This could conceivably affect the midterm currently scheduled for February 1. The reason why is at some point this quarter I will be called to the hospital to be with my wife, welcoming “Cook Junior” into the world. So a lot depends on Junior’s timing, whether this will be a conflict with my class schedule. I don’t think it will be a major distraction, but I do want to give my students full notice going into Winter quarter (and also an explanation, if your instructor seems sleep-deprived in March).* ***

² *Ibid* (means same as previous footnote).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

WINTER 2016 THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

All readings are available on D2L; some will be distributed in class (marked as handouts). There are two bookstore texts for the class: *The American Presidency: Origins & Development* and *Presidential War Power*. These are abbreviated as OD and PWP.

WEEK ONE, JANUARY 4 - 6: Introduction, Different Kinds of Theory, and “Greatness”

This first class we discuss course expectations, the syllabus, empirical theory and normative theory. I get a sense for the class’s interests, and I lecture about one or two important empirical theories concerning the ongoing 2016 presidential primary. On Wednesday we explore the normative (*or is it normative?*) idea of “presidential greatness.”

Readings: Empirical vs Normative Theory (class handout and D2L); (Wed) Schlesinger (D2L).

WEEK TWO, JANUARY 11 - 13: Exploring the Roots of Constitutional Power

On Monday we will have a guest speaker to let you know about local internship opportunities, 43rd Ward Chief of Staff Adam Gypalo. We then continue our presidential investigations. If, as I have argued, the president’s normative mission is unclear, how do we ground our judgments about what the office should do? One (though only one) instructive way to investigate this question is to go back and look at the Constitution itself and its history, and what the Framers thought they were creating. We begin with the constitutional text itself and what we call the formal enumerated powers, even while this course argues that presidents, regardless of ideology, seek to expand their powers beyond this list.

Readings: Article II of Constitution (class handout); OD ch. 2, “Creating the Presidency”; PWP ch. 1, “The Constitutional Framework”; (on D2L) *Federalist* No. 69 and No. 70; *Anti-Federalist* papers excerpt. *If you’ve never taken a PSC 120 class or have no background on the Constitutional Convention of 1787, I strongly recommend you also peruse OD ch. 1.*

SHORT WEEK THREE, JANUARY 20 ONLY!: The First “Great”: George Washington

Note: No class Monday January 18 (in recognition of Martin Luther King).

For Wednesday: In George Washington we see our first model of what makes a “great” president, and also how the ambiguities within Article II posed challenges and opportunities for Washington as he became the first man to attempt to govern within its framework. We explore some of the precedents Washington helped fix in stone, including where he deferred to Congress, and where he attempted to govern independently of it.

Readings: OD ch. 3, “Bringing the Constitutional Presidency to Life: George Washington and John Adams”; Excerpt from Washington’s Farewell Address (D2L); Joseph Ellis, “The Farewell” (D2L)

WEEK FOUR, JANUARY 25 - 27: When Presidents Successfully Set Precedents – And When They Fail

This week we work more on broad models of presidential power. We first explore our first broad models of how presidents successfully set precedents in terms of presidential power overseas, what your Louis Fisher book at one point refers to as the “federative power.” Relying on a 2015 Fisher excerpt, we also begin to sketch out a broader vocabulary to deal with the variety of things presidents do that aren’t specifically enumerated within Article II. For a sense of an early controversy involving foreign policy, executive command, Congress and constitutional ambiguity, on Monday we pay special attention to George Washington’s Neutrality Proclamation and the famous *Pacificus-Helvidius* debate it led to. On Wednesday, with the 2016 Iowa Caucuses imminent and thus the beginning of the “visible primary,” we look more at electoral precedents that Washington tried but failed to establish, including the idea of a president “above partisanship.” We look at the first competitive presidential elections of 1796 and especially 1800, the emergence of the Federalist / Democratic-Republican split, and we do some obligatory reflection about 2016.

Readings: (Mon) PWP ch. 2, “Precedents from 1789 to 1900”, pp. 17-30; an excerpt from the *Pacificus – Helvidius* debate (D2L); Fisher excerpt, “Presidential Unilateral Actions” pp. 293-299, 301-304, 307-313 (D2L) (Wed) Review the end of OD ch. 3 and begin ch. 4 (6th ed. pp. 100-104, 5th ed. pp. 97-101); Ferling, “Cliffhanger” (D2L); Gil Troy, “Standing for Office in an Age of Virtue” (D2L)

WEEK FIVE, FEBRUARY 1-3: Midterm, and Developing a Theory of “Partisan Regimes”

Monday is the midterm. On Wednesday, I introduce a more sophisticated “big picture” model for how to think about presidential leadership across what is sometimes called “political time”: the partisan-regimes theory of Stephen Skowronek.

Readings: Nothing for Monday; (Wed) Valley, “An Overlooked Theory on Presidential Politics”; Skowronek, “Presidential Leadership in Political Time” (both D2L)

WEEK SIX, FEBRUARY 8-10: Applying Skowronek, and First Short Paper Discussion

And George Washington begat John Adams, who begat Thomas Jefferson, who begat James Madison ... And eventually Andrew Jackson came along ... And then in the mid-century, Lincoln ... The string of presidents throughout history continues. How do we organize or think coherently about presidential history? And why, again, are some of these executives in a kind of “greatness pantheon,” while others are comparatively forgotten? Is it all due to their own leadership / skill, or is something else at work? We practice Skowronek’s methodology on the “greatness” of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. On Wednesday we speculate more on what this approach may have to say for the present day, with our first full-fledged short paper discussion which speculates on Barack Obama’s place in “political time” (and I expect the 2016 primary will again come up in this discussion).

Readings: (Mon) OD chs. 4-5; (Wed) Skowronek, “Bill Clinton’s Moment in Political Time”; Brownstein, “Repudiating Bush” (both on D2L)

**** 1st 2-3 page paper due Wednesday ****

WEEK SEVEN, FEBRUARY 15-17: The Evolution of Power Abroad and At Home

On Monday we look at another “great” president, Abraham Lincoln, and some of his famous decisions during the Civil War (including an important precedent for Lincoln, the Mexican-American War under James K. Polk). I will discuss why most historians credit Lincoln for making responsible decisions. On Wednesday we continue our historical focus with a president Skowronek classifies as “affiliated” with Lincoln, the enormously-discussed-today Theodore Roosevelt. We discuss how TR is discussed in connection with a growing repertoire of presidential *domestic* powers. Jumping ahead to the present – and Obama compares himself to TR frequently – we look more at domestic power debates and a bit more at one contemporary controversy involving a president’s power to issue “commands”: Obama’s recent actions concerning immigration and his interpretation of “prosecutorial discretion.”

Readings: (Mon) OD ch. 6, “The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln”; PWP, the following page excerpts (again it’s key you have the third edition): 38-44, 47-51; (Wed) OD ch. 8, pp. 218-229 (6th ed), 208-221 (5th ed); Rudalevige, “Letter of the Law” pp. 29-39, 43-45; some recent current events about Obama’s immigration decision (D2L)

WEEK EIGHT, FEBRUARY 22-24: Presidential War Power in the 20th and 21st Century, from Korea to Libya and Yemen

This week we continue to trace the development of presidential power and command into the 21st century. On Monday we look more at the 20th century case examples of Korea and Vietnam. On Wednesday we develop the 21st century case examples of Libya and drone strikes under Barack Obama. Your 1-2 page final paper proposal is due February 24.

Readings: (Mon) PWP excerpts: pp. 95-103, 127-134, 144-153; (Wed) PWP 207-216, 222-227, 238-247, 260-265; excerpt from Savage’s *Power Wars* (D2L); Mazzetti, “How a U.S. Citizen Came to Be in America’s Cross Hairs” (D2L)

**** 1-2 page paper proposal due February 24 ****

WEEK NINE, FEBRUARY 29 - MARCH 2: Second Short Paper Discussion, and a Look at the Presidential “Bully Pulpit”

Monday is our second class paper discussion. Wednesday we shift gears and look at a debate where (I argue) presidential power is overrated: the so-called “power of the bully pulpit” (as associated with Theodore Roosevelt). An enormous amount of weight and hope has been placed on the president’s power to “go public” and to rally the public through his vision or eloquent words. (Drew Westen’s essay, “What Happened to Obama?” is only one in a long chain of similar essays). I discuss some empirical evidence why our aspirations for the president may be overrated in this respect.

**** 2-3 page short paper is due February 29 ****

Readings: (Mon) Savage, *Power Wars* (D2L); (Wed) Drew Westen, “What Happened to Obama? An Opinion Piece”; Ezra Klein, “The Unpersuaded”; George Edwards excerpt (D2L)

WEEK TEN, MARCH 7 - 9: Open Week To Be Determined

I want to keep Week Ten and its subject matter / readings open for a lecture or two on a specific class interest, maybe “a look back at the 2016 primary” or for a canceled class that we have to make up, etc. (see bottom of page five). *Readings TBD.*

FINAL EXAM: MARCH 14, 2:30 – 4:45 pm, same classroom

**** final 8-10 page paper also due March 14 ****

Midterm and Final Terms to ID

For each term, you must give a three-four sentence definition clearly expressing your understanding of it. My advice is keep this list handy and as you come across one of these terms in the readings, check it off. The list of terms is cumulative (so #1-17 for the midterm, #1-31 for the final). I stress that the below list is not all you need to know for the midterm. The essays will test additional knowledge of the first half readings, so if you only review the 170 terms below for the midterm, you may do badly on it.

For the Midterm:

1. empirical theory
2. normative theory
3. Schlesinger’s concept of “presidential greatness”
4. enumerated powers (see Milkis and Nelson)
5. the executive vesting clause (see Milkis and Nelson)
6. commander in chief (see Milkis and Nelson, also Fisher)
7. the Take Care clause (see Milkis and Nelson, also Fisher)
8. Federalist 69 (must discuss this essay’s specific content, not what a Federalist essay is in general)
9. Federalist 70 (ditto)
10. implied powers (as defined by Fisher)
11. inherent powers (as defined by Fisher)
12. the Whiskey Rebellion
13. the Pacificus-Helvidius debates
14. The Jay Treaty
15. Washington’s Farewell Address
16. The “Revolution” of 1800
17. “republicanism” (as defined in your Gil Troy reading)

All of the Above, Plus the Following, for the Final:

18. the repudiator president / regime builder (Skowronek)
19. the orthodox-innovator president / regime manager (Skowronek)
20. the disjunctive president (Skowronek)
21. the “third way” president (Skowronek)
22. Andrew Jackson’s bank veto
23. the Mexican-American War
24. habeas corpus
25. the “bully pulpit” (see Milkis and Nelson)
26. prosecutorial discretion
27. executive order
28. the War Powers Resolution
29. the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) against Afghanistan
30. the Office of Legal Counsel (OLC)
31. one – three more terms possibly to be added later

SPELLING / GRAMMAR MANDATES FOR THE FINAL PAPER

Students are often unsure just what particular instructors are looking for, when they stress good writing standards. My primary mandate is that students must leave time to review and do basic proofreading / formatting on their final papers, if they wish to avoid a deduction. So here are my automatic red flags, or “Zachary Cook’s Unforgiveable Errors,” any of which, each time they are committed, will see an automatic half-letter deduction, up to a total of a full grade. (In other words, if you turn in an A paper but commit three of the errors below, or any one of them three times, your grade will fall from an A to an A- to a B+ to a B. I’ll stop after one full letter.)

No matter how good your underlying ideas are, a well-argued but poorly-written paper is like showing up at a job talk with a glowing resume but with hair unwashed and in a ripped tee. People are not going to look beneath, and will usually assume you haven’t put sufficient thought into your ideas, if it looks like you skipped the presentation.

- 1) If it comes up, the President’s name is Barack Obama. Not “Barrack Obama.” Not “Barak Obama.” Every year I have poli sci majors who can’t spell his name. Also, my name is Zachary Cook, not “Zachery Cook.” Last, don’t misspell your own name.
- 2) Don’t misspell the names of any of our authors assigned for the course, or any of the class reading titles. Milkis, Nelson, Fisher, Skowronek, etc.
- 3) Don’t misspell any word that could have been caught by the quick use of a spellchecker. A widespread pattern of using the wrong word in the wrong place (*their* for *there*, *the Untied States of America*, *the pubic interest*, *loosing* for *losing* – my favorite was the student who once submitted *Silicone Valley*) may see a deduction, but you can get that back with a re-write. Any flat misspellings, on the other hand, are worth an irreversible deduction. Make sure you finish your paper in time to use a spellchecker (but remember it won’t always save you from misspelling a text or an author’s name – see #2 above).
- 4) Apostrophes only are used for possession (“Joe’s paper”); they never mean the plural. Many students use them to signify the plural, like *American’s from all over the world have gathered*. This is never right. It is *Americans from all over the world have gathered*. A clear ongoing attempt to avoid committing Error #4 by omitting all apostrophes, from anywhere in your paper, will also get a deduction.
- 5) I don’t have any requirements about margin size, double vs. single-spacing, page numbering, etc., but I do deduct if the **SIZE** or the **style of your font changes** during the paper. This always signals cutting-and-pasting that the student didn’t bother taking the time to correct (and it’s always an easy tell, for me to look for signs of plagiarism!) I have no problem with you quoting long passages from other texts or articles if it is appropriate, but if you leave a “fill” over any of your paper, including the Works Cited, that is an automatic deduction. Finally, [random hyperlinks in the main body of the paper \(usually again bad cutting and pasting\) are unacceptable and merit a deduction.](#)
- 6) Do include a professionally-formatted Works Cited / References page at the end of your 8-10 page paper. I accept multiple styles – AP, Chicago, just make sure it looks good. (Again, careful with hyperlinks here. Website pages have to be referenced properly. It is never adequate to simply cut-and-paste a URL for a paper citation. DePaul’s Writing Center website has good models for how to properly cite a website).