COURSE OBJECTIVES
- To nurture an appreciation of the importance of the office of the US Presidency;
- To focus on FOUR esteemed US Presidents to better understand the meaning and significance of effective leadership and its importance in American Society;
- To better understand the part FOUR key presidents have played in the development of the Nation AND its national character.
- To better understand the attributes of effective leadership in general.
- To better understand American Character and Historical Continuity

COURSE INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPLANATION OF MY APPROACH TO THIS CLASS
- THE PRESIDENTS =I have arbitrarily selected four US Presidents to study as the main emphasis in our course. (I am chagrined that we are limited to four, I would have preferred five to seven!)

- TEXT for this course is prepared by your professor. It provides students with my lectures in narrative style that I would have used had I chosen to lecture face to face. It also includes selected primary source documents that hopefully you will find stimulating. They are in the main important speeches, or other important documents of historical value selected to spark student interest in their study of the USA’s presidency. Students are to rely heavily on our text. The lecture material, my commentary wherever it appears, as well as the primary source documents selected in the text, together will help you understand the setting, the historical times and the men. Stated simply, the text is what I want you to know.

- MOODLE = We will together identify the major issues in the administration of each of our great President’s. Instead of listening passively to wonderful lectures, you will read my narrative and we will discuss our president’s together on the discussion board---via Moodle. We will cover one US President every two weeks with readings assigned for each of the four US Greats. We will do all this “discussing” on the internet via the ICES Moodle system. So you see reading and keeping up with the class according to the schedule is an essential commitment that each student must make from the beginning.

- THE QUIZ: To ensure student preparation it is my practice to utilize a weekly quiz on the assigned reading for that week. The quiz is my way of ensuring that students have not only read the material but are also able to do something with what they have read in the text.
- COMMENTS ON MOODLE = Students are to make two intelligent comments on the reading assigned each week on Moodle. You will make these comments on the ICES Moodle system. Each of your comments will be graded by me in my response to each of your comments—including a grade for each. My response will not be on Moodle, it will be sent directly to you via your preferred e-mail address. So you and I will talk at least three times a week—talk electronically that is.

- MORE ON YOUR COMMENTS = What I want in each comment from you is: your analysis; your considered reaction; or questions that are raised or stimulated by your reading of each week’s assigned reading. I do not want you to tell me what I told you. I want your reaction, that is, your judgment on the readings and what the readings for the week tell you about the US Presidents we are studying. As you read you will have reactions, thoughts, questions, comments, etc., that come to your mind. Jot these thoughts down—they might well be the basis for a good comment. As you will note when reading the text, I also insert questions and comments throughout the text to make you think—watch for them. If you are moved to look up information on the net, or try to answer some of my questions—I consider that an excellent commitment on your part. If you wish to share your thoughts from other sources, make sure they are your own words and also tell us your source. You cannot copy and share—after all I am grading YOUR work. Think originally and share it on Moodle. I am always impressed with a student’s ability to link knowledge. That is, taking knowledge in the text and linking it with knowledge of things you know or understand. Your ability to then relate what you know to the subject being reviewed is most impressive to your professor. I am also impressed when you cite the work or ideas of other students and build on their Moodle comments. The bottom line is I want you to demonstrate that you not only understand the reading assigned but that you can do something with the material you have read. Something that shows me you understood the reading well enough to use it intelligently. You are expected to read all the comments on Moodle from your student colleagues in this class. Go ahead and comment on their comments, always being civil, or use their comments to build on in your own commentary. Remember two comments are required each week. Your comments will make up 45% of your final grade—so they are most important in our course and your final grade.

ENGAGEMENT = It has been my experience that the best way to teach today is to actively engage students. I find it easy to engage students in online teaching for you must talk to me via the internet at least THREE times each week. You the student are being assigned the primary responsibility for learning. I am your guide and you have my lecture notes and conclusions in this text. So be prepared to learn by doing!

- BOOK REVIEW: It is my intention that each student will also select and read a biography selected with my approval, on ONE of the great Presidents from books on the course reading list. Each student will select a different book to read. The selection process will be worked out in discussions with the students during our first class. The book selection
must come from the course reading list which is included in the syllabus. A book review on the President of your choice will be due in December, date to be arranged.

Instructions on how to prepare the book review are included in our text. We will spread the selection process so that an equal number of students in our class will be reading on each of the four “Greats.” You will select the “president” in our first week of classes, and the book from the reading list no later than the second week. The process of approval will be on a first call first served basis.

THE TEXT: Our discussions about the president’s and my lecture notes focus on: their biographical background; their character and personality; their strengths, accomplishments, and their short-comings; and on the major issues/events each faced during their presidential administration. I have selected the documents and written the text based on my reading, research and reflections over the fifty-five plus years that I have taught US History. What is presented in the text comprises what I want you to know about the US Presidents selected. We will also discuss the contributions these men made to the office of the president, to leadership in general, and, of course, to American Character & Historical Continuity.

THE PRESIDENTIAL POLLS: You will be asked to read several presidential polls in the text that we will review in our next class. Rating US Presidents seems to be a part of American Character as new polls with a new approach seem to come out often in the USA. At the same time whoever conducts the polls and whatever the rules the results seem to produce the same top three every time.

THE FOCUS in my text and our class is on the men, their times, and on how their actions/inactions as President influenced the nation and the development of its national character. The class will focus on presidential leadership as well as on the notion of leadership in general. Assessing the leadership skills of the president’s studied in this course should contribute something to your understanding of what constitutes effective leadership. At least that is my hope. Who knows, the leaders you will study may directly influence your future as a leader.

The President’s selected by your Professor and the bibliography that students are to select their book from, are listed in the next section of the syllabus. Remember a book must be selected from this list on one of the President’s in our course. If you find a book you would like to read that is NOT on the list---e-mail or talk to me about your idea to see if I will approve it. I am familiar with all these books on the list so I may not wish to read a book that is not on the list. Also note that an * in front of a title indicates it is available at the Doherty Library at UST Houston; a + or ++ indicates a book of distinction; a – means it is a good, but difficult selection. The date following the title indicates the date of publication. The format for preparing your book review is included elsewhere in the text.
EXPECTATIONS FOR MY STUDENTS = To clarify student responsibility and my expectations read the following carefully:

1. The first part of each week or the previous weekend should be dedicated by the students to reading the assigned reading for that week in the text. The second part of each week is dedicated to posting a comment, discussing or expanding on the comments made by other students or by the Professor. You may and are encouraged to ask questions about anything that is not clear to you—do so on Moodle or by direct e-mail to your professor.

2. Students are expected to make TWO intelligent comments no later than 5 p.m. French time on Friday during each week in the course. (Or by whatever deadline we agree to in our first class.) These comments will be graded by your Professor and will make up 45% of a student’s final grade—a considerable %. Think about what you want to say, don’t be rushed, and be aware of correct grammar, civility, spelling and punctuation.

3. Students are encouraged to make their Moodle comments early and not wait until the deadline is upon you. In doing so you permit your student colleague’s sufficient time to read colleague posts—an important aspect in online learning. In making intelligent commentary, a student is both a student and a teacher, sharing their observations with classmates as well as their professor.

4. Student discussion and interaction on Moodle are the essential elements in the course. Students may comment on the remarks of other students, as well as on the text, always in a respectful manner. I sometimes give bonus points for insightful comments on the work of others.

5. Students should try not to repeat what has already been said on Moodle by other students or your professor. Doing so is a sign that a student has not read previous comments and perhaps is not “listening” or thinking for themselves.

6. Civility and politeness towards others shall be a shining characteristic in this course.

7. Students are to select one book from the reading list on one of the Presidents studied in the course. They must follow instructions in this regard, and hopefully we will have everyone’s book selected before I leave for the USA.

8. A weekly quiz on the material assigned for each week will be scheduled as appropriate.

9. You may contact your Professor directly if you so desire by email at mcfadden@stthom.edu

10. Remember in this course, all of us are both teachers and students. Always be polite, even if you strongly disagree with other participants.
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Also suggest several works authored by Theodore Roosevelt himself which are as revealing about the President as they are his topics selected. Among the more interesting and revealing are:

- AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
- RANCH LIFE AND HUNTING TRAILS
- OLIVER CROMWELL
- GOUVERNEUR MORRIS
- THE ROUGH RIDERS
- FEAR GOD AND TAKE YOUR OWN PART
- WINNING THE WEST
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STUDENT GRADING POLICY: Students will be graded using my American system which is then converted to your crazy French system as follows:

1. Each activity will receive a grade and all grades will be averaged into a final course grade:
   - Activity # 1: Book review on one of the four President’s; Grade Value = 20% of final grade in course
   - Activity # 2: The weekly Quiz; Grade Value = 10% of final grade in the course
   - Activity # 3: The weekly Class Discussions and Moodle Comments; Grade Value = 45% of final grade in course.
   - Activity # 4: Final Exam; Grade Value = 25% of final grade in course.

2. Each activity will receive a grade according to the following scale:
   - A+ = 100-95     A-94-93     A- = 92-90
   - B+ = 89-88     B = 87-83     B- = 82-80
   - C+ = 79-78     C = 77-73     C- = 72-70
   - D= 69-65      F = 64-00

3. Failure to turn in a required assignment on time earns a 0 for that assignment. Failure to comment on the discussion board merits a 0 for each discussion comment missed; failing to enter your comments on the weekly discussion board before the deadline means that the highest possible score for the Moodle comment for that week is a C- or 70, no matter how good the comment may be. Meet the deadline! Missing a quiz merits a 0. The quiz will be graded on a scale of 1 to 10 with a 10 being an A. With advance notice a quiz may be made up or taken via e mail---should an unavoidable absence be necessary. Note: advance notice required, not after the fact.

4. Your completed book reviews will be placed on the Discussion Board before the deadline established by the class. NO book review will be accepted after the assigned deadlines---unless a student receives prior approval.

OTHER COURSE RULES
In effect WE have an appointment with one another on the internet on a weekly basis and according to our schedule that I intend on keeping. I expect you to also keep your appointment with me. Conversion of my American based grades to French grades is problematic. I say problematic because American grades are often down-graded by your French authorities when the grades are transferred to your French System. It is my understanding that this action is taken because it is believed by your authorities that we Americans grade too high. So be prepared, I can’t fight your system, I have tried in the past and lost. You will know what your American grade is, and of course, I will notified you of your French equivalent. Then we shall see what happens.
POSSIBLE RESEARCH PROJECTS (Here we are “making believe.”) These are the instructions that I would have given to my American Students. They are only for your reading pleasure, so relax. No action is required on your part with regards to a research project. None is assigned or expected. (Unless… you twist my arm. Only kidding!)

“Instructions”
Graduate and undergraduate students are to select a research project from among those listed below, or come up with their own. One project per student, first come first serve. Selections must be accomplished prior to the end of the second class. The project possibilities are listed below. A G before a project means it is a graduate level research project; a UG means an undergraduate level research project. ALL means this project is acceptable for any student. Graduate students will have first choice and must select from Graduate level projects. Undergraduates will have second choice and may select from among any project not selected. The goal here is to produce a paper based on your reading of original sources that suggests an answer to an historical query. It is best to start research with a question in mind, utilizing the sources to provide a reasonable answer to the question posed. Then a student writes their paper supported by the evidence they found. This project will not be your life’s work, so we are talking about a paper in range of 7 to 15 pages or so. I also encourage students to consider presenting your paper at the Research Conference held in April at UST. More on that later. Instructions as to deadlines for preparing abstracts and outlines will be forthcoming. The projects that one may select from are as follows:

1. G We have the papers of most of our Great Presidents available in our Doherty Library or on line. Select a President and read their papers, concentrating on just a few topics or a topic, and write a mini-research project. Example, read the Diary of George Washington covering several years and write a paper describing the Washington that emerged from your reading of his diary. Or, read Jackson’s papers and search for examples that may reveal important personality traits.

2. UG Prepare a bibliographic essay on one of our Great Presidents that focus’s only on ORIGINAL source materials available in the Doherty library and at the Rice University library. If you do not know what a bibliographic essay is ask me to show you one.

3. UG Write a paper on how the NEW YORK TIMES covered FDR’s more important Fire Side Chats. If you select this option we need to talk about which chats. (The Chats you have read for this course would be a starting point.)

4. G Write a paper on how the NEW YORK TIMES, or any other paper or magazine available on line or in hard copy, reacted to a selected important issue during the Roosevelt Presidency. Examples: The Destroyer for Bases deal; Lend Lease; His Quarantine Speech; or select any other issue of your preference.
5. G. Utilizing the Valley of the Shadows web site material, review any two newspapers included in the collection and their editorial stands on either the election of 1860 or 1864. Or, search for articles on Lincoln to determine how they presented him.

6. G Write a paper on how the NEW YORK TIMES and the HOUSTON POST or HOUSTON CHRONICLE reacted editorially to FDR’s court packing scheme.

7. UG Write a research paper on FDR’s involvement in the North American Wildlife Conference and how his involvement was reflected in the NYT. (I have the notes for this conference.)

8. G Review articles in the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW OR NILES REGISTER on line and assess how the journal covered either Jefferson, Jackson, or Lincoln.

9. G Trace the legislative debates on any key law passed during the administration of one of our great presidents. Congressional Globe/Record is available at Rice.

10. ALL Review the inaugural addresses of our president’s, that would be eight in total, and prepare an intelligent analysis and interpretative essay.

11. ALL Review newspapers in Valley of the Shadow collection or the digitized collection of the RICHMOND DAILY DISPATCH, to see how papers covered Abraham Lincoln or Lincoln related issues in selective years.

12. ALL Read a selection of FDR’s Fireside Chats, I recall there being 29 or so, and prepare an analysis of these public relations efforts.

13. ALL Read through the three volumes of correspondence between Madison and Jefferson and write a paper describing their relationship, based on this correspondence.


15. UG Read Jefferson’s AUTOBIOGRAPHY and his NOTES ON VIRGINIA and comment on his assessment’s about his life and life around him as he saw it.

16. ALL Read the IRISH WORLD editorials on FDR and comment on how they presented his International leadership in period 1937-1940.
17 ALL. The UST Doherty Library is subscribing to an online collection of Early American Newspapers published between 1690-1876, Series I. Rice University has a collection of early American newspapers on microprint cards and include two online collections “Early American Imprints, Series I and Series II covering materials online between 1639-1919. One would have to use the Rice materials at Rice. Excellent research opportunity here to read articles in newspapers regarding the press and Washington, Jackson or Lincoln, particularly in the two papers having at it in Washington’s administration: NATIONAL GAZETTE, and THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

18. ALL On line you can log into the presidential papers of most of our greats, a system tied into the Congressional Library which contains a key word entry as well. My alma mater Northern Illinois University has a Digitized Project on Lincoln that may be accessed at http://dig.lib.nie.edu/

19. ALL Come up with your own idea, after discussing with professor.
LECTURE SCHEDULE:
We will hold our first class on Friday September 19 where we will review the text, my expectations and establish our required deadlines. During our first class we will review the following topics in the Text: Introduction to the Course; the syllabus and assignments; and the bibliographies for each of the four US Greats. In other words we will be concentrating on the course mechanics, found in Document A in our text. We will hold our second class meeting on Tuesday September 23. Students are expected to have read and are prepared to discuss the notes On Document B the Presidential Polls; Document C the Notes on the Presidency and the US Constitution; and Document D the listing of Questions and Issues most often raised by historians related to our four US presidents. Our third class will be held on Friday September 26, where our discussions for that day will focus on Document E Thoughts on American Character and Continuity; and Document # 1 and # 2, as we begin our readings on the first US President George Washington.

To review: I will schedule three classes of two hours each during my time in France at ICES On: Friday 9/19; Tuesday 9/23; and Friday 9/26. We will call these three classes WEEK # ONE. On class # 1 in WEEK ONE, on Friday 9/19 we will together review the course requirements and my expectations---essentially focusing on the course mechanics as outlined in Document # A.

For class # 2 WEEK ONE on Tuesday 9/23 we will focus on Documents B through D. For Class #3 in WEEK ONE on Friday 9/26 we will Focus on Document E and the first two documents in our text on George Washington. Document # 1 will provide you with background material on the life, career and character of Washington. Document #2 focuses on Washington’s service in the American Revolution, which I believe to be crucial in understanding the USA’s first President. You will be expected to read intelligently these assigned readings as indicated and to make one comment on the discussion board on Moodle on the reading assigned in the documents B through E, Document # 1, and # 2 by midnight Thursday, September 25. (French time.) There will be a quiz on Friday 9/26 that focuses only on Documents E, #’s 1 and 2, a total of 35 pages.

When students attend the second class during the first week they make their commitment to the class---a “contract” if you will between you and your Professor. Students who have made that commitment should introduce themselves to me and to your colleagues in the class over Moodle sometime during week # 1. So in effect you have two comments to make on Moodle during the week # 1--- the one, a brief introduction and the other, an intelligent commentary on the reading assigned as indicated above. Your comment on the reading will be graded.

Reading Assignment for Week #Two September 29 -October 5; pages to read = 33 pp. 72-99
Document # 3 George Washington: On the Road to President and Washington’s first Inaugural Address, April 30 1789, and The Presidency begins: 4 pp. 72-75;
Document # 4 Washington: Notes on Setting Precedence as President, 6 pp 76-81;
Document # 5 President George Washington: Domestic Issues, 23pp. 82-104;

Class # Two Week of September 29-October 5 The Presidency of George Washington: Setting Precedence and an emphasis on domestic issues in his First years as President. Students will have read Docs # 3, 4 & 5, and prepare their required Moodle commentaries by the deadline established.
Class # Three Week of October 6-12 Quiz! Students are expected to have read all the documents related to Washington, #’s 1 through 8 prior to this week’s class.  Today’s focus is on the issues faced by Washington in Foreign Affairs and on his Farewell Address, a must read to fully understand his presidency and his legacy.  We will complete our discussions on Washington.

Readings assigned for Week #4 President Lincoln Part One: October 13-19: 51 pages
Document # 9 USA on the Eve of the Civil War, 4pp. 130-133;
Document # 11 Events and Personalities: 1840-1860, 2 pp. 141-42;
Document # 12 Abraham Lincoln: Introduction and Background, 7 pp, 143-149;
Document # 13 Abraham Lincoln and US Politics: The Kansas Nebraska Act and Lincoln’s House Divided Speech, June 16 1858, 6 pp.150-155;
Document # 14 Lincoln and Politics Continued: 3 pp. 156-158;
Document # 15 Notes on Buchanan and Coming of Civil War, 9 pp. 159-167;
Document # 16 Lincoln: Slavery and Racism 6 pp. 168-173;
Document # 17 Oration in Memory of Lincoln: Frederick Douglass, Apr 14 1876, 7 pp. 174-180;

Class = Week #4 October 13-19 Part One: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln: A Whig In The White House. We will begin our study of Lincoln. Students will have read documents # 9 through Document # 17.

Reading Assignment for Week # 5, Lincoln Part Two, 67 Pages
Document # 18 Notes on Lincoln: Election of 1860, 4 pp. 181-184;
Document # 19 Political Parties and their Platforms in 1860: 2 pp. 185-86;
Document # 20 Election Results and a Brief Voter Analysis: 3 pp. 187-189;
Document # 21 Aftermath of the Election, 6 pp. 190-195;
Document # 22 Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address, March 3, 1861, 3 pp. 196-198;
Document # 24 Notes on Lincoln: Fort Sumter and Secession, 6 pp. 202-208;
Document # 25 Notes on Lincoln: Lincoln as President and CIC, 21 pp. 209-229;
Document # 26 Lincoln: Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863, 2 pp. 230-31;
Document # 27 Notes on Lincoln and Emancipation: Gradual; With Compensation; and Colonization, 7 pp. 232-238;
Document # 28 Notes on Lincoln and Reconstruction: 9 pp. 239-247

Class = Week # 5, October 20-26 Quiz!  We will hold our second and final class discussion on the administration and accomplishments of Abraham Lincoln.  Students will have completed all the readings on Lincoln, Documents # 9 through # 28.
Reading Assignment for Week # 6: October 27 through November 2 is: FALL BREAK NO CLASSES OR ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS WEEK! ENJOY THE BREAK AND BE SAFE.

Reading Assigned for Week # 7 November 3 through 9, FDR, Part One, 46 pages.
Document # 29 Introduction to the Age of Roosevelt, 6 pp. 248-253;
Document # 30 Notes on the Great Depression, 5 pp. 254-258;
Document # 31 Notes on FDR and the New Deal and Depression; including FDR’s First Inaugural Address, March, 1933; FDR’s First Fire Side Chat # One, March 12, 1933 on the Bank Crisis; and conclusions. 35 pp. 259-293;

Class = Week # 7, Quiz! November 3-9, we begin our study of the Presidency of Franklin D Roosevelt and The Emergence of the Welfare State in The USA. We will begin our class with a few words about TR and WW in order to better understand the presidency of FDR. It is quite a leap from Lincoln to FDR with nothing in between! Students shall have read the documents # 29-31 on FDR.

Reading Assignment for Week # 8, November 10-16 45 pages,
Document # 32 FDR and Foreign Affairs: Intro to the Calendar of Events, 4 pp. 294-297;
Document # 34 FDR: Master Communicator and Internationalist, 5 pp. 321-325;
Document # 35 America Goes to War: The War Years, 9 pp. 326-334;
Document # 36 FDR’s Critics, 4 pp. 335-338;

Class = Week # 8 November 10-16 Quiz! We will finish our class discussion on the Administration and accomplishments of FDR, with a focus on foreign affairs. Students are expected to have read all FDR documents, # 29-36

Reading Assignment for Week # 9, November 17- 23, Eisenhower Part One, 35 pages.
Document # 37 Introduction: Eisenhower History; Character; Leadership Philosophy, 8 pp. 339-346;
Document # 38 Setting the Stage for the Eisenhower Presidency: The Calendar 1950-1952, and comments relating to NSC-68, 7 pp. 347-353;
Document # 39 Eisenhower: Presidential elections; Domestic Legislation; and 52; Détente, , 7 pp. 354-360;
Document # 40 Eisenhower: Address at Gettysburg June 3 1963, 3 pp. 361-363;
Document # 41 Eisenhower Summary/Assessment: Foreign Policy, including a al page on presidential approval ratings and nuclear warheads; two maps showing membership in NATO, CENTO, and SEATO and Eisenhower’s Farewell Address, January 1961, 10 pp. 364-373
Class = Week # 9, November 17-23 Quiz!. We begin our studies of our fourth US President Dwight D Eisenhower, Part One. Students should have finished reading Documents 37-41.

Reading Assigned for Week # 10, Nov 24-30, Eisenhower Part, 36 pages
  Document # 42 Eisenhower Summary/Assessment: Domestic Politics, 7 pp. 374-380;
  Document # 43 Eisenhower: Radio address on Little Rock, Arkansas, 4 pp. 381-384;
  Document # 44 Setback 1: Eisenhower and Cuba, 5 pp. 385-389;
  Document # 46 Eisenhower Setback 3: Eisenhower and the Suez Canal Crisis, 4 pp. 399-402
  Document # 47 Eisenhower: Overall Assessment, His place in US History, 3 pp. 403-405;
  Document # 48 The 1950’s in retrospect: Prosperity a prelude to the 1960’s, 4 pp. 406-409;

Class: Week # 10, November 24-30 Quiz! We conclude our studies on Eisenhower Part 2. Students shall have read all the documents # 37 through 47 as we complete our studies for the semester.

Class: Week # 11 December 1-14 The Course Final Exam will be a take home exam with the due date to be determined in class discussions. The Book Review will also be due during this time period. (See below.)

ASSIGNMENT: BOOK REVIEW
Students will have completed the biography selected on one of the Greats and submit their review according to instructions in the appropriate place identified on the Moodle DB. They may also make their usual insightful comments on Moodle about their book during the weeks we cover their president. The Deadline for submitting the book review will be decided by the class during week # one.

FINAL EXAM
Prepare for final examination, which will be essay in format and it will be a take home examination. More information on the final exam as to format and the due date will be discussed in Week # 1.