

# Course Outline: POLI. 1301YDE

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**Consultation:** students may contact me through University e-mail (recommended method) or via my personal Lakehead University e-mail account: [sislam2@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:sislam2@lakeheadu.ca)

## Introducing Myself

Hi everyone, welcome to this class of Introduction to Law. Before getting into the course outline I want to briefly introduce myself. This is Dr. Islam, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Lakehead University. I graduated with my doctorate, Ph.D. from McGill University. Since obtaining my doctorate I have been teaching courses in International law and politics. I have taught in many universities in many countries of the world. I have written 9 books and nearly 80 articles in internationally reputed journals. If you would like to know more about me, please visit the university's [Political Science website](#).

Let's now go through the course outline.

## Course Description & Objectives

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. 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? 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.

## Required Texts

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

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

## Recommended Reading

1. 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.

## Marking Scheme

Tests	Dates	Duration	Mark
First Test	Anytime between October 15th -17th 6.p.m. ESTTimeZone	90 Minutes	20%
Second Test	Anytime between December 4- Dec.6, 6 p.m.	90 Minutes	20%
Third Test	Anytime between February 11th -13th, 6 p.m.	90 Minutes	20%
Final Exam	Anytime between April 12th -14th, 6 p.m.	120 Minutes	30%
Participation	In 12 discussion sessions	6 in each term	10%

## DISCUSSION FORUMS

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

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 coment on each others' responses. . DISCUSSION FORUM WILL OPEN/CLOSE EACH WEEK ON MONDAY AT 6 p.m.

I will be visiting the Discussion Forums regularly.

### Tips for Participating on a Discussion Board

- Think ideas through before responding. You do not want to respond 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 post 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)

Mandatory participation in a minimum of 6 Discussion forums/sessions in **each** term is required to obtain 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 written in the module and text book reading. Participation marks will be determined on the basis of quantity and quality of participation

## Tests and Examinations

### Preparation:

There is No assignments in this course. There are three Tests and the Final Examination. Each test is worth 20% and the Final examination is worth 30%. The tests and examination will be taken **ONLINE** from any computer, even from your home. Each test and final examination must be taken on the assigned dates. NO request for supplemental tests or alternative dates will be accepted, including ones concerning technical issues with your computer. It is your responsibility to ensure you have access to a reliable system at all times throughout the term.

Each test will consist of 40 multiple choice questions and the Final examination will consist of 60 multiple choice questions. Each question will contain 4 or 5 answer choices.

The first Test will cover the materials discussed in the first 6 modules and from the first 4 Chapters in Vago's *Law and Society* book.

The Second Test will cover the materials discussed in modules 7 to 11 and from Chapters 5 to 9 in Vago's *Law and Society* book.

The Third Test will cover the materials discussed in modules: 12 to 16 and from Chapters: 1 to 4 in Boyd's *Canadian Law* book.

The Final Examination will cover the materials discussed in **modules 13 (again)**, 17 to 23 and from **Chapters: 5 to 10** in Boyd's *Canadian Law* book.

All exams are to be done independently. Since the tests and exam are timed, spending time looking through your notes and textbook increases your risk of running short on time. Time is a part of the challenge in writing tests and exams! Use your time wisely!

## Course Modules and Readings

Date	Module	Topic	Readings
September	Module 1	Introduction	Course Outline

### Part I: Introducing Law

Week 1	Module 2	Law and Legal Systems	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 1
Week 2	Module 3	Law: Functions	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 1
Week 3	Module 4	Law in Historical Context: Theoretical Perspective	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 2
Week 4	Module 5	Current Intellectual Movements in Law	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 2
Weeks 5/6	Module 6	Organization & Making of Laws in Political Systems	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 3&4
Oct. 15-17	&nbsp;	Test 1	Covers the first 6 modules and from the first 4 Chapters in Vago's <i>Law and Society</i> book
Week 7	Module 7	The Role of Law: Law as an Instrument of Social Control	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 5
Week 8	Module 8	Law as a Mechanism of Dispute Resolution	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 6
Week 9	Module 9	Law and Social Change	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 7
Week 10	Module 10	Law and the Legal Profession	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 8
Week 11	Module 11	Researching Law	Vago & Nelson, Chapt. 9
Dec. 4-6	&nbsp;	Test 2	Covers modules 7 to 11 and from Chapters 5 to 9 in

			Vago's <i>Law and Society</i> book
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**Part II: Laws and the Legal System in Canada: Readings from YATES are recommended only.**

Week 1	Module 12	Introduction to Canadian Law	Boyd, Chapt.1
Week-2	Module 13	The Organization of Laws and Courts in Canada	Boyd, Chapt. 5 & Yates, pp.90-117(recommended)
Week-3	Module 14	The Roots and Sources of Law in Canada	Boyd, Chapt. 2&3
Week-4	Module 15	Canadian Constitutional Law	Boyd, Chapt. 4
Week-5	Module 16	Constitutional Law and Canadian Charter of Rights	Boyd, Chapt. 4.contd & Appendix
Feb. 11-13	&nbsp;	Test 3	Covers modules 12-16 and from Chapters 1 to 4 in Boyd's <i>Canadian Law</i> book
	Study Week	&nbsp;	&nbsp;
Week-6	Module 17	Law of Torts	Boyd, Chapt. 7
Week-7	Module 18	Law of Contracts	Yates, pp.224-241(recom)
Week-8	Module 19	Criminal Law	Boyd, Chapt.10
Week-9	Module 20	Family Law	Boyd, Chapt. 8 & Yates, pp.201-222 (Recommended)
Week-10	Module 21	Laws of Property	Yates, pp.269-290 (Recom.)
Week-11	Module 22	Laws of Business	Yates, pp.249-268(Recom).
Week-12	Module 23	Administrative Law	Boyd, Chapt. 9
Apr. 12-14	&nbsp;	Final Exam	Covers modules

			13(again) and from Chapters 5 to 10 in Boyd's <i>Canadian Law</i> book
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