

Lakehead

UNIVERSITY

POLI 4255 FAO Canadian Public Policy

Instructor: Todd Stubbs

Class Times: Online (asynchronous)

Office/Hours: Zoom, Tuesday 9:00-10:00 am (or by appointment)

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Course Description

Why do politicians and governments make certain decisions? What principles and political values guide these choices to act (or *not* act)? How are the outcomes of policies judged? Does assessment lead to better policy? These questions are central to understanding politics and government. Indeed, it is arguable that in our age of rigid partisanship, rampant misinformation, and political apathy an appreciation for public policy and the mechanics behind it is needed now more than ever. Focusing broadly on Canadian politics (encompassing, where relevant, federal, provincial/territorial, local, and first nations politics and governance), this course surveys leading frameworks for the study of public policy and examines the formation, implementation and impact of policies in a range of selected fields.

Course Outcomes

Through readings, discussions, and written assignments students in POLI 4255 will develop a high-level understanding of the theoretical scope and practical application of public policies in Canada. A major component of the course involves researching and writing in a self-selected policy field, in the process of which students will engage individually with the various stages of policy formation, implementation, and analysis. A major purpose of the course is to nurture advanced analytical and written competencies in political science.

Mandatory Reading Materials

Lydia Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada: An Introduction*, 7th Edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Additional mandatory reading materials are posted on D2L or linked in the syllabus. Be sure to check the weekly schedule for information about the readings.

Evaluation

Individual Presentation (PowerPoint): 15%

Background Research Paper: 30%

Policy Brief: 25%

Participation: 26% (10 discussion posts) + 4% (peer presentation comments) = 30%

Course Structure and Work Requirements

Course Structure:

POLI 4255 is entirely online. Each week students will complete scheduled reading discussion posts using the D2L discussion board. It is your responsibility to acquaint yourself with the discussion schedule. Students are expected to read all assigned materials and take an active part in discussions. Occasional full class meetings will be scheduled using Zoom on an ad hoc basis. The instructor will alert class members regarding meeting times using your Lakehead email address.

Assignments:

1) Individual Presentation

Each student will prepare an eight-slide (maximum) PowerPoint presentation discussing a topic in the field of Canadian public policy, which you will discuss at more length in the Background Research Paper and the Policy Brief Assignment. A list of suggested topics is posted on D2L, but you are free to choose your own.

The presentation will cover the main elements of the proposed project: 1) the topic, 2) a preliminary research question and hypothesis, and 3) a brief discussion of preliminary findings from the scholarly literature. The main purpose of the presentation is to seek input from the class on the project in anticipation of preparing the Background Research Paper and Policy Brief.

The presentations will be posted on D2L and each student will be assigned to a working group that will provide constructive criticism towards preparing the final Policy Brief.

2) Background Research Paper (BRP)

3,250-3,500 words minimum.

For this assignment, you will prepare a detailed background research paper on the topic you have chosen. The BRP must feature a bibliography of no fewer than 12 scholarly or otherwise reputable sources, such as government documents, statistical analyses, etc.

Suggested topics and detailed guidelines are posted on D2L. See the Assignment Guidelines file.

3) Policy Brief (PB)

1,500 words in length, not including the bibliography.

For this assignment. Students will distil their findings from the BRP and prepare a Policy Brief, following the standard conventions of the format. This assignment is the third and final instalment of the major course project, which mimics the policy development process.

For more detailed information on the PB the see Assignment Guidelines file on D2L.

4) Participation

Participation is an essential feature of the course. Since the course is entirely online, and as an advanced level-four course, students should be prepared to upload weekly reading discussion posts and to take an active part in online review of their peer's work, where relevant.

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

Due Dates

Individual Presentation: 25 September 2020
Background Research Paper: 23 October 2020
Policy Brief: 20 November 2020

All due dates are valid to 11:59 pm on the specified day. Please submit papers to the D2L dropbox in pdf or .doc (Word) format.

Weekly Schedule

Part 1: Analyzing Canadian Public Policy

Week 1 (8-13 September) Introduction to Canadian Public Policy

Emma Graney, "Countries should integrate energy policies into pandemic plans: IEA," *Globe and Mail*, 18 June 2020, p. B3.

International Energy Agency, *Global Energy Review 2020: The Impacts of the Covid-19 Crisis on Global Energy Demand and CO2 Emissions* (IEA, 2020).

- Skim for background info

Week 2 (14-20 September) Making Sense of Policy Choices

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 1.

Major party platforms posted on D2L.

- Skim for the core themes
- Please note the Bloc Quebecois platform is in French and is therefore optional

Week 3 (21-27 September) Major Theoretical Perspectives

Individual Presentation due 25 September

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 2 and (3).

Richard Simeon, "Studying Public Policy," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 9, 4 (Dec., 1976): 548-580.

Week 4 (28 September-4 October) Policy “Cycles” and “Stages”

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 4 and 5.

Week 5 (5-11 October) Policy Evaluation

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 6.

Canada, *Background Document: Public Consultation on Strengthening Canada’s Approach to Substance Use Issues* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 2018).

Part 2: Canadian Policy Fields

Week 6 (19-25 October) Economic Policy

Background Research Paper due 23 October

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 7.

Geoffrey Hale, “CNOOC-Nexen, State-Controlled Enterprises and Canadian Foreign Investment Policies: Adapting to Divergent Modernization,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 47, 2 (June 2014): 349-373.

Week 7 (26 October-1 November) Social Policy

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 8.

Rodney Haddow, “Power Resources and the Canadian Welfare State: Unions, Partisanship and Interprovincial Differences in Inequality and Poverty Reduction,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 47, 4 (December 2014): 717-739.

Week 8 (2-8 November) Public Health Policy

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 9.

Amélie Quesnel-Vallée, “Policies and Health Inequalities: State of the Field and Future Directions,” *Canadian Public Policy* 41, Supplement 2 (November 2015): S1-S9.

Week 9 (9-15 November) Family Policy

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 10.

Rachel Loopstra and Valerie Tarasuk, “The Relationship between Food Banks and Household Food Insecurity among Low-Income Toronto Families,” *Canadian Public Policy* 38, 4 (December/décembre 2012): 497-514.

Week 10 (16-22 November) Indigenous Policy

Policy Brief due 20 November

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 11.

Emma George, "Social Determinants of Indigenous Health and Indigenous Rights in Policy: A Scoping Review and Analysis of Problem Representation," *International Indigenous Policy Journal* 10, 2 (April 2019): 1-28.

Week 11 (23-29 November) Economy and Environment

Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada*, ch. 12.

Edward B. Barbier, "Building the Green Economy," *Canadian Public Policy* 42, S1 (November 2016): S1-S9.

Week 12 (30 November-7 December) Course Wrap Up