

Political Science 1301: Course Outline

A. Instructor Information

- Dr. S. S. Islam, Ph.D. McGill. Professor

1. Consultation

- Students may contact me through the D2L e-mail (the recommended method) or via my personal Lakehead University e-mail account: sislam2@lakeheadu.ca.

B. Course Description & Objectives

1. The course is designed to introduce students to some of the basic skills needed for the study of law and to give the student a basic understanding of some aspects of the Canadian legal system.

- This course has two objectives. The first is to provide students with a basic understanding of the role and function of law in general, and the second is to make familiar the students with the legal system of Canada.

2. The first goal will encourage students to think critically about the various aspects of law and legal system which will enable them to ask questions about our society and the role of law within it.

- What does our law and legal system say about our society?
- Why do we have the laws we have?

3. The second goal will enable students to look at the history of law in Canada, the various branches of law (criminal, family, constitutional, etc.), the common and civil law traditions, statutory interpretation and precedent, the role of judges, lawyers and lay persons, as well as alternative means for resolving disputes, such as community and restorative justice, mediation, etc.

C. Texts

1. Required Reading

- Vago, Steven & Adie Nelson, *Law and Society.CANADIAN (NOT American) edition.*
- Neil Boyd, *Canadian Law: An Introduction*

- Course books are available for purchase at the Lakehead University Bookstore or online.

2. Recommended Reading

- Yates, Richard, Yates, R.W., and Bain, P, *Introduction to Law in Canada*. This book can be found in the university library.
- **Please note: Although selected readings from this text are noted on the Reading Schedule, no test or exam questions will be drawn from this book.** It is a recommended book to expand your knowledge of law in Canada.

D. Marking Scheme

Tests	Dates	Duration	Mark
First Test	Anytime between October 17th -19th 6.p.m. EST Time Zone	90 Minutes	20%
Second Test	Anytime between December 4- Dec.6, 6 p.m. EST Time Zone	90 Minutes	20%
Third Test	Anytime between February 11th -13th, 6 p.m. EST Time Zone	90 Minutes	20%
Final Exam	Anytime between April 12th -14th, 6 p.m. EST Time Zone	120 Minutes	30%
Participation	In 12 discussion sessions	6 in each term	10%

E. Discussion Forums

1. What They Are For

The discussion forums are areas where you can review concepts, discuss difficulties you may be having about a particular concept, collaborate with peers, or discuss just about anything you want to share with your fellow students.

2. How to Earn Participation Marks

For participation marks in Discussion Forums, students are required to comment on each topic of the week.

- Discussion on each topic is open ended.
- However, you could formulate your questions from taking questions written at the end of each chapter or in the contents in the text book.

- Students have one week to respond to others in discussion forum.
- Students have to debate, raise questions, and comment on each others' responses.
- **The discussion forum will open/close each week on Monday at 6:00 p.m.**

I will be visiting the Discussion Forums regularly.

3. Tips for Participating on a Discussion Board

- Think ideas through before responding. You do not want your response to be considered flaming. It often helps to outline responses before responding. Be polite and respectful.
- Use good communication skills. Keep your comments concise, but do meet the requirements posted for discussion by the instructor. Avoid brief affirmations such as "Amen," "Ditto," and "I agree." Don't quote or copy long passages from a previous post. Quote only the relevant portions to make your response clear.
- Pay careful attention to instructions. Be sensitive with your use of language.
- Use subject lines in your posts to keep the flow going for a certain discussion item. Be sure to change the subject line if you are changing the direction of the discussion.
- Try to stay on track and respond directly to comments being made. (Adapted from Dakota State University, Distance Education Orientation website)

4. Mandatory Participation

Mandatory participation in a minimum of 6 discussion forums/sessions in **each** term is required to obtain any participation marks.

- Students will participate in these forums by accessing the "Discussion Area" portion of their online course.
- For participation marks in Discussion Forums, students are required to comment on each week's topic in the module and text book reading.
- **Participation marks will be determined on the basis of quantity of threads (number of posting) and quality of comments.**