

## Course Syllabus

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### Course Information

*(course number, course title, term, any specific section title)*

## ***Beyond Congress and the White House***

Fall Semester 2007

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### Professor Contact Information

*(Professor's name, phone number, email, office location, office hours, other information)*

Joel L. Swerdlow, Ph.D.

[joel@jswerdlow.com](mailto:joel@jswerdlow.com)

Cell: 202-549-8111

I will always return your email or telephone call within 24 hours. If you do not hear from me, please assume that your message or email was electronically lost. Please call or write again.

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### Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

*(including required prior knowledge or skills)*

Acceptance into the Archer Fellowship Program.

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### Course Description

This course will help us better understand power in Washington, D.C.—especially what lies beyond Congress and the White House, where power can be the most difficult to perceive and understand. We will study the capital city in a way that is possible only in Washington itself. Each week we will visit a place that lies between Arlington National Cemetery and the Library of Congress. Along the way, we will examine facets of political power and democracy, exemplified by a series of issues that have no “right” or “wrong” (or final) answers.

This course will explore a thesis that may or may not be correct: Although the United States is a nation of constitutional principles and laws, the ultimate source of power is public opinion. During class discussions, we will compile three lists: (1) Tools that facilitate the use and abuse of history; (2) How electronic screens change beliefs about “reality”; and (3) How to “read” a memorial. We will also identify a newly-emerging “conceptual vocabulary” that enables people to better understand and make practical use of these lists.

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### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

#### **Upon completing the course students will**

- have developed critical reading and writing skills.
- be able to identify the basic components of political power in Washington, D.C., especially as it exists beyond Congress and the White House.
- be able to relate internship experiences to basic notions of power in Washington.
- be able to describe how communications and digital technologies have—and have not—changed the workings of democracy.
- be able to describe and assess the political forces and ideas that have shaped and will shape the National Mall.
- be able to assess the importance of the city of Washington D.C. to America’s democratic experience.

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### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

#### **Required Readings** (to be distributed in class)

**There is a reading assignment for each week (see below). In addition, we will weave the following basic readings into our discussions:**

- Dickens, Charles, *American Notes: A Journey* (1842) pp. 112-127

- Madison, James, *Federalist* No. 51 (1788)
- Mann, Thomas, *The Oxford Guide to Library Research* (1998) pp. 185-203
- Whitman, Walt, "By Blue Ontario's Shore" (1881) [adaptation]

In addition, each student is asked to choose one book (with instructor's approval) and report on this book to the class. Any genre of book, including fiction and poetry, is welcome. **The books you choose must be related to your internship or to a specific topic in one of the Archer courses.** Book presentations will be scheduled throughout the semester.

### Suggested Course Materials

### ***Electronic Journal***

You will maintain an Electronic Journal about the sites you visit each week. It should record your thoughts, reactions and ideas. We will discuss details about how and when these journals are to be submitted. During the first twenty minutes of class, volunteers will read their journal entries aloud

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### Assignments & Academic Calendar

*(Topics, Reading Assignments, Due Dates, Exam Dates)*

## ASSIGNMENTS FOR FALL SEMESTER 2007

***Please Note:*** We will establish a cell phone/email system so you can learn if weather has forced us to change any classes on the Mall.

### **Before the first class, you must:**

- Meet with me in small groups (time and place will be on sign-up sheets).
- Go to the top of the Washington Monument. Write your feelings and thoughts in your Electronic Journal. ***Please bring printouts of your journals to the first class.***
- Visit the Library of Congress and get a Reader Identification Card.
- Be prepared to discuss one major idea from each book of your summer reading: Jean Baudrillard *America* (1988) and Jerzy Kosinski, *Being There* (1970).

**Readings for each class will be distributed the previous week. Most of the readings are brief and you never have more than about fifty pages a week.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Some of the following assignments may change as we respond to major events that occur during the semester.**

**Class Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *Changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery*

**Read:**

- Eisenhower, Dwight D., *Farewell Address to the Nation* January 17 1961
- Hormats, Robert D., *The Price of Liberty* (2007) pp. 207-226
- James, William, *The Moral Equivalent of War* (1906)
- Junod, Tom, "The Falling Man," *Esquire* September, 2003
- O'Brien, Tim, "How to Tell a True War Story" (1990)
- Thucydides, *Pericles' Funeral Oration* (431 BC)

**Topics to be discussed:**

- How does the U.S. pay for wars?
- Are there aspects of wars we simply do not want to see?

**Class Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *The Magna Carta, U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights in the National Archives*

**Read:**

- Bryce, James, *The American Commonwealth* (1893) pp. 251-258
- Dunn, John, *Democracy: A History* (2006) pp. 55-68
- Henry, Patrick, *Speeches Before the Virginia Ratifying Convention* (1788)
- Immerman, Richard and "Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu: The 'Day We Didn't Go to War Revisited'," *Journal of American History* (1984)
- Kennedy, John. F., *Speech, never delivered, announcing U.S. military attack on Cuba* (1962)
- Neustadt, Richard E., *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents* (1990) pp. 295-306

- Tietz, Jeff, "The Unending Torture of Omar Khadr, Rolling Stone August 10, 2006
- Yoo, John, War By Other Means (2006) pp. x-xx

**Topics to be debated in class:**

- When it comes to declaring and ending war, does the Constitution work well?
- Should the U.S. government torture people? Does it?

**Class Wednesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** Main Reading Room, Library of Congress

**Read:**

- Bradbury, Ray, Fahrenheit 451 (1950) pp. 52-63
- Gladwell, Malcolm, "The Picture Problem," The New Yorker, December 13, 2004
- Kelly, Kevin, "Scan This Book!," N.Y. Times Magazine, March 14, 2006
- Luntz, Frank, Words That Work (2007), pp. x-xx
- Orwell, George, 1984 (1950) pp. 250-253
- Patterson, Thomas E., The Vanishing Voter (2003) pp. 3-22
- Putnam, Robert D., Bowling Alone (2000) pp. 367-401

**Topic for discussion:** To what degree have electronics changed—and not changed—the

ways in which we acquire and use information and ideas?

**Class Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>: Meet at the top steps of the Lincoln Memorial**

**Before this class, read:**

- King, Martin Luther, Jr., Beyond Vietnam April 4, 1967
- Vowell, Sarah, Assassination Vacation (2005) pp. 189-235
- White, Ronald C., Jr., Lincoln's Greatest Speech (2003) pp. 21-42 and 180-203.
- Wicker, Tom, "If Lincoln Had Not Freed the Slaves" in What If? (2001)

**Topics for discussion:**

- Did the "Abraham Lincoln" we know today ever exist?

- *Why is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech so famous?*

**Class Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *Spend time trying to find your favorite place*

**Read:** *Material assigned via the Digital Exploration and Discussion Project*

**Topics for Discussion:**

- *How did chickens in Arkansas save Silicon Valley?*
- *What do primary source documents tell us about how well democracy is working?*

**Class Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>: Meet at the FDR Memorial (rocks in the center of the third term)**

**Remember to bring your brown bag dinner.**

**Before this class, read:**

- *Draut, Tamara, "The Growing College Gap" (2005)*
- *Swerdlow, Joel L., "The Politics of Economic Growth" (2007)*
- *Walker, David, America's Fiscal Future (2006)*

**Topics for discussion:**

- *What is "economic growth" and what causes it?*
- *How important is the "income gap"?*
- *What lessons can we learn from FDR's economic mistakes?*
- *Why are Social Security/Payroll taxes so regressive today?*

**Class Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Individual meetings for mid-semester review.**

**Class Wednesday, October 31<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *The John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy gravesites*

**Read:**

- *Hofstadter, Richard, The Paranoid Style in American Politics (1964)*
- *Kennedy, Robert F., Day of Affirmation Address, South Africa June 6, 1966*
- *Newfield, Jack, Robert Kennedy: A Memoir (1969) pp. x-xx*
- *Piereson, James, Camelot and the Cultural Revolution: How the Assassination of John F. Kennedy Shattered American Liberalism (2007) pp. x-xx*

**Topics for discussion:**

- *How important are heroes? Do they shape history?*
- *Has technology changed the people we choose as heroes?*

**Class Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>: Meet at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (statue of the three soldiers)**

**Before this class, read:**

- *Swerdlow, Joel L., To Heal a Nation (1985) pp. x-xx*
- *Johnson, Lyndon B., Address to the Nation March 31, 1968*
- *Braestrup, Peter, The Big Story (1977) pp. x-xx*

**Topics for discussion:**

- *Has the Vietnam Veterans Memorial failed?*
- *What is the significance of things that people leave at the Wall?*
- *Who decides to build memorials like this? What is their function on the Mall?*
- *Who “won” the Tet Offensive and what can we learn from it?*
- *What was the purpose of LBJ’s March 31<sup>st</sup> speech?*

**Class Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *The Berlin Wall Display in the Reagan Building*

**Read:**

- *Reagan, Ronald, Tear Down This Wall, Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate June 12, 1987*
- *Taylor, Frederick, The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989 (2007) pp. x-x*

**Topics for discussion:**

- *Why is such a huge building named after Ronald Reagan, who advocated small government?*
- *Is it possible that the Berlin Wall helped to prevent World War III?*

**No Class Wednesday, November 21<sup>th</sup>: Holiday**

**HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE THANKSGIVING!!!!**

**Class Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *the Botanical Gardens*

**Read:**

- *Carson, Rachel, Silent Spring (1962) pp. x-xx*
- *Lomborg, Bjorn, The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World (2001) pp. x-xx*
- *Swerdlow, Joel L., Nature's Medicine (2000) pp. x-xx*

**Topics for Discussion:**

- *Why don't we use DDT to combat malaria?*
- *What role does books have in setting the public agenda?*
- *How and why do people change their minds?*

**Class Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Before this class:**

**Visit:** *The future sites of the Martin Luther King and Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorials*

**Read:** *To Be Announced*

**Topics for discussion:** *To Be Announced*



**Class Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>: The Archer Center**

**Summation/Questions that still need to be addressed/Lessons learned**

Complete presentations

**Assignment for Winter Vacation: Have Fun!**

## **Good Luck on Your Future Work and Studies**

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### **Grading Policy**

*(including percentages for assignments, grade scale, etc.)*

### **Electronic Journal**

You will maintain an Electronic Journal about the sites you visit each week. It should record your thoughts, reactions and ideas. We will discuss details about how and when these journals are to be submitted. During the first twenty minutes of class, volunteers will read their journal entries aloud.

### **Presentations**

*During the semester, you are required to:*

- *Visit the Smithsonian American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery. They are open every evening until 7:00 pm. Find a work (or works) that relates to your internship. **Prepare to present a 5-15 minute report to the class on what you have found.** The building itself, its location, and its history are all part of what you can use.*
- *Find a place on the Mall that speaks to you in a special way, and be prepared to explain how and why you selected this place.*

Thus, each student will make three presentations: (1) What you learned from reading your book; (2) Your visit to the American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery; and (3) the personal place you select. All presentations will be 5-15 minutes. **You are strongly advised not to use PowerPoint.** We will schedule presentations as the class progresses.

### **Grading Policy**

**Mid-Semester Review:**

During the week of October 24<sup>th</sup>, I will meet individually with each of you to review and discuss your participation and progress to-date.

**Final Grades:**

- Class Discussions: 40 percent
- Written Journals: 25 percent
- Oral Presentations: 25 percent
- Digital Research Project: 10 percent

**To participate in class discussions, you *must* do the readings.**

Students who complete all assignments satisfactorily and in a timely manner will receive a **B**. Students who display excellence through written work and through class participation will receive an **A**. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete assigned projects or to attend classes regularly will receive lower than a **B**. The grading scale will include + and - grades, although your home institution may limit grading to simple letter grades for GPA purposes. Students are encouraged to discuss with faculty how they might display excellence in the course.

Students are expected to attend every class and organized Archer function, and to conduct themselves according to University rules. Excuses for compelling personal or work-related reasons must be granted *beforehand*. Unexcused absences will result in lower grades. Late work will be penalized at least one grade. Opportunities for extra credit and special assignments will be made available throughout the semester.

**Writing Boot Camp (voluntary)**

Participation in this boot camp is strictly voluntary and unrelated to grades. The boot camp is designed to help you improve your writing, and is **limited to four students**. Procedures for admission to boot camp are as follows:

- Submit a sample of what you believe to be your best writing;
- After reviewing this sample, I will suggest three ways to improve your writing;
- If you agree with this assessment, you join the boot camp, which will require you to complete writing assignments designed to address your particular goals;
- We will meet periodically as you complete your assignments;
- Failure to meet this commitment will result in termination from boot camp.
- You can leave boot camp at any time.

Again, all of this is strictly voluntary. If more than six students apply and are accepted, a lottery will determine who attends.

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## Course & Instructor Policies

*(make-up exams, extra credit, late work, special assignments, class attendance, classroom citizenship, etc.)*

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## Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: [assist@utdallas.edu](mailto:assist@utdallas.edu) or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

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## Field Trip Policies

### Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

*Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address [http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm). Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.*

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## Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

## **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork

to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

## **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

[disabilityservice@utdallas.edu](mailto:disabilityservice@utdallas.edu)

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of

your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

### **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***