

Master of American History and Government  
Ashland University

**AHG 630:  
American Statesmen**

Instructors: Peter W. Schramm and Steven F. Hayward  
*Sunday, July 30, - Friday, August 4, 2006*

Even though the powers of the American Executive are controlled and limited, extraordinary acts of statesmanship are possible. This seminar examines those presidents who have demonstrated extraordinary political leadership. We will examine such statesmen and the political circumstances in which their prudence revealed itself. Among those examined will be Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will understand:

- The quality and limits of “executive power” in a constitutional regime
- The nature of statesmanship or political greatness
- The relationship between prudence and character
- The education or self-education of statesmen

**Requirements**

All reading assignments; participate in discussion  
An in class examination

**Students auditing the course as a part of a Teaching American History Grant program must complete the readings and fully participate in the seminars during the week.**

**Readings**

- Marc Landy & Sidney M. Milkis, *Presidential Greatness* ISBN: 0700611495
- Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* ISBN: 069102295X
- Andrew E. Busch, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Freedom* ISBN: 0742520536
- Steven F. Hayward, *Greatness: Reagan, Churchill & the Making of Extraordinary Leaders* ISBN: 030723715X
- Lord Charnwood, *Abraham Lincoln: A Biography* (Madison Books) ISBN: 0486299597
- *Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States of America.* (booklet), Ashbrook Center. ISBN: 1878802232
- Photocopied Reading Packet (PRP), Ashbrook Center

**You should read Tulis, ch 1-3, Landy/Milkis, and Hayward before the seminar meets.**

## Schedule

### Sunday, July 30

#### 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Session 1

**Topic:** Introduction to the idea of Statesmanship

**Focus:** What is politics? What is statesmanship? Is it the same as leadership? Is it the same as greatness? Why all politicians are not statesman. Is statesmanship an art or a science? How does one study statesmanship?

**Readings:**

Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Ch. 1  
Hayward, *Greatness*, Chs. 1, 2

#### 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Session 2

**Topic:** The Constitution, executive power, and statesmanship

**Focus:** Is it possible to talk about democratic statesmanship? How does political greatness reveal itself in this constitutional regime? Do statesmen, in the words of Hamilton, merely pursue “extensive and arduous enterprises for the public benefit”? What is “executive power” in a regime that separates power? Why is energy in the executive a good thing?

**Readings:**

Harvey Mansfield, “Introduction: The Ambivalence of Executive Power,”  
Chapter 1 of *The Taming of the Prince: The Ambivalence of Modern  
Executive Power* (PRP pp 5)  
The Constitution of the United States, Article II (booklet pp 17)  
The Presidential Oath of Office (booklet pp 19)  
*Federalist Papers*, Nos. 69, 70 (PRP pp 27)  
Pacificus-Helvidius Letters (PRP pp 37)

### Monday, July 31

#### 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session 3

**Topic:** George Washington

**Focus:** Washington is first among “the assembly of demigods.” He defends the Constitution with few words and deeds.

**Readings:**

Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Ch. 2  
Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Ch.1-3  
To Colonel Lewis Nicola, May 22, 1782 (PRP pp 45)  
Speech to the Officers of the Army, Newburgh, March 15, 1783 (PRP pp 47)  
First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789 (PRP pp 51)  
Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, November 2, 1783  
(PRP pp 55)

**10:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Session 4**

**Topic:** George Washington

**Focus:** We will consider Washington's character, reserve and distance; his moderation, virtue, and prudence; his ideas and self-education.

**Readings:**

Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1789 (PRP pp 61)  
To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Aug 7, 1790 (PRP pp 63)  
The Proclamation of Neutrality, April 22, 1793 (PRP pp 65)  
Farewell Address, September 19, 1796 (PRP pp 67)  
*Patriot Sage: George Washington and the American Political Tradition:*  
- Matthew Spalding, "Making Citizens: George Washington and the American Character" (PRP pp 77)  
- William B. Allen, "George Washington and the Standing Oak" (PRP pp 103)

**4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Session 5**

**Topic:** Thomas Jefferson and the election of 1800

**Focus:** How did Jefferson's "abstract truth" (Lincoln's words) reflect the American mind? What is the connection between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution? Jefferson thought that the election of 1800 was something like a regime change, a revolution that for the first time established the principles of 1776. Why did Jefferson decide that the "abstract truth" must be sustained in a party or that the party must promote an abstract truth? What is Jefferson's understanding of representative government?

**Readings:**

Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Ch.3  
Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Chs. 1-3  
The Declaration of Independence (booklet)  
Rough Draft of the Declaration (PRP pp 129)  
Notes on Slavery,  
- *Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XIV, "Laws"* (PRP pp 133)  
- *Notes on the State of Virginia, Query XVIII, "Manners"* (PRP pp 143)

## Tuesday, Aug 1

### 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session 6

**Topic:** Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Liberty

**Focus:** What is Jefferson's understanding of representative government? What is his understanding of the Empire of Liberty? What did he think of the Missouri Compromise?

#### **Readings:**

- Letter to Henry Lee, May 8, 1825 (PRP pp 147)
- Letter to Roger C. Weightman, June 24, 1826 (PRP pp 149)
- A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, 1779 (PRP pp 151)
- Letter to John Adams, October 28, 1813 (PRP pp 153)
- Letter to John Holmes, April 22, 1820 (PRP pp 157)
- First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1801 (PRP pp 159)
- Letter to the Legislature of Vermont, December 10, 1807 (PRP pp 165)
- Harvey Mansfield, "Introduction", *Thomas Jefferson: Selected Writings*, 1979, Crofts Classics pp. vii-xlii (PRP pp 169)
- John Zvesper, "Jefferson on Liberal Natural Rights", *Reason and Republicanism: Thomas Jefferson's Legacy of Liberty*, Gary L. McDowell and Sharon L. Noble (eds.), 1997, Rowman & Littlefield. (PRP pp 207)

### 10:50 a.m. – 12:20 a.m. Session 7

**Topic:** Andrew Jackson

**Focus:** Alexis de Tocqueville famously said that Jackson had "a violent character and middling capacity." Perhaps. But he did preserve the preeminence of the Union during the Nullification Crisis, and he democratized the presidency, and was decisive in his actions. He thought himself a follower of Jefferson, a partisan Democrat who was committed to decentralized and limited government. Did Jackson create the Democratic Party or did the Democratic Party use his person to the Party's advantage? Did the Bank veto strengthen or weaken the presidency?

#### **Readings:**

- Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Ch. 4
- First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1829 (PRP pp 227)
- First Annual Message to Congress, December 8, 1829 (PRP pp 229)
- "Maysville Road" veto, May 27, 1830 (PRP pp 235)
- Veto Message of the Bill on the Bank of the United States, July 10, 1832 (PRP pp 237)
- Proclamation Regarding Nullification, December 10, 1832 (PRP pp 249)

Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1833 (PRP pp 261)

Farewell Address, March 4, 1837 (PRP pp 263)

Richard J. Dougherty, "Republicanism and Constitutional Government in the Political Thought of Andrew Jackson," in *Challenges to the American Founding: Slavery, Historicism, and Progressivism in the Nineteenth Century*, Ronald J. Pestritto and Thomas G. West (eds.), Lexington Books, 2005. (PRP pp 275)

#### **4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Session 8**

**Topic:** Abraham Lincoln, the Declaration of Independence and the limits of consent

**Focus:** What did the Founders mean by declaring "all men are created equal?" Equality is a fundamental principle of justice. Can the people abandon equality, "the father of all moral principle in them," through consent? What did Stephen Douglas mean by "popular sovereignty?" Why was Lincoln so opposed to it?

**Readings:**

Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Ch. 5

Charnwood, *Abraham Lincoln*

Speech on the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise, October 16, 1854  
(PRP pp 317)

Speech on the Dred Scott Decision, June 26, 1857 (PRP pp 339)

#### **Wednesday, August 2**

#### **9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session 9**

**Topic:** Abraham Lincoln, war and the new birth of freedom

**Focus:** What is Lincoln's definition of democracy? Why didn't states have a right to secede, according to Lincoln? What is Lincoln's agenda as incoming president? Why couldn't the south have allowed

Address at Cooper Institute, February 27, 1860 (PRP pp 349)

Fragment on the Constitution and Union, January 1861 (booklet)

Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1862 (PRP pp 361)

Final Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863 (PRP pp 363)

Gettysburg Address (booklet)

Second Inaugural (booklet)

#### **10:50 a.m. – 12:20 a.m. Session 10**

**Topic:** Theodore Roosevelt

**Focus:** What is Theodore Roosevelt’s understanding of the presidency and presidential power? What role did he see for the U.S. in the world? What effect did his view of foreign policy have on his understanding of the presidency? Was he a progressive?

**Readings:**

Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Ch. 4  
First Annual Message to Congress (PRP pp 367)  
Eighth Annual Message to Congress (PRP pp 371)  
The New Nationalism Speech (excerpts) Aug 31, 1910 (PRP pp 377)

**4:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Session 11**

**Topic:** Woodrow Wilson, history, and his critique of the social compact

**Focus:** What is Wilson’s understanding of natural rights and history? What is his understanding of democracy? What is his understanding of the Constitution?

**Readings:**

Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Ch. 5  
*Constitutional Government in the United States* -  
“The President of the United States” (PRP pp 387)  
“Leaders of Men” (PRP pp 401)

**7:30 pm – 9:30 pm: Session 12 – Institute Lecture**

**Thursday August 3**

**9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session 13**

**Topic:** Woodrow Wilson and leadership beyond the separation of powers

**Focus:** How does he understand leadership in a regime in which powers are separated? Why does he criticize the Constitution? Why does he separate politics and administration? What is the relationship between popular leadership and political institutions?

**Readings:**

Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Ch. 6  
“What is Progress?”, Ch. 2 of *The New Freedom* (PRP pp 417)  
“The Study of Administration” (PRP pp 423)  
First Inaugural Address (PRP pp 437)  
The Fourteen Points (PRP pp 441)

Ronald J. Pestritto, "Woodrow Wilson, the Organic State, and American Republicanism," in *History of American Political Thought*, Bryan-Paul Frost and Jeffrey Sikkenga (eds) (PRP pp 445)

**10:50 a.m. – 12:20 a.m. Session 14**

**Topic:** Franklin D. Roosevelt as a progressive leader

**Focus:** How did Franklin Roosevelt praised Abraham Lincoln for being a progressive? Was FDR's leadership inspired by Lincoln or Woodrow Wilson? How did FDR understand the New Deal?

**Readings:**

Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Ch. 7  
Landy & Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, Chs. 6-8  
Commonwealth Club Address, September 23, 1932 (PRP pp 467)  
First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933 (PRP pp 475)  
First Fireside Chat, 1933 (PRP pp 479)  
Address to the Young Democrats, July 24, 1935 (PRP pp 483)  
Acceptance Speech for the Nomination for the Second Term (PRP pp 489)  
"Four Freedoms," Speech to Congress, January 6, 1941 (PRP pp 493)

**4:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Session 15**

**Topic:** Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democratic Party

**Focus:** What role did FDR see for the Democratic Party? Did he consider himself a constitutionalist? What role did he see for the beauracracy?

**Readings:**

Address at Constitution Day, September 17, 1937 (PRP pp 499)  
State of the Union Address, January 11, 1944 (PRP pp 505)  
Annual Message to Congress, 1944 (PRP pp 513)  
"To Fulfill These Rights," L.B. Johnson, June 4, 1965 (PRP pp 521)

**Friday, August 4**

**9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Session 16**

**Topic:** Ronald Reagan, the Constitution and the Cold War

**Focus:** What was Reagan's understanding of the Constitution? How did Reagan understand conservatism? What was his criticism of contemporary liberalism or progressivism? How did Reagan understand the welfare state, taxation, and social issues? Why did he think it necessary to call the USSR and "evil empire"?

**Readings:**

Speech to the Republican Convention, July 1980 (PRP pp 529)  
Speech to Veterans of Foreign Wars, Aug 18, 1980 (PRP pp 537)  
Speech to the House of Commons, June 8, 1982 (PRP pp 543)  
Speech to the Republican National Convention Aug 17, 1992 (PRP pp 547)  
First Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981 (PRP pp 553)  
“Evil Empire” Speech, March 8, 1983 (PRP pp 557)  
Hayward, *Greatness*, Chs. 3-9  
Busch, *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Freedom*, Chs. 1-8  
Hugh Heclo, "Ronald Reagan and the American Public Philosophy," in W.  
Elliot Brownlee and Hugh Graham Davis, eds, *The Reagan Presidency:  
Pragmatic Conservatism and Its Legacies* (U. Press of Kansas, 2003).  
(PRP pp 563)

**10:50 a.m. – 12:20 a.m. Session 17**

**Topic:** Review Session

**1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Session 18**

The examination will consist of short essay questions and will be comprehensive.