

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**COURSE SYLLABUS
POLI 1001
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS & GOVERNMENT**

Instructor: Dr. Igor Shoikhedbrod **Term:** Fall 2021
Phone: MS Teams **Days:** Wednesdays and Fridays
E-mail: Igor.Shoikhedbrod@dal.ca **Time:** 1:05p.m-2:25p.m ADT
Office Hours (MS Teams): Wednesdays 10:00-11:00a.m ADT **Location:** Collaborate Ultra
Students are asked to schedule an appointment in advance via email to ensure fairness and equal access.
TAs : Xinyu Gong xinyu.gong@dal.ca & Tobias Schminke : tobias.schminke@gmail.com

*The course instructor and TAs will normally be responding to logistical questions by email within 48 hours, Mondays through Fridays, between 10a.m and 5:00p.m ADT (i.e. not on weekends or during statutory holidays). For substantive course content-related questions, please make an appointment with the course instructor during the instructor's scheduled MS Teams office hours.

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

POLI 1001, together with POLI 1002, offers a general introduction to the study of politics. In this course you will be exposed to the fundamental concepts of political life. It will introduce you to a range of key issues and approaches that animate contemporary politics. The course focuses on the fundamental themes and concepts that help us analyze politics, society, political values, and institutions. It does so through a three dimensional approach:

1. **Political Thought:** What is 'politics'? What is 'political science'? What is the source of Canadian ways of thinking about 'politics' and 'society'?
2. **Political Institutions and 'actors':** What are the rules (both informal and formal) that dictate what is permissible to, and desirable for, these 'entities' to do? How do the institutions of the state work? How do they affect us? How did we get to these rules? How does Canada understand and apply them? Do they still matter?
3. **Political values and outcomes:** What do we want from politics? Why do we want those particular things? Do 'politics' and how we think about it matter? Does 'politics' affect our everyday life? Does it matter in Canadian society and beyond? Why (or why not)?

NOTES: This course, together with POLI 1002, is a general introduction to the study of politics. The two classes together fulfill the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' writing requirement. The two courses must be taken in sequence (that is, POLI 1001, followed by POLI 1002), and must be taken in the same academic year.

FORMAT: Synchronous Lectures via Collaborate Ultra

EXCLUSIONS: POLI 1103X.03, POLI 1500.06, POLI 1050.03, POLI 1055.03, POLI 1060.03, POLI 1065.03

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- i. Introduce students to the main concepts and themes that animate political science —their provenance, their content, their development, their contemporary relevance, their Canadian application.
- ii. Introduce students to mechanisms through which political preferences are formed, how those affect society, political structures and institutions in general and specifically in Canada; how the processes play out in Canada: elections, voting patterns, political parties, and electoral systems.
- iii. Describe and analyze how political institutions work, particularly the Canadian parliamentary system, federalism, and the powers of the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary.
- iv. Strengthen critical and independent thinking capacities.
- v. Refine skills related to the evaluation of empirical evidence derived from literature produced in the discipline.
- vi. Lay the foundations which will prepare students for more advanced courses in political science.

C. REQUIRED TEXT

Robert Garner & Peter Ferdinand, *Introduction to Politics: Second Canadian Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2016). Available for purchase in hardcopy and eBook formats at the Dalhousie University Bookstore. N.B. Additional required readings will be posted on Brightspace.

D. EVALUATION COMPONENTS AND WEIGHTS**Components**

The course will be delivered entirely online via Collaborate Ultra. Work will be evaluated on an individual basis. Except for formally volunteering as a note-taker for the course, which is strongly encouraged, students are discouraged from sharing their individual work on online platforms (i.e., do not share individual work on Facebook Groups, Google Drive, Discord, Dropbox, etc.). In the past, such sharing of individual work has resulted in incidents of plagiarism and academic misconduct.

The course assessment will be determined as follows:

List of Components	Percent of Total Grade
Test 1 (Oct.1)	20%
Test 2 (Nov 17)	20%
Essay 1 (due Oct.22 at start of lecture – 800 words)	10%
Essay 2 (due Dec 1 at start of lecture- 1600 words)	20%
Final exam (to be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office)	30%
TOTAL OF ALL COMPONENTS	100%

***Essay questions/topics will be provided in advance by the course instructor.**

Grade Determination

Letter grade	Numerical equivalent	GPA	Definition	
A+	90-100	4.3	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	4.0		
A-	80-84	3.7		
B+	77-79	3.3	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	3.0		
B-	70-72	2.7		
C+	65-69	2.3	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefiting from university experience.
C	60-64	2.0		
C-	55-59	1.7		
D	50-54	1.0	Marginal pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter; critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of “C” or “C+” is required).
F	0-49	0	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature

E. COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES

The Use of Course Materials

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are the instructor's intellectual property and are covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lectures or other course materials in any way (this includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Brightspace materials, etc.) are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to post, publish, or circulate the instructor's work on a website or to sell them in other forms without formal permission.

Course Attendance and General Expectations

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Brightspace will be the main online space for the course. This is where lectures will be delivered, assignments will be posted and submitted, and where all course announcements will be posted. It is expected that students will log-on to Brightspace regularly and set their email accounts to receive course announcements.

Online attendance is essential for success in this course. The instructor will pause the lecture at a designated interval for a brief break that will be followed by an opportunity for students to ask questions of clarification and elaboration.

Written skills are important in this course. Proficiency in English therefore is assumed. Writing support is available for students at Dalhousie University. Students are strongly encouraged to seek out this support ahead of time.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have accessibility-related needs that may require accommodations, please feel free to contact me and/or Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

Submission of Work and the Use of Urkund

All assignments, including tests, will be administered entirely through Brightspace. All submissions, including tests, will be verified on Urkund for textual similarity. The terms that apply to Dalhousie University's use of Urkund are specified online:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/urkund--plagiarism-detection.html

Missed Tests and Assignments

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to catch up with missed lecture and reading material. Test dates are scheduled in advance and cannot be changed. No make-up tests or extensions will be granted for missed tests or essays unless students have formal supporting documentation explaining why they were unable to fulfill the requirements. Examples of formal supporting documentation include medical notes issued by a certified physician/practitioner, as well as a completed absence declaration form. If you are absent from class or unable to complete any other term work, you are responsible for contacting your instructor as soon as possible to request reasonable accommodation. Extensions and the writing of make-up tests will only be granted under extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances. Appropriate documentation must be submitted within 5 days of the missed course requirement. Please note that all course requirements must be fulfilled for the completion of this course.

Late Penalty

Late essay submissions will be penalized 5% percent per day of lateness (weekends included).

Procedure for Appealing Assignment Grades

Should you have legitimate concerns regarding assignment grades, you are welcome to submit a half-page typed appeal that explains the reasons why you are contesting the grade (to be submitted to the teaching assistant no later than 5 days, weekends included, past the date that you received your assignment grade). Please note that the re-evaluation of an assignment may result in a higher or lower grade, or the grade may remain the same.

F. University Policies, Statements, Guidelines, and Other Resources for Support

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate.

University Statements***Territorial Acknowledgment***

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

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.

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 do not follow this community expectation.

Students are required to comply with health and safety requirements on campus, and should be considerate of others' health concerns. Non-compliance may be reported under the Code of Student Conduct.

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).

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 their office at:
Room 107, Indigenous Student Centre
1321 Edward Street
Phone: (902) 494-6803

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year
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-practicespolicy.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/fairdealing/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>
- Libraries: <http://libraries.dal.ca>
- Student Health Services: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html
- Counselling and Psychological Services: <https://www.dal.ca/counselling>
- Black Student Advising: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/blackstudent-advising.html
- Indigenous Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html
- eLearning Website: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>
- Student Advocacy Services: <http://www.dsu.ca/dsas>
- 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-andstudy-skills.html.
Assistance with learning to write academic documents, reviewing papers for discipline -specific writing standards, organization, argument, transitions, writing styles and citations.
- Studying for Success program and tutoring: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html

G. READING SCHEDULE

IMPORTANT NOTE: All additional required readings will be posted on Brightspace (B).

Week 1

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|---------------|---|
| Sept 8 (Wed) | Introduction to the course and overview of course syllabus. |
| Sept 10 (Fri) | What is Politics?
Introduction in <i>Introduction to Politics</i> . |

Week 2

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|---------------|---|
| Sept 15 (Wed) | Political Power, Authority, Nation, and the State
Ch.1 in <i>Introduction to Politics</i> . |
| Sept 17 (Fri) | Ch. 2 in <i>Introduction to Politics</i>
V. Napoleon, “Indigenous Legal Orders” (B). |

Week 3

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| Sept 22 (Wed) | Freedom & Justice
Ch.4, <i>Introduction to Politics</i> .

B. Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared to Moderns” (B). |
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Sept 24 (Fri)

Models of Democracy and Traditional Western Ideologies
Ch.3 & 5 in *Introduction to Politics*.

Week 4

Sept 29 (Wed)

Alternatives to the Traditional Western Ideologies
Ch.6 in *Introduction to Politics*.

Oct 1 (Fri)

Test 1 (during scheduled lecture time).

Week 5

Oct. 6 (Wed)

Political Culture

Ch.13 in *Introduction to Politics*.

S.M. Lipset, “Revolution and Counter-Revolution” (B).

Oct 8 (Fri)

W. Kymlicka, “Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future” (B).

Week 6

Oct 13 (Wed)

Institutions and States
Ch.7 in *Introduction to Politics*.

Oct 15 (Fri)

Ch.7 in *Introduction to Politics* continued.

Week 7

Oct 20(Wed)

Laws, Constitution & Federalism
Ch.8 in *Introduction to Politics*.
CBC Radio Interview with David Dyzenhaus,
[“What does the ‘rule of law’ really mean?”](#)

Oct 22 (Fri)

Ch.8 in *Introduction to Politics* continued.
Essay 1 Due (at start of lecture).

Week 8

Oct 27 (Wed)

Legislatures and Legislators
Ch.9 in *Introduction to Politics*.

Oct 29 (Fri)

Vanessa MacDonell, “The New Parliamentary Sovereignty” (B).

Week 9

Nov 3 (Wed)

Bureaucracies, Policymaking, and Governance
M. Weber, “Bureaucracy” (B).

Nov 5 (Fri)

Ch.10 in *Introduction to Politics*.**Week 10**

Nov 10 and 12

Study week (no class)**Week 11**

Nov 17 (Wed)

Test 2 (during scheduled lecture time)

Nov 19 (Fri)

Voting, Elections, and Political PartiesCh.11 in *Introduction to Politics*.

Y. Dawood, “The Process of Electoral Reform in Canada” (B).

Week 12

Nov 24 (Wed)

Civil Society, Interest Groups, and the Media.
Ch. 12, *Introduction to Politics*.

Nov 26 (Fri)

Ch. 12, *Introduction to Politics* continued.

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Week 13

Dec.1 (Wed)

Simone Chambers, “Truth, Deliberative Democracy, and the Virtues of Accuracy” (B).

Essay 2 Due (at start of lecture).

Dec. 3 (Fri)

Review & Conclusion.

FINAL EXAM 30% (TBD /by Registrar’s Office).