LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
CANADIAN GOVERNMENT & POLITICS
POLI 2110 FAO
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Douglas Jarvis
Classroom: OA2006
Class Schedule: Wednesday and Friday, 10:00am-11:30am
Email: djarvis@lakeheadu.ca
Office Location & Hours: TBD

This course will survey the institutional dimensions of Canadian government and politics in historical, descriptive and comparative terms. The course will begin with an historical analysis of Canada’s Parliamentary Westminster System. Throughout the initial period of the course, students will learn about the comparative differences between Canada’s political system and the UK, which stands as the birthplace of the Westminster Parliament. How the legislative and executive branches of Canadian government interact with each other in political life will be a key part of this section of the course. The course will also explore how political parties and the media affect our political system. In the latter half of the course, the role of our colonial experience, and how it molded our society towards the nation building arrangement known as Canadian Confederation, will be assessed. Canadian federalism and its impact on our national political culture throughout history will be examined. Following this exploration of the institutional nature of Canadian Government and its federal framework, the course will grapple with the historical, cultural and social factors behind the late 20th century development of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Finally, students will assess how Canada has changed since the passage of the Charter, with special emphasis placed on Aboriginal matters.

**Required Texts**:
S. Brooks, M. Menard, *Canadian Democracy: A Concise Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2013
C. Leuprecht, P. Russell, *Essential Readings in Canadian Constitutional Politics*, University of Toronto Press, 2011

**Assignments and Grading**:

Note: All assignments are to be written in 12# Times New Roman Font and double spaced. Assignments should range from a minimal 6 to 11 pages maximum. Bibliography and Chicago Manual style citation is required. Please refer to link below for directions on Chicago Manual style citation methods:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\_citationguide.html

1.) Short Essay due by Oct. 9 (30%):

What are the advantages or disadvantages of a constitutional monarchy over a popular republic for a liberal-democratic political system? If there are so many ethnic groups in Canada that see themselves as standing outside the British Empire, why does Canada still maintain the British Crown as the trustee of national sovereignty?

Or

Explain “Responsible Government” in comparison to purely representative government and outline its strengths and weaknesses. Is it preferable or not preferable to purely representative government? Why?

2.) Short Essay Due by Nov. 13 (30%)

Why is Canada considered a “Confederation” in terms of its Provinces’ relation to national sovereignty? Given that the federal government’s powers are so concentrated and extensive, is the word “Confederation” a misnomer or true reflection of Canada’s federal system?

Or

In the United States, their political party system arose after the formation of their constitution. In Canada, political parties existed and governed the colonies prior to the development of our constitution. What is the effect of this fact on our political culture in comparison to the United States? Does the integral role played by political parties in designing our national constitution reflect a pragmatic advantage or democratic deficit for Canada in comparison to the U.S.A.?

3.) Short Essay Due by Dec. 11 (30%)

During the 30th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper refused to officially celebrate the patriation of Canada’s constitution. If the Charter currently defines what it means to be a Canadian on a legal and political level, why is it still so divisive?

Or

Is the Not Withstanding Clause (Sec. 33) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms an aberration or necessary component of the Charter of the Rights and Freedoms? If it is an aberration, why was it essential for all the Provinces, excluding Quebec, in order to support the Charter? If it was a necessary component of the Charter, why has it been so rarely used by Provinces and never by the Federal Government?

3.) Participation (10%)

Note: Class attendance is mandatory. Active contribution to discussions centered on readings is key aspect of participation grade. Cell phones are to be turned off and not present during class lectures. Laptop computers are acceptable in class but are to not be in use during video presentations.

**Course Schedule**:
Sept. 6—Introduction: The Stuart Dynasty and the Rise of Parliamentary Rule in British History

Sept. 8—Values and Norms in Canadian Politics: A Fragmentary Fabric of Nationhood
Brooks & Menard, ch. 2

Sept. 13—The Historical Roots of Canada’s Constitutional Sovereignty
Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, Ch.2 (“The Monarchy”)
<http://socserv.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/bagehot/constitution.pdf>

Suggested Reading:
Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt,* pp. 112-124—available on mycourselink

Suggested Watching:
*The Queen* (2006)—available on netflix
*Diana: The Mourning After* (1998)—available on youtube
*The Madness of King George* (1994)—available on youtube

Sept. 15—Colonial Foundations of Canadian Government
Patrick Monahan, *Constitutional Law*, Ch.2 (Canada’s Constitutional Development Before 1867), course reserves

Sept. 20—Responsible Government: A Detailed Study
Leuprecht & Russell, Part I, chs. 3, 4, Part V, ch. 29

Sept. 22—Canadian Constitutionalism
Leuprect & Russell, Part 1, chs. 1, 2

Sept. 27—Canadian Constitutionalism cont.
Brooks & Menard, ch. 5

Sept. 29—Parliament’s Place in the Canadian Constitution
Patrick Monahan, *Constitutional Law,* ch. 3, Section E (“Legislative Power”)

Oct. 4—The Mechanics of Canadian Government
Brooks & Menard, ch.8,

Suggested Watching:
*Paperland* (available at www.nfb.ca)

Oct. 6—The Prime Minister in Canada
Monahan, *Constitutional Law,* Ch. 3, Section D (Executive Power)

Oct. 11/Oct. 13—Fall Break

Oct. 18—Canadian Political Parties & Interest Groups
Brooks & Menard, ch. 9 , pp. 278-291, ch.10

Suggested Readings:
Alexis De Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*, Vol. 1, Part 2, chs. 2, 4—available on mycourselink
(Essential reading for question #2 in Assignment #2)

Oct. 20—Canadian Government and the Media
Brooks and Menard, ch. 11

Oct. 25—Canadian Confederation and its Federal System
Leuprecht & Russell, Part 2 chs. 8, 9, 10
Suggested Readings:
Brooks & Menard, ch. 4

Oct. 27—Canadian Confederation and its Federal System cont.
Brooks & Menard, ch. 7
*John A., Birth of a Nation* CBC (available on youtube)

Nov. 1—Canadian Confederation and its Federal System cont.
Leuprecht & Menard, Part 2, ch. 11, Part 3, chs. 13, 14, 15

Nov. 3—Canadian Confederation and its Federal System cont.
P. Monahan, Ch. 4, Sec. C (Federal Distribution of Legislative Powers)

Nov. 8—Canadian Government and the Language Question
Brooks & Menard ch. 12, pp. 371-82
Leuprecht & Russell, Part V, ch. 24, ch. 25

Nov. 10—Canadian Government and the Language Question cont.
Leuprecht & Russell, Part V, chs. 26, 27, 28

Nov. 15—The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Brooks & Menard ch. 6
Leuprecht & Russell, part 6 ch. 30

Suggested Watching (available at www.nfb.ca):
i.) *The Champions* (Parts 1, 2, 3)
ii.)*The Road to Patriation*
Nov. 17—The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms cont.
Leuprecht & Russell, Part 6 chs., 31, 32, 41

Nov. 22—The Canadian Charter and its Discontents
Leuprecht & Russell , Part 7, chs. 34, 36, 33

Nov. 24—The Charter and Canadian Society
Brooks & Menard, ch. 12, pp. 383-416

Nov. 29—Aboriginal People and the Canadian Constitution (Pre-Charter)
P. Monahan, ch. 14, Section A and B

Dec. 1—Aboriginal People and the Canadian Constitution (Post-Charter)
P. Monahan, ch. 14, Section C
Leuprecht & Russell, Part 7 chs. 39, 40