



POLI 2220: Political Power and Partisan Politics: Structures of Canadian Parliamentary Government – Summer 2018

Instructor: Mohammad Ehsan
Class Time: Monday to Thursday, 9:05-11:55 am
Class Room: Room 1107, Mona Campbell Building
E-mail: mehsan@dal.ca
Office Hours: After class or by appointment

1. Prerequisites

An introductory Political Science course, or instructor approval.

2. Course and Learning Objectives

Course Synopsis:

This class provides an introduction to the institutions and actors at work in Canadian parliamentary politics and governance, and analyzes the dynamics between them. Though it is designed to meet the educational needs of students in the Political Science Department, students from related programs who seek greater understanding of parliamentary government in Canada are also welcome. The class introduces participants to various aspects of Canadian parliamentary government as well as to those relevant issues that affect the day to day functioning of the system. Topics range from responsible government to the Canadian public service to the electoral system. This course focuses on many intriguing questions that we, as students of political science, need to explore for better understanding of the Canadian parliamentary government.

Learning Objectives:

It is expected that participants of POLI 2220 will:

- Understand and be able to identify the key institutions and actors involved in the governance of the Canadian parliamentary democracy;
- Comprehend the critical challenges and appreciate the alternative reforms that are fundamental to the improvement of the system;
- Be able to integrate and apply these concepts to specific situations for increased understanding through explanation and analysis.

3. Textbook

The text assigned to this course is Alex Marland and Jared Wesley's **Inside Canadian Politics**, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2016.

4. Method of Evaluation and Grading Thresholds

The requirements of this course include a midterm class test, a critical review essay, in-class final examination, in-class debates and participation.

Midterm Class Test

The two-hour long midterm class test will cover all the course materials assigned in the first five classes (May 31 - June 7). The class test will comprise of short questions. Make-up examinations will not be allowed unless there is a valid medical reason.

Critical Review Essay

The nature of the essay assignment in this class is a critical review of a journal article. From a list of articles, which will be provided on May 31, each participant is going to choose an article. The expected length of the essay is 8-10 pages. It is expected that the submission will consult other articles, cite sources used and include bibliography. The submissions must be in proper grammatical form, double-spaced with 12-point font. There is no prescribed format for the review. However, no more than one-fourth of your paper should be the summarization of the article's main assertions. Devote the remainder of the review essay to critical analysis. Consult the 'Guide to Writing Papers' available in the course site. Submit your paper (stapled printed copy) in class on 18 June. Late submissions will be subject to a 10% penalty per day, including Saturdays and Sundays.

In-Class Debates

One in-class debate will be required of each student. These debates will have student(s) select a Yes or No side per issue from Marland and Wesley text, *Inside Canadian Politics*. The debates will be scheduled for 30 minutes as per the course schedule and the use of technological aids is encouraged. Additional research on the subject is also required.

Guidelines for Debates

Read and digest both sides of the debate issue. Use additional books, journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles, and the internet to find information on the debate issue. Keep the focus on the advantages and disadvantages of your side of the debate. In your presentation of the issue, keep definitions and introductory statements to a minimum as you have a very limited time to present your side of the argument.

- Each student will be given 7 minutes to present their side of the argument. Those arguing pro will present their side first.
- Both students will then have 3 minutes to provide rebuttal remarks to their opponent's position.
- There will be a 5-minute Q&A period during which the class can ask questions.

Final Exam

A two and a half-hour long in-class final examination is scheduled in the last class (June 21) to evaluate your grasp of the course materials. The final examination covers all the materials discussed throughout the course. The nature of this exam is similar to the midterm class test except that it will also include long question(s).

Participation

Participation is expected in this class, and a variety of mechanisms will be used to facilitate it, including debates. The emphasis on participation should also require little explanation. Students are expected to come to class having read and be prepared to discuss class topics. Sharing your ideas enriches both your learning experience, and that of others who exchange ideas with you. It is expected that every student in the class will make a contribution in class to each of the thematic areas of the course. Respecting others' views and not interfering and/or dominating the discussion is also part of the rules of game. Quality of participation is always preferred than quantity. Good ideas and faithful participation will be rewarded, not least when it comes to writing the examination! The distribution of grades thus is as follows.

Assignment	Participation	Midterm	Critical Review	Debates	Final Exam
Due Date	Throughout	June 11	June 18	June 20	June 21
Weight (%)	10	20	20	15	35

5. Ground Rules

A number of simple rules will make POLI 2220 a good learning environment for all. *First*, it's important to listen while others are talking, and that includes the instructor. Class participants who fail to extend this courtesy can expect to be called out on it. *Second*, laptop use for class purposes will be allowed, but use of laptops for browsing, gaming, messaging and the like during class will not be tolerated. *Third*, portable music devices are prohibited. *Fourth*, absence from class will result in decreased participation marks.

6. Schedule of Sessions

The schedule of sessions is as follows:

Session Date	Theme(s)
May 31	<i>Introduction</i> <i>How Canadians Govern Themselves</i> <i>The Constitution</i>
June 4	<i>Federalism and Regionalism in Canada</i>
June 5	<i>The Executive</i>
June 6	<i>The Legislature</i>
June 7	<i>The Justice System</i>
June 11	<i>Midterm Test</i>

	<i>Public Policy and Public Administration</i>
June 12	<i>Political Parties</i>
June 13	<i>Democracy and Elections</i>
June 14	<i>Political Activism</i>
June 18	<i>Critical Review Essay Submission</i> <i>Diversity and Representation</i>
June 19	<i>Class Review</i> <i>In-Class Debates</i>
June 20	<i>In-Class Debates</i>
June 21	<i>Final Exam</i>

7. Session-wise Required Readings

FIRST SESSION:

Introduction, Course Overview and expectations

Eugene A. Forsey (2016), *How Canadians Govern Themselves*, 9th Edition, Ottawa: Library of Parliament. (Available Online)

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), "The Constitution," in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 36-80.

SECOND SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), "Federalism in Canada," and "Regionalism in Canada," in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 81-165.

THIRD SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), "The Executive," in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 166-205.

FOURTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), "The Legislature," in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 206-253.

FIFTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), "The Justice System," in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 254-287.

SIXTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), “Public Policy and Public Administration,” in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 288-337.

SEVENTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), “Political Parties,” in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 338-385.

EIGHTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), “Democracy and Elections,” in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 386-429.

NINTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), “Political Activism,” in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 338-387.

TENTH SESSION:

Alex Marland and Jared Wesley (2016), “Diversity and Representation,” in *Inside Canadian Politics*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 338-387.

8. Miscellaneous: University Policies, Statements and Guidelines

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [University Calendar](#) and the Senate.

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.

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

Learning and Support Resources

- General Academic Support - Academic Advising:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html

- Copyright and Fair Dealing:

<https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fair-dealing/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>

- Dalhousie Ombudsperson:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/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

- Studying for Success program and tutoring:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html