

**LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**Political Studies 1100 2010-2011**  
**Introduction to Political Science**

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## **SYNOPSIS**

An introduction to the scope, concepts and methods of political science, including the institutional and social framework of political activity illustrated by reference to Canada and other political systems, and to the role of political ideas. This course will familiarize the students with the definition of political science, basic concepts such as state and power, political ideologies such as Marxism and liberalism, political systems such as exist in the US and Canada, political processes such as elections, public opinion polls and national budget decision-making.

## **COURSE GOALS**

- introduction to basic concepts of political science and processes of politics to prepare students for their own appreciation of politics and to take upper-year political science courses
- all students need to understand politics enough to play their role as citizens
- understand the range of political ideas, issues and solutions proposed both by elected officials, other citizens and public servants to the problems and circumstances of various polities
- learn and develop analytical skills, as well as skills related to political decision-making, election campaigns, and public opinion polls

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, you will understand, explain, and use in your political decision-making as a citizen and in future courses in political science:

- what is political science;
- what is the definition of ‘state’;
- how the concept of state is used in various political processes;
- how the concept of state is used in the political systems of Canada and the United States;
- what is the definition of ‘power’;
- how the concept of power is used in various political processes;
- how the concept of power is used in the political systems of Canada and the United States;
- how several other concepts are used in various political processes and political systems;
- what are the major political ideologies in political systems;
- how political science uses an ideology such as liberalism;
- how liberalism can be seen in political systems groups, and politicians;
- how political science uses the major political ideologies;
- how the major ideologies can be seen in political systems, groups, and politicians;
- how major political processes such as election campaigns are planned and carried out in countries like Canada and the US;
- how political scientists carry out public opinion polls about political issues
- and several other political processes.

You can find more information in the “Learner Outcomes” section below.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

Using lectures, guest speakers, multi class role play simulation, and group exercises, the course content will answer, among others, the following questions:

- What are the major concepts of political science?
- What are the major political ideologies of political science?
- How do these concepts manifest themselves in political life?
- How do political scientists use these concepts?
- How do ideologies manifest themselves in political life?
- How do political scientists use these ideologies?
- What are the components and evolution of political processes such as election campaigns?
- How can citizens make better decisions with this understanding?
- How do political scientists use this understanding of political processes?

## REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

- *Ten Core Worksheets*, by Laure Paquette, and other material available on WEB CT;
- Readings listed on WEB CT's Course Calendar; and
- all available relevant material, and supplementary and further supporting information found through your own research.

## COURSE FORMAT

To support your learning the Course Content, you will be provided with:

- an opportunity to analyze the presentations of guest speakers;
- participate in a public opinion poll
- classroom instruction;
- access to research materials and instructor-prepared worksheets;
- opportunities to participate in role-playing exercises (more details available on Web CT's under Role Play Simulation); and
- individual and group written assignments.

## TYPICAL COURSE SCHEDULE

*Please see WebCT's Course Calendar. As a sample only, see below*

Fall term		Winter term	
Week 1	Intro to course	Week 1	Intro to cabinet simulation; lecture on Canadian politics
Week 2-3	Basic concepts	Week 2	Cabinet preparation for budget
Week 4-6	Political ideology	Week 3-5	Cabinet presentation and decisions on budget
Week 7-12	US Election Campaign	Week 6-12	Public opinion polls: method, polling, tabulation, press release.

## LEARNER OUTCOMES

In this course, you will learn:

- ***independent critical thinking*** through the use of research and written assignments;
- ***social awareness*** by requiring that you know the concepts, ideologies, and some of the processes that govern the social and environmental policies, programs and services of modern polities; and

- **leadership** through the team work required of role play simulations.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **collect authoritative information about** the concepts, ideologies, and political processes of modern polities;
- **identify some of the theoretical content, characteristics, decision making processes, roles of elected officials, officials, and citizens** in the US and Canada;
- **identify and assess** some of the theoretical content of political actors and processes in US and Canada; and
- **apply** these skills research and analyze political actors and processes in the US and Canada.

## GRADING

COMPONENT	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MARK
Individual Worksheets (best 4 of 5)	40
Professionalism in exercise or simulation	10
Performance of team in each exercise or simulation	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

In preparation for completing the worksheets, students must participate in a discussion forum for the duration of the simulation. While participation is mandatory, the discussion occurring will not be graded. Worksheets are due on the class after the analysis workshop. There is a guide on WEB-CT on worksheets, which are to be completed individually. Worksheets must be: typed; in the proper format i.e. using the worksheet as specified in the WebCT document, in 12 point font. All assignments must be properly sourced according to the Chicago Manual of Style. The grade for each debate is for the team, and reflects the quality of research, cogency of arguments presented, and overall effectiveness of argumentation. In general, the instructor awards grades on assignments and moots on the following criteria:

- The student did an excellent job: 8/10
- When reading the student's work, the instructor learns something: 9/10
- The student's work is better than the instructor could have produced: 10/10

The grades for the group exercises will reflect the presentations and background preparation, which include class presentations and preparation of memoranda. In general, the instructor awards grades on assignments and presentations on the following criteria:

- The student did an excellent job: 8/10
- When reading the student's work, the instructor learns something: 9/10
- The student's work is better than the instructor could have produced: 10/10

The professionalism grade is given by teammates according to the following proposed rubric, to be discussed and modified on the second class of term.

Learning Objective	13-15/15 Students receiving Excellent will:	11-13/15 Students receiving Good will:	9-11/15 Students receiving Satisfactory will:	0-11/15 Students receiving Poor to Failure will:
Attendance	Attend every class	Miss only 1 class with	Miss several classes	Miss many classes
	Be on time and prepared to start class	Be on time and prepared to start class	Arrive late for one or two classes	Arrive late for many class
	If ill, give notice prior to class/due date	If ill, give notice prior to class/due date	If ill, give notice after the class/due date	If ill, give no notice or notice after an absence
	Pay attention	Pay attention	Pay attention most of the time	Talk to others, sleep, eat, or give your attention to other work or activities
Preparation	Read assignments in advance	Read assignments in advance	Read most assignments in advance	Frequently not do required readings in time for class
	Ask questions in a timely manner	Ask questions in a timely manner	Asks questions close to deadline	Often asks questions when it is too late
	Read instructions before asking questions	Read instructions before asking questions	Sometimes fails to read instructions thoroughly	Often ask questions without consulting the course materials first
	Use graded feedback to improve all future work	Use selected graded feedback to improve future work	Use selected graded feedback to improve some future work	Ignore instructor feedback and/or disputes grade without a careful critique of your own work

## ASSESSMENT AND ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR

I believe that you learn only through what you yourself say, do, write or read, so I will use classroom time as much as possible to help you learn what you cannot learn any other way on your own. For more about my approach to teaching, background information is available on WebCT: Scholarly Foundations of Course Delivery.

My responsibilities on this course are to:

- design the course and course requirements;
- set clear expectations for you to meet;
- coach you during your course work (developing strategies, role plays);
- help you prepare for components listed in the “Grading” section above, as well as exams and classroom participation; and
- resolve any conflicts or answer any questions regarding student activities in the course.

My performance is assessed through:

- formal student evaluations done at the end of the course;
- informal short discussions from time to time during the class;
- interactions (talk and e-mail) with individual or groups of students; and
- ongoing monitoring of your performance and that of other students in the class in all your work.

I commit to:

- ongoing reflection on my practice as a teacher;
- creativity, innovation and experimentation in the classroom;
- taking chances and making mistakes while I try to find the best way for you to learn;  
and
- being accountable to you and other students regarding these commitments.

## IF YOUR WORK IS LATE...

If there is no date stamp each page of any late assignment (available from the Lakehead University Security Services office), the applicable date/time penalties will be assessed based on when I receive the assignment.

Late penalties are as follows:

- 10 percentage points deducted for submissions up to 24 hours late;
- 20 percentage points deducted for between 24 and 48 hours late;
- 40 percentage points deducted for between 48 and 72 hours late **ONLY** if I have not completed grading for all assignments handed in. Once all assignments are handed in are graded, I will not accept late assignments.

Less participation in class work will result in a lower participation grade. However, if you are responsible for a significant task as part of group work, and you do not fulfill that task, **you will fail the course.**

## CHEATING

When you registered at Lakehead University, you agreed to follow the University's *Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures* (you can find a version online here <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/policy.php?pid=60>). Handing in any work under your name where you are not the author (either by yourself or part of a group) is considered academic fraud. Handing in the same piece of work, or a significant part of the same piece, for more than one course without the written permission of the professors or departments concerned is considered academic fraud. Any professor who discovers academic fraud and does not apply for sanctions under the Procedures is negligent in his/her professional obligations.