

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

POLI 2110 WDE Canadian Government and Politics/W2024

Instructor: Dr. Todd R. Stubbs

Class Times: Web-based (asynchronous)

Office Hour: Monday 10:30-11:30 (Zoom), or by appointment.

Email: tstubbs@lakeheadu.ca

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 civil service. The course considers the interaction between the executive and the legislature, the role of interest groups and political parties in policy making, the legal and political impact of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and other issues. Lastly, the course considers current political problems and debates, and reflects critically on the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary democracy and democratic governance 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

Patrick Malcolmson, et al., *The Canadian Regime: An Introduction to Parliamentary Government in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021).

Additional readings are linked in the syllabus. Check the weekly schedule regularly to stay up-to-date on scheduled readings.

Evaluation

Part I Argumentative Paper: 15%

Research Essay: 30%

Online Posts: (6 x 5% each) 30%

Final Exam: 25%

Course Structure and Work Requirements

Course Structure:

This course takes place entirely online in asynchronous format (no Zoom lectures). The thematic structure is broken up into 12 weekly blocks covering a major theme or set of themes. The instructor will upload a PowerPoint lecture at the start of each scheduled week. To complete the course successfully, students should regularly read the posted lecture and the scheduled reading/video and complete the required discussion posts.

Evaluated Work:

a) Part I Argumentative Paper (20%)

Length: 1,000 words minimum/1,150 maximum

Sources: You must use Malcomson et al. Additional sources may be consulted (no more than three), including reputable websites and scholarly and journalistic articles/books

For this assignment, students will write a brief paper arguing for or against reforming one of Canada's major institutions of governance as covered in Part I of the course, and as outlined in detail in Malcomson et al. Quite typically in Canadian political history, the federal Senate has been subject of contention over the need for reform, but other institutions may be examined as well, including the Crown, Parliament, the Constitution (which includes the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Aboriginal Rights sections), the civil service, and the judiciary. A successful paper will demonstrate a good understanding of the themes covered in Part I and provide a clear argument with sound, well-informed reasons to support it.

More detailed guidelines will be posted on D2L.

b) Research Essay (30%)

Length: 2,500 to 2,750 words in length, not including the bibliography.

Sources: Minimum of 8 scholarly and/or government 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.

For general assistance on writing research papers see:

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

c) Participation (30%)

Participation in this course will comprise your discussion posts. Students are responsible for completing a total of three posts in Part I of the course (Weeks 1 through 6) and three in Part II (Weeks 7 through 12), for a total of six. You may take part in additional discussions but only six will receive a score. **IMPORTANT:** additional posts in one part of the course will

not make up for a lack of posts in the other (see Discussion Guidelines). Each post will receive a grade out of 5.

Please note: late posts are not permitted unless the student presents the instructor with signed documentation for illness or bereavement. In the event of a COVID-19 diagnosis, a doctor's note is required (a photo of a positive rapid test does not qualify).

d) Final Exam (25%)

A final, online exam will be scheduled for the exam period. The exam will cover the whole course. Format, date, and time TBA.

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.

Academic Honesty:

AI policy: Artificial Intelligence has its place, but pedagogically it is not appropriate for this course, which identifies as a core takeaway the further development of critical reading and writing skills; therefore, use of AI writing assistance in this class is strongly discouraged. In cases of suspected use of AI, penalties may be imposed, including a substantially reduced score on the assignment.

Academic misconduct, general: 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

Due Dates

Part I Argumentative Paper: 26 February 2024

Research Essay: 18 March 2024

Final Exam: TBA

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 (8 January-14 January)

Introduction to the Course/Ideas, Values, and Institutions: An Overview

Malcolmson, Introduction.

Week 2 (15 January-21 January)

Canada's Foundational Principles

Malcolmson, Ch. 1.

Week 3 (22 January-28 January)

The Canadian Constitution and Federalism

Malcolmson, Ch. 2 and 8.

Week 4 (29 January-4 February)

Responsible Government: The Bedrock of Canadian Democracy

Malcolmson, Ch. 3.

Week 5 (5 February-11 February)The Crown, Parliament, and the Civil Service

Malcolmson, Chs. 4 and 5.

Mario Polèse, “Why not replace the monarchy with a monarchy of a different kind?”
Policy Options, 12 December 2022.

<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/december-2022/monarchy-canada-indigenous/>

Week 6 (12 February-25 February)

Reading week 19-25 February

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Modern Judiciary

Malcolmson, Chs. 9 and 10.

Part II: Politics, Policy, and Participation**Week 7 (26 February-3 March)**

Part I Argumentative Paper due 26 February

Democracy in Canada: What Are the Issues?

Malcolmson, Chs. 6 and 7.

Week 8 (4 March-10 March)Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Politics

Douglas Sanderson, “Indigenous-settler relations need bold solutions and strong political will,” *Policy Options*, 20 December 2022.

<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/december-2022/sanderson-indigenous-solutions/>

Week 9 (11 March-17 March)Intersectional Issues in Canadian Politics

Tammy Findlay, “Intersectionalities of Opportunism: Justin Trudeau and the Politics of ‘Diversity,’” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 60 (March 2022): 40-59.
<https://www.utpjournals.press/doi/full/10.3138/ijcs.60.x.40>

Week 10 (18 March-24 March)

Research Paper due 18 March 2024

Interest Groups and Media

(Film) *Pipelines, Power, and Democracy* (NFB, 2015).
https://www.nfb.ca/film/pipelines_power_and_democracy/

Week 11 (25 March-31 March)Environment, Globalization, and International Politics

Peter Zimonjic, “Liberal government set to miss 2030 emissions targets,” *CBC News*, 7 November 2023.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/environment-comissioner-audit-emissions-charging-stations-1.7020689>

Week 12 (1 April-9 April)Is Canadian Democracy Healthy? / Course Wrap-Up

Malcolmson, Conclusion.