Course Title: Constitutional Crises from the Founding to the Trump Administration
Course Code: LAW 106
Instructor: William H. Simon

Tentative Weekly Outline:

1. The Adoption of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights (with some attention to the Election of 1800 [Adams-Jefferson]).
   Benedict, 64-88, 101-02
   Constitution, Arts V and VII.

2. The Civil War
   Benedict, 141-45, 172-78, 183-95
   Abraham Lincoln, “House Divided” Speech (June 16, 1858)
   Constitution, Art. I, sec. 8, cl. 10-16; sec. 9, cl. 2; Art. II, secs 2-3; Art. IV, sec. 2, cl. 3, sec. 3

3. Reconstruction
   Benedict, 198-212
   Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address (Nov. 19, 1863)
   Constitution, Amendments 13-15

4. The Election of 1876 [Hayes-Tilden] (with some attention to the Election of 2000 [Bush-Gore])
   Benedict, 212-220, 418-22
   Constitution, Art. II, sec. 1, cl. 3; Amendment 12

5. The New Deal
   Benedict, 285-300
   Constitution, Art. III, secs 1-2

   Benedict, 327-46
   PBS Video, Eyes on the Prize – Episode 2: Fighting Back

7. Watergate (with some attention to the Clinton impeachment)
   Benedict, 351-59, 415-18
   Constitution, Art II, sec. 1, cl. 8, sec. 3-4; Art. I, sec. 1, cl. 5; sec. 3, cl. 6-7
   BBC Video, Watergate
8. President Obama’s Executive Unilateralism with respect to immigration (DACA), climate change (the Paris Accord), marijuana, and military affairs (Libya).
   Benedict, 449-66, 469-88

9. Trump-Era Issues

Grade Options and Requirements:
- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  o This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit will be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  o Students must attend at least 80% of class sessions.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose the Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Required Books/Materials:


   There is no need to bring the book to class, but it would be a good idea to bring a copy of the Constitution. A printable pdf of the constitutional text is on the course website. Lincoln’s addresses can be easily found on-line. The two videos were available on YouTube as of the time of the preparation of this syllabus. Many public libraries have DVDs of them or can enable you to stream them.