

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

POLI 2110 WDE Canadian Government and Politics

Instructor: Dr. Todd R. Stubbs

Class Times: Friday 11:30-2:30, OA 1022

Office/Hours: Friday 10:30-11:30, or by appointment.

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Course Description

Canada's democratic system is among the most highly developed and respected in the world. Yet governing Canada is uniquely complex and fraught with challenges and pitfalls that are distinct features of the Canadian experience. This course examines the development and practice of Canadian political institutions, such as Parliament, the prime minister, the courts, and the bureaucracy. Among other topics, it considers the interaction between the executive and the legislature, the role of interest groups and political parties in policy making, and the legal and political impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The course considers current political issues and debates, and reflects critically on the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary democracy in Canada.

Course Outcomes

In POLI 2110, students will develop a thorough understanding of how the Canadian system of government developed and currently functions and the nature of Canadian politics, with a focus on the national level. An additional stress is placed on developing critical reading and writing skills, as well as enhancing discussion skills.

Mandatory Reading Materials

Steven Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 9th Edition (Toronto: Oxford, 2020).

Additional readings, including reference materials, are posted on D2L. Check the weekly schedule.

Evaluation

Midterm Test: 15%

Research Essay: 30%

Presentation: 10%

Participation: 20%

Final Examination: 25%

Course Structure and Work Requirements

Course Structure:

This course takes place on campus once weekly, for a three-hour session. The structure of each class meeting should be expected to vary, but in general the basic format will involve an instructor lecture and student-focused discussions. A Desire2Learn site is available featuring course materials, including readings, instructor PowerPoints, assignment guidelines, and student grades.

Evaluated Work:

a) Research Essay (30%)

- 2,500 to 2,750 words in length, not including the bibliography.
- Minimum of 8 scholarly sources.

The Research Paper will address in depth a theme relating to Canadian government and politics. Additional guidelines, including suggested topics, will be posted on D2L. See the Assignment Guidelines file.

For general assistance on writing research papers see:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/research_papers/index.html

b) Presentation (10%)

In Part II of the course, students will present in groups on the reading material for that week and lead the class discussion. Groups will be selected at the start of the course. The presentation should consist of a fifteen-minute overview of the assigned article reading for the given week (not the textbook chapters). Using PowerPoint, the presentation should 1) provide a brief background discussion of the topic and its pertinent themes; 2) survey the main points of argument; 3) discuss the readings general significance to the week's general theme; and 4) provide five clearly stated and concise discussion questions touching on the major themes of the reading. The group must submit a link to a Google Docs version of the PowerPoint by email to the instructor before the start of class. All group members must take part in the presentation and discussion facilitation (exemptions will require official signed documentation from a medical or other valid professional).

c) Participation (20%)

Participation in this course will cover your attendance and regular participation in all class discussions. Please note that participation is a significant portion of the final grade.

d) Midterm Test (15%) and Final Exam (25%)

The midterm will cover all scheduled course materials, lectures, and readings, up to the date of the test. The test will take place in class on 22 October 2021.

A final exam will be scheduled for the exam period at the end of the semester. It will be cumulative and cover the reading and lecture material from the whole semester.

Evaluation of Written Assignments/Projects:

80-100% (A range):

Shows advanced competency in meeting the research and/or analytical and/or communications and/or cognitive and/or technical requirements of the assignment.

- The work is of exceptional quality
- The work is insightful, detailed, articulate, grammatically correct, technically correct, and well organized

70-79% (B range):

Exhibits a good effort in meeting the requirements of the assignment or examination.

- The work may be less focused, detailed, organized or less widely researched than a paper worthy of a higher grade or communicates fewer ideas with less detailed analysis than an assignment worthy of a higher grade

60-69% (C range):

Average approach and level of success in communicating analysis, factual material, and ideas.

- The work offers less detailed analysis and/or a lack sufficient research, and /or a less articulate or less clearly focused argument and/or may have technical flaws

50-59% (D range):

A poor level of competency in meeting the requirements of an assignment or examination.

- The work is poorly organized and/or written, features generalized statements, lacks supporting details and/or critical analysis, and features significant technical flaws

Below 50% (F):

Failure to meet the requirements of the assignment.

Course Policies

Late Assignments:

All written work must be handed in on time. Late work will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends and holidays. Late assignments may not be accepted after more than ten days. To obtain an exemption for medical or compassionate reasons, students must present signed supporting documentation.

IMPORTANT: Unsubstantiated technical problems or electronic submission of blank files or otherwise unreadable files are not legitimate excuses for late penalty exemption.

Laptops, Cellphones, and Other Electronic Devices:

Unless the instructor approves their use for educational activities, students should refrain from using electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and the like, during class. If these devices are required for emergencies students are encouraged to inform the instructor before class starts. Laptops are permitted; however, using them to browse the internet during class for non-educational purposes is strongly discouraged. Upon the request of the instructor, students should be prepared to close laptops when deemed academically appropriate.

Academic Misconduct:

Lakehead University's policy on academic misconduct can be found in the online Course Calendar 2013-14 > University Regulation > IX Academic Misconduct

A copy of the "Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures" including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may also be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

- a. The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
- b. A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

Note: "Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:

- a. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
- b. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e., no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given."

Weekly Schedule and Due Dates

Important Dates

Midterm Test: 22 October 2021

Research Essay: 12 November 2021

All due dates are valid to 11:59 pm on the specified day. The written assignment must be submitted electronically to the appropriate D2L drop box in pdf or .doc (Word) format. Please do not submit PAGES-formatted documents.

Weekly Schedule:

Part I: Ideas, Values, and Institutions

Week 1 (10 Sept.) Introduction to the Course

Brooks, Preface and Chapter 1.

Alex Marland, "Rhetoric Check: Historically, how important is the 2021 Canadian election?" *The Conversation*, August 18, 2021.

Week 2 (17 Sept.) Ideas, Values, and Institutions: An Overview

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 2 and 3.

Federal Election 2021 Special Discussion: The Party Platforms

Week 3 (24 Sept.) Understanding Diversity in Canada

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 4 and 5.

Federal Election 2021 Special Discussion: What Happened?

Week 4 (1 Oct.) Founding Principles: Responsible Government and Federalism

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapter 8.

Alain-G. Gagnon and Alex Schwartz, "Canadian Federalism since Patriation: Advancing a Federalism of Empowerment," in Lois Harder and Steve Patton, eds., *Patriation and Its Consequences* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015).

Week 5 (8 Oct.) *The Constitution Acts (1867 and 1982)*

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 6 and 7.

Week 6 (22 Oct.) The Crown, the Prime Minister, and Parliament

Midterm 22 October 2021

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapter 9.

Week 7 (29 Oct.) The Judiciary and the Bureaucracy

Peter W. Hogg and Cara F. Zwibel, “The Rule of Law in the Supreme Court of Canada,”
The University of Toronto Law Journal 55, 3 (Summer, 2005): 715-732.

Part II: Politics, Policy, and Participation

Week 8 (5 Nov.) Political Parties and Elections – Presentations

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapter 11.

Alex Marland, “The Stifling Conformity of Party Discipline,” *Policy Options*, 21 March 2019.

Week 9 (12 Nov.) Interest Groups and Media

Research Essay Due 12 November 2021

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 12 and 13.

(Film) *Pipelines, Power, and Democracy* (NFB, 2015) – In class

Week 10 (19 Nov.) Indigenous Peoples and Women in Canadian Politics – Presentations

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 15 and 16.

Martin Papillon, “Adapting Federalism: Indigenous Multilevel Governance in Canada and the United States,” *Publius* 42, 2 (Spring 2012): 289-312.

Week 11 (26 Nov.) National Identity and Globalization – Presentations

Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, Chapters 14 and 17.

Mark R. Brawley, “Canada in the World,” in in James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon, eds., *Canadian Politics, Sixth Edition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

Week 12 (3 Nov.) Course Wrap-Up