

## Structures of Canadian Parliamentary Government

POLI 2220

Winter 2021

Online

**Instructor:** Dr. Scott Pruyzers

**Office:** Henry Hicks Building, Room 360

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11:30am-12:30pm

**Email:** scott.pruyzers@dal.ca

On weekdays, I will generally respond to your emails within 24 hours. Substantive questions are best discussed in person during office hours. Feel free to email me or to drop by during the virtual office hours to see me with any questions you may have or simply to chat about your progress in the course. This time is for you so I hope that you will use it. I look forward to getting to know you better.

### Course Description

The course offers students an introduction to the major political institutions that shape democratic life in Canada. This includes the Constitution, Indigenous self-governance and federalism, parliament (House of Commons, Crown, Senate), political parties, election campaigns, the electoral system, and the Charter and judiciary. While the course explores the design, evolution, and modern functioning of these various political institutions, we will also consider whether and how these institutions contribute to the so called 'democratic deficit' and explore the constitutionality of various reform proposals.

### Required Texts

Marland, Alex and Jared Wesley. 2020. *Inside Canadian Politics*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

**SECOND EDITION**

\*\*See course schedule for additional readings each week. These will be posted to Brightspace

### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Provide students with an understanding of the major political institutions that shape political life in Canada as well as contemporary debates/critiques surrounding these institutions.
2. Assist students in rooting their arguments in the relevant literature and expose them to the fundamental arguments of scholars in the field.
3. Help students develop and practice critical reading and writing skills.

### Class Format

This class will be offered asynchronously. A series of video lectures for the week will be uploaded to Brightspace under each module (corresponding to a week in the course). These videos can be viewed online and at your own pace, but should be viewed in conjunction with assigned course readings. In addition to weekly videos, each module will contain additional activities and resources (discussion boards, popular news articles, videos etc.). Once a week I will hold live office hours (Tuesdays 11:30am-12:30pm) to answer questions and discuss course content with students.

### Course Assignments

Requirement/Assessment	Date	Weighting
Weekly Discussion Participation	Ongoing	10%
Essay Proposal	January 25	10%
Online Quizzes (x5)	See detailed schedule	25%
Midterm	Launches February 8	25%
Essay	April 5	30%

### Essay Proposal (10%) & Essay (30%)

The topics of this paper must be chosen from a specified list of themes/questions. This list, as well as further instructions, will be posted online via Brightspace. Essay proposals should be **2-3 pages** in length and must include the research question, thesis statement, and a brief summary of the major arguments that the final paper will offer. References do not count towards the page limit. Three academic sources are required in the proposal. The purpose of the outline is to identify any potential challenges before writing your final essay (i.e., too ambitious, not enough sources, etc.). The final essay, **10 double-spaced pages**, will build on this proposal (and the feedback provided). All essays and proposals must be submitted online April 5. Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per day.

### Midterm Exam (25%)

The midterm will be available starting February 8 at 9:00am. The test will cover all assigned readings, lectures, and other posted materials for the first five modules. The midterm will consist of two parts: a section in which students will be asked to define and explain the significance of key terms/concepts, and a short essay question. The midterm questions will be made available on February 8 at 9:00am and the submission portal for your answers will be active for 24 hours on Brightspace (that is, all submissions **must** be completed by February 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am).

### Online Quizzes (25%)

In addition to the midterm, there will be five online quizzes throughout the second half of the semester (5% each). These quizzes are multiple choice and are based entirely on the textbook. Quizzes will go “live” on Monday mornings of the corresponding weekly module and will be available for the remainder of the week (closing Sunday midnight), allowing students to complete them on their own schedule. Note that once a quiz has been started, you will have 1 hour to complete it before the session expires. See course schedule for the exact dates each quiz will launch.

### Online Discussion Participation (10%)

Weekly modules on Brightspace will include a discussion board for student participation. This kind of participation provides students with the ability to interact with one another as well as critically engage with the course material. A series of netiquette guidelines for the course as well as details regarding participation expectations will be posted on Brightspace. Both quality and quantity of participation will be assessed. While the discussion board has a “starting” question, discussion is not limited to this question alone. Students are encouraged to raise other questions related to the module’s specific readings and substantive content.

**Course Schedule**

Module	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction & Course Orientation (Week of Jan 4)	**No reading**
2	Theories of Political Culture & Historical Foundations (Week of Jan 11)	McGrane, David & Loleen Berdahl. 2013. "Small Worlds No More: Reconsidering Provincial Political Cultures in Canada." <i>Regional &amp; Federal Studies</i> 23(4): 479-493.  Chapter 2. "The Constitution." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i> .
3	Mega Constitutional Politics (Week of Jan 18)	Russel, Peter. 2004. Chapter 8. "Round Three: Patriation." In <i>Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians become a Sovereign People?</i> Toronto: UTP.  Russel, Peter. 2004. Chapter 9. "Round Four: Meech Lake." In <i>Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians become a Sovereign People?</i> Toronto: UTP.
4	Federalism & Indigenous Self-governance (Week of Jan 25)	Chapter 3. "Federalism in Canada." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i> .  Frances Abele and Michael Prince. 2006. "Four Pathways to Aboriginal Self- Government in Canada." <i>American Review of Canadian Studies</i> 36(4): 568-95.  <b>*Essay Proposal Due (Jan 25)</b>
5	Charter & Judiciary (Week of Feb 1)	Chapter 7. "The Justice System." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i> .  Hogg, Peter; Bushell, Allison. 1997. "The Charter Dialogue Between Courts and Legislatures." <i>Osgoode Hall Law Journal</i> 35 (1): 75-124.
6	MIDTERM (Week of Feb 8)	<b>*MIDTERM</b>
<b>Winter Break</b>		
7	Parliament (Week of Feb 22)	Chapter 6. "The Legislature." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i> .  Heard, Andrew. 2010. "Conacher Missed the Mark on Constitutional Conventions and Fixed Election Dates." <i>Constitutional Forum</i> 19: 129-140.  <b>* Quiz 1 launches (Chapter 6)</b>

8	Parliament continued (Week of March 1)	<p>Chapter 5. "The Executive." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i>.</p> <p>Lagassé, Philippe. 2016. "The Crown and Prime Ministerial Power." <i>Canadian Parliamentary Review</i> 39(2): 17-23.</p>
9	Political Parties & Party Systems (Week of March 8)	<p>Chapter 9. "Political Parties." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i>.</p> <p>Carty, Kenneth. 2001. "Three Canadian Party Systems." In Hugh G. Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn (eds.) <i>Party Politics in Canada</i>. Toronto: Prentice-Hall.</p> <p><b>* Quiz 2 launches (Chapter 9)</b></p>
10	Elections and Campaigning (Week of March 15)	<p>Chapter 10. "Democracy and Elections." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i>.</p> <p>André Blais, Maxime Héroux-Legault, Laura Stephenson, William Cross, and Elisabeth Gidengil. 2012. "Assessing the Psychological and Mechanical Impact of Electoral Rules: A Quasi-Experiment." <i>Electoral Studies</i> 31(4):829-837.</p> <p><b>* Quiz 3 launches (Chapter 10)</b></p>
11	Political Communication (Week of March 22)	<p>Chapter 11. "Political Communication." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i>.</p> <p>Jay G. Blumler &amp; Dennis Kavanagh. 1999. "The Third Age of Political Communication: Influences and Features, Political Communication." 16(3): 209-230.</p> <p><b>* Quiz 4 launches (Chapter 11)</b></p>
12	Diversity & Representation (Week of March 29)	<p>Chapter 13. "Diversity and Representation." In <i>Inside Canadian Politics</i>.</p> <p>Trimble, Linda. 2007. "Gender, Political Leadership and Media Visibility: Globe and Mail Coverage of Conservative Party of Canada Leadership Contests." <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> 40(4):969-993.</p> <p><b>* Quiz 5 launches (Chapter 13)</b> <b>* Final Essay due April 5</b></p>

**University Grading Policy**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Definition</b>	
A+ A A-	4.30 4.00 3.70	90-100 85-89 80-84	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
B+ B B-	3.30 3.00 2.70	77-79 73-76 70-72	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.
C+ C C-	2.30 2.00 1.70	65-69 60-64 55-59	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.
D	1.00	50-54		Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of 'C' is required).
FM	0.00		Marginal Failure	Available only for Engineering, Health Professions and Commerce.
F	0.00	0-49	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.
INC	0.00		Incomplete	
W	Neutral and no credit obtained		Withdrew after deadline	
ILL	Neutral and no credit obtained		Compassionate reasons, illness	
P	Neutral		Pass	
TR	Neutral		Transfer credit on admission	
Pending	Neutral		Grade not Neutral and no credit obtained	

			reported	
--	--	--	----------	--

## SECTION B: 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 [http://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

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.

Accessibility [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/accessibility.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)

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).

### Student Code of Conduct

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html)

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.

### 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) (read more: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>)

## 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. Contact the program at [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca).

## University Policies and Programs

Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)

[http://www.dal.ca/academics/important\\_dates.html](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](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html)

Scent-Free Program

<http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

## Learning and Support Resources

General Academic Support – Advising

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html) (Halifax)

Fair Dealing Guidelines

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

Dalhousie University Library <http://libraries.dal.ca>

Indigenous Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

Black Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/black-student-advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html)

International Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/international-centre.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre.html)

Student Health Services

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/health-and-wellness.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness.html)

Counselling

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/health-and-wellness/frequently-asked-questions-august-2017.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/frequently-asked-questions-august-2017.html)

Copyright Office

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

E-Learning website

<http://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>

Dalhousie Student Advocacy Services

<http://dsu.ca/dsas>

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_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](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)

Faculty or Departmental Advising Support: Studying for Success Program

[http://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html)