

Instructor: Marcella Firmini

Office Hours: By appointment only

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Course Synopsis

This course examines the Canadian Parliamentary system of government. In particular, the course focuses on “theories” of parliament and parliamentary structures, the Constitution, the Crown, the House of Commons, the Senate, the powers – legislative, executive, judicial - political parties, the public service, and officers of parliament. The course will add to students’ understanding of Canada’s parliamentary regime: how it is structured, why it is structured as it is, what each component “does”. The course will have students understand the basic functioning of parliament, and its impact on the daily life of the country and its citizens. The goal, put simply, is to understand how the Canadian federal parliament works and to appreciate its complexity and its relevance.

Required Text: *How Canadians Govern Themselves*. Eugene Forsey (2012). Online.

Required Readings: Posted to BBL/OWL when possible, otherwise on reserve in the Killiam Library.

Learning Objectives:

The course aims to

- familiarize students with the Structures and ‘Functions’ of Canadian Parliament;
- familiarize students with Canadian government (and governance) and its actors;
- recognize and master knowledge of the powers (“branches”) of government;
- recognize the importance of ideas to politics, institutions, values;
- strengthen *critical* and *independent* thinking capacities;
- refine skills related to the evaluation of empirical evidence derived from literature produced in the discipline;
- lay the foundations which will prepare students for more advanced courses in political science.

Knowledge & Skills Acquisition and Application — Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to be capable of competently

- recognizing, describing, and critiquing the role of actors, the activities, and the structures of Parliament;
- understanding Parliament and how it ‘works’;
- understanding Canadian government and how it ‘works’;
- understanding the powers and ‘branches’ of government;

- recognizing duties and roles of Parliament when presented and confronted within political discourse;
- recognizing, describing, and operationalizing key concepts of Canadian structures of parliament;
- structure a logical, methodical, analytical oral argument and research paper related to the discipline;
- communicate effectively in written and oral form

Rules and Policy Regarding Cell Phone and Computer Etiquette:

1. The use of cellular phones or any other electronic gadgetry is **not permitted** during class lectures; neither are recording devices of **ANY** kind.
2. During discussions all phones, computers, and all other electronic gadgets **must be turned off and stored away.**
3. Use of laptops **for taking notes** during lectures is permitted; *however*, should complaints arise regarding inappropriate or distracting web browsing during class, the use of laptops **will be restricted.** Use them wisely.
4. Phone calls, texts, Snap Chat, You Tube, Facebook, Twitter, and **ALL other forms** of social media usage are **NOT** permitted inside the classroom.

Evaluation Opportunities: Percentages as follows:

1. **Quiz One:** January 30 (Worth 15%)
2. **Mid-term:** February 27 (Worth 20%)
3. **Test: March 27** (Worth 25%)
4. **Attendance:** 5%
5. **Final Exam:** Worth 35% - **per Registrar's Exam Period**

The quiz, test, mid-term, and final exam may consist of a possible combination of multiple choice, true or false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or essay questions.

Grading scheme

A+	90-100	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89		
A-	80-84		
B+	77-79	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
B	73-76		
B-	70-72		
C+	65-69	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.
C	60-64		
C-	55-59		
D	50-54	Marginal Pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of "C" is required).
F	0-49	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

No alternative exam/test dates will be scheduled without documented and verifiable justification.

Student Accessibility and Accommodation

Students may request accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams. Requests should be made to the *Office of Student Accessibility & Accommodation* (OSAA) prior to or at the outset of each academic term. Please see

www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca for more information. Note takers may be available as well and there is an honorarium. If you are interested, please contact OSAA for more information.

Drop Course Dates: please review dates on the registrar's website

Statement on Academic Integrity (Source: Dalhousie University):

“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.

What does academic integrity mean?

At university we advance knowledge by building on the work of other people. Academic integrity means that we are honest and accurate in creating and communicating all academic products. Acknowledgement of other people's work must be done in a way that does not leave the reader in any doubt as to whose work it is. Academic integrity means trustworthy conduct such as not cheating on examinations and not misrepresenting information. It is the student's responsibility to seek assistance to ensure that these standards are met.

How can you achieve academic integrity?

[T]he following are **some ways** that you can achieve academic integrity:

- Make sure you understand Dalhousie's policies on academic integrity (<http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/Policies/>)
- Do not cheat in examinations or write an exam or test for someone else
- Be sure not to plagiarize, intentionally or unintentionally
- Clearly indicate the sources used in your written or oral work. This includes ideas, figures of speech, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images.
- Do not use the work of another from the Internet or any other source and submit it as your own
- When you use the ideas of other people (paraphrasing), make sure to acknowledge the source
- Do not submit work that has been completed...previously [and] submitted for another assignment

Where can you turn for help?

If you are ever unsure about any aspect of your academic work, contact me; also:

- Academic Integrity website <http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/>
- Writing Centre (http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)

What will happen if an allegation of an academic offence is made against you?

I am **required** to report every suspected offence... If you are found guilty of an offence, a penalty will be assigned ranging from a warning, to failure of the assignment or failure of the class, to

expulsion from the University. Penalties may also include a notation on your transcript that indicates that you have committed an academic offence.

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. ***Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations***".

Plagiarism, therefore, is considered a serious academic offence. ***No excuse is acceptable for plagiarism*** and **NO AMOUNT OF PLAGIARISM WILL BE TOLERATED AND THUS WILL BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY**. For more information, see:

http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Requests for Student Accommodation (Source: Dalhousie University):

“Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 902-494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class”.

- ✓ No alternative dates for paper deadlines will be set **except for serious medical conditions**
- ✓ No assignments will be given for extra credit.
- ✓ Lectures cover material not posted on Bright Space.
- ✓ **DO NOT** book any travel before the exam schedules are known.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with course ‘Drop Dates’. These can be found here: http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

STATEMENTS FROM DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY:

UNIVERSITY POLICIES, STATEMENTS, GUIDELINES and RESOURCES for SUPPORT

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

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
- 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
- Counselling and Psychological Services: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/counselling.html
- Black Student Advising: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html
- Aboriginal Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/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
- 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

Course Outline

PART ONE: Constitutional Foundations & the Principles of the Canadian Regime

- What were the Fathers of Confederations up to?
- Parliament (Part one: Theoretical Foundations)
- The Canadian Constitution (Part One: Theoretical Foundations & Evolution)
 - Constitution & Constitutional Conventions (Part One)

January

7: Welcome

- Introduction and Expectations
- Approach to assigned readings

9-14-16: Meaning and Goals of Canadian Confederation - The Fathers Explain Parliament

Readings:

- *The Canadian Founding: John Locke & Parliament* – Janet Ajzenstat. McGill-Queen's University Press (2007).
 - Chapter 1: *Making Parliament*, pp. 3-21.
 - Chapter 10: *Parliament and Today's Discontents*, pp. 180-193.
- *Considerations on Representative Government* - John Stuart Mill (1861). Link on BBL/OWL.
 - Chapter V: *Of the Proper Functions of Representative Bodies*
 - Chapter IX: *Should there be Two Stages of Election?*
 - Chapter XVII: *Of Federal Representative Governments*
- *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *Introduction*, pp. 1-2 & *Living Government*, pp. 47-48

21-23-28: The Canadian Constitution & the Charter (Part One: Theoretical Foundations)

Readings:

- *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *Our Constitution*, pp. 8-19.
 - *Parliamentary Government*, pp. 3-6.
- *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches* (7th ed.) – Rand Dyck & Christopher Cochrane. Nelson Education (2014).
 - Chapter 17: *The Canadian Constitution and Constitutional Change*, pp. 401-430.
- *Where our Legal System Comes From* – Department of Justice (Bright Space).

Recommended Links:

- a. *The Canadian Constitution* (Bright Space)
- b. *The Statute of Westminster* (Bright Space)

January 30 – QUIZ ONE

PART TWO: Institutions - Parliamentary “Who’s Who?” and “What’s What?”

Parliament (Part II) The Canadian Crown and its Servants The House of Commons Responsible Government & Other Constitutional Conventions (Part II) Cabinet and the Prime Minister The Senate The Judiciary & the Charter (Part II)

February

4-6: Federalism

- Federalism - Jennifer Smith. UBC Press (2004).
 - Chapter 2: *Federalism and Democracy*, pp.11-26.
 - *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *A Federal State*, pp. 7-8.
 - *Powers of the National and Provincial Governments*, pp. 20-23.
 - *Provinces and Municipalities*, pg. 46
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11: Parliament

- *The Legislative Process* – (PDF on Bright Space)
 - *The People’s House of Commons: Theories of Democracy in Contention* - David E. Smith. University of Toronto Press (2007).
 - *Parliamentary Democracy*, pp. 19-33.
 - *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *The Institutions of Our Federal Government*, pp. 32-40.
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13: The Canadian Crown

- The Republican Ideal – D. Smith (Excerpt on Bright Space)
- *Future of the Crown in Canada* – Edward McWhinney. Canadian Parliamentary Review 28:3 (2005).
- Philippe Lagassé: “The Queen is Canada’s Head of State Not the Governor General. (@<https://lagassep.com/2015/03/16/the-queen-is-canadas-head-of-state-not-the-governor-general/>) – **Google or Click link**
- *The Evolving Canadian Crown* – Jennifer Smith and D. Michael Jackson. McGill University Press (2012)
 - *The Constitutional Role of the Governor General* – Patrick J. Monahan, pp. 73-75.
- *The Invisible Crown: The First Principle of Canadian Government* – David Smith. University of Toronto Press.
 - *The Monarchical Idea* – pp. 3-19.
- *The Queen is the Head of State not the GG* – (PDF on Bright Space)

STUDY BREAK: Feb. 18-22

25: The Canadian Crown (continue with readings assigned on the 13th of Feb.)

- PM Harper's Address – video link on Bright Space
 - S. Dion's Address – video link on Bright Space
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27: Mid-term

March

4-6: House of Commons

Readings:

- *Democracy and the Canadian House of Commons at the Millennium* – Jennifer Smith. Canadian Public Administration, vol. 42(4), pp. 398-421.
 - *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *What Goes on in Parliament*, pp. 41-45
-

11-13: Cabinet and the Prime Minister

- *The Rise of Court Government in Canada* – Donald Savoie (1999). Canadian Journal of Political Science, vol. 32(4), pp. 635-664.
 - *Ministerial Responsibility & the Machinery of Government* – Nicholas D'Ombra (2007). Canadian Public Administration, vol. 51(2), pp. 195-217.
 - *Does the Executive Dominate the Westminster Legislative Process? Six Reasons for Doubt.* (2016) Meg Russell, Daniel Gover and Kristina Wollter, Parliamentary Affairs 69, pp. 286–308
 - **TBA**: Additional literature will be added as literature analyzing recent Senate appointments and procedures
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18: The Senate

- *Abolishing the Senate: the NDP's Bad Idea* - Jennifer Smith (2013). The Federal Idea.
 - *Federalism and Institutional Design: The Perils and Politics of a Triple-E Senate in Canada* – Michael Lusztig (1995). Publius, 25: 1, pp. 35-50.
 - *Political Legitimacy for an Appointed Senate* - Campbell Sharman (2008). Choices, 14: 11, pp. 1-28.
 - *Restructuring the Canadian Senate through elections* – Hicks & Blais (2008)
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20-25: Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - Judiciary

- *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *Our Constitution*, pp. 8-19 (re-read).
 - Canadian Politics and Government in the Charter Era – Heather MacIvor. Oxford University Press (2013).
 - Chapter One: *The Charter 101*, pp. 7-21.
 - *How Canadians Govern Themselves* (8th ed.) – Eugene Forsey. Library & Archives Canada.
 - *The Rule of Law and the Courts*, pp. 30-31.
 - Peter W Hogg & Allison A Bushell, *The Charter Dialogue Between Courts and Legislatures (Or Perhaps The Charter of Rights Isn't Such a Bad Thing After All)*, *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, 35 (1997), pp. 75-124.
 - F L Morton, *Dialogue or Monologue? Policy Options*, April 1999
-

27: Test

PART THREE: Democracy, Citizenship, and Participation **Parties** **Elections**

April 1-3-8: Parties & Elections

- Ken Carty (2006): *The Shifting Place of Political Parties in Public Life*. Choices, vol. 12, 4 (pp. 3-11)
 - William Cross and Lisa Young (2006): *Are Canadian Political Parties Empty Vessels?* Choices, vol. 12, 4 (pp. 14-27) **GOOGLE THIS.**
 - Mac Harb (2005): *The Case for Mandatory Voting in Canada*. Canadian Parliamentary Review, 28, 2
 - Peter John Loewen, Henry Milber and Bruce Hicks (2008): *Does Compulsory Voting Lead to More Informed and Engaged Citizens? An Experimental Test*. Canadian Journal of Political Science, 41, 3.
 - **TBA**: Additional literature will be added as literature analyzing current electoral reform proposals become available
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EXAM PERIOD: see Dal website for date, time, and location
