

POLI 2220
Structures of Canadian Parliamentary Government

Fall 2017
Department of Political Science
Dalhousie University

Professor: Lori Turnbull

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30-5:00 p.m. (or by appointment)

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Course synopsis

This course examines the primary institutions of politics and governance in Canada, including: the House of Commons, the Senate, the Prime Minister's Office, the Constitution, the public service, political parties, pressure groups, and the media. The focus is on current events and themes in Canadian politics and the exercise of power in Canadian politics and governance. The goal of the course is to understand how responsible government works (or doesn't work) in Canada and the extent to which power is concentrated in ways that are counterproductive or even abusive. We will discuss the evolution of Westminster government in Canada, with attention to the many reforms that have taken place over the years.

Required readings

O'Brien, Audrey and Marc Bosc. 2009. *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* (Second Edition). Available at: <http://www.ourcommons.ca/procedure-book-livre/Document.aspx?sbdid=7C730F1D-E10B-4DFC-863A-83E7E1A6940E&sbpid=1&Language=E&Mode=1>

**A number of additional readings available online for free.

Assignments and Grading

3 online essays at 20% each: 60%
Tutorial Participation: 10%
Final exam: 30%

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies

and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Click [here](#) to read more.

Accessibility

The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFLD). Click [here](#) to read more.

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. Click [here](#) to read more.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Click [here](#) to read more.

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the McCain Building (room 3037) or contact the programs at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803 (leave a message).

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)
http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
- University Grading Practices: Statement of Principles and Procedures
https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html
- Scent-Free Program
<https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

Learning and Support Resources

- General Academic Support - Academic Advising: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/academic-support/advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/academic-support/advising.html)
- Copyright and Fair Dealing: <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fair-dealing/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>
- Libraries: <http://libraries.dal.ca>
- Student Health Services: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/health-and-wellness/health-services.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/health-and-wellness/health-services.html)
- Counselling and Psychological Services: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/health-and-wellness/counselling.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/health-and-wellness/counselling.html)
- Black Student Advising: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/communities/black-student-advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/communities/black-student-advising.html)
- Aboriginal Student Centre: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/communities/native.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/communities/native.html)
- ELearning Website: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>
- Student Advocacy Services: <https://www.dsu.ca/services/community-student-services/student-advocacy-service>
- Dalhousie Ombudsperson: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html)
- Writing Centre: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)
- Studying for Success program and tutoring: [https://www.dal.ca/campus life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus%20life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html)

Topics and Assigned Readings

September 5, 7: Responsible Government in Canada's Parliament

- Chapter 1, "Parliamentary Institutions," O'Brien and Bosc.
- CBC. 2017. "How Parliament Works." Available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/parliament-behind-the-scenes-videos-1.4229648>

September 12, 14: Constitutional Conventions in Canada

- Chapter 2, "Parliaments and Ministries," O'Brien and Bosc
- Andrew Heard, "Just What is a Vote of Confidence? The Curious Case of May 10, 2005," Canadian Journal of Political Science 40:2, June 2007.
- Don Desserud, "The Confidence Convention under the Canadian Parliamentary System," Canadian Study of Parliament Group, October 2006. Available at: [http://cspg-gcep.ca/pdf/Parliamentary Perspectives 7 2006-e.pdf](http://cspg-gcep.ca/pdf/Parliamentary_Perspectives_7_2006-e.pdf)

September 19, 21: The Powers of the Prime Minister

- Public Policy Forum. 2015. Time for a Reboot: Nine Ways to Restore Trust in Canada's Public Institutions." Available at: http://www.ppforum.ca/sites/default/files/PPF_TimeForAReboot_ENG_v6.pdf
- Wherry, Aaron. 2012. "Power, Parliament and the Prime Minister." *Macleans* magazine. Available at: <http://www.macleans.ca/politics/ottawa/power-parliament-and-the-prime-minister/>

September 26: Tutorial Exercise

September 28: Online Essay

October 3, 5: The House of Commons and its Members

- Chapter 4, "The House of Commons and its Members," O'Brien and Bosc.
- Government of Canada. 2017. "Reforming the Standing Orders of the House of Commons." Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/leader-government-house-commons/services/reform-standing-orders-house-commons/2017/march.html>

October 10, 12: The Senate, Reformed

- Public Policy Forum. 2016. "A House Undivided: Making Senate Independence Work." Available at: http://www.ppforum.ca/sites/default/files/Senate-A-House-Undivided_2.pdf
- Harder, Peter. 2017. "Sober Second Thinking: How the Senate Deliberates and Decides." Available at: http://peterharder.sencanada.ca/en/resources/media/pdf/Sober%20Second%20Thinking%20-%20How%20the%20Senate%20Deliberates%20and%20Decides_2017-03-31_EN_Final.pdf

October 17, 19: Electoral Systems and Proposals for Reform

- *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 39: 4, pp. 2-29. Available at: http://www.revparl.ca/39/4/39n4e_16_printversion.pdf

October 24, 26: Political Communication and Issues Management

- Delacourt, Susan. 2014. "How marketing came to drive our politics," *National Post*. Available at: <http://nationalpost.com/opinion/susan-delacourt-how-marketing-came-to-drive-our-politics>
- Marland, Alex. 2016. "Brand Command: Canadian Politics and Democracy in the Age of Message Control (book excerpt)," *Policy Options*. Available at: <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/2016/07/13/book-excerpt-brand-command-canadian-politics-and-democracy-in-the-age-of-message-control/>

October 31: Tutorial Exercise**November 2: Online Essay****November 14, 16: The News Media**

- Public Policy Forum. 2016. "The Shattered Mirror: News, Democracy and Trust in the Digital Age." Available at: <http://www.ppforum.ca/publications/shattered-mirror-news-democracy-and-trust-digital-age>

November 21, 23: Feminism in Canadian Politics

- Finding Feminism, *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 50:2, June 2017. Please review articles by: Dobrowolsky, MacDonald, Raney, Collier, and Dufour; Scala and Paterson; Ashe; and, O'Neill.

November 28: Public Service and Political Staff

- Heintzman, Ralph. Renewal of the Federal Public Service: Towards a Charter of Public Service. Canada 2020. Available at: http://canada2020.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014_Canada2020_Paper-Series_Public_Service_EN_Final.pdf

November 30: Online Essay

