

## Structures of Canadian Parliamentary Government

POLI 2220

Winter 2022

**Mondays and Wednesdays: 8:35AM – 9:55AM**

**In person: Goldberg Computer Science Building (Room 127)**

**Online: Asynchronous [at least first 4 modules]**

**Instructor:** Dr. Scott Pruyzers

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

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday 10:30am-11:30am

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

On weekdays, I will generally respond to your emails within 24 hours. Substantive questions are best discussed in person during office hours (in person or virtually). Feel free to email me or to drop by during 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. If these times do not work for you (or you'd rather speak online), please get in touch and we can arrange an alternative time to meet.

### Course Description

The course offers students an introduction to the major political institutions that shape democratic life in Canada. This includes the Constitution, 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

The class is scheduled to meet twice a week. While the format of class is lecture-based, students are expected to attend having read the required readings for that week. The Winter Semester still holds a great deal of uncertainty. **THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF CLASS WILL BE HELD ONLINE.** Asynchronous videos will be made available on Brightspace. Please note that we may be required to go online again after these first few weeks, either for a short or extended period (with relatively short

notice). Please monitor your email and Brightspace for updates and changes throughout the semester.

### **Course Assignments**

<b>Requirement/Assessment</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Essay Proposal	February 2	10%
Participation	Ongoing	10%
Midterm	February 7 & 9	20%
Essay	March 30	30%
Final Exam	TBA	30%

### **Essay Proposal (10%) and 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 discussed in class and provided 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 via Brightspace on the appropriate day (February 2 for the proposal and March 30 for the essay). Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per day.

### **Midterm Exam (20%)**

There will be an in-class midterm during week 8 of the course (February 7 and 9). The midterm will cover all assigned readings, lectures, and any videos assigned. Students are expected to integrate course readings, key authors, and relevant examples/illustrations into their answers. To ensure ample time for writing, the midterm will be separated into two parts. Part A will be administered on Monday and Part B will be administered on Wednesday. The midterm will consist (largely) 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. Students will have choice in both of these sections and will not have to answer every question on the midterm.

### **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.

### **Final Exam (30%)**

The final exam will be held during the scheduled examination period. Material in readings and lectures (including any films) for the entire course will be tested in the examination. The format will be a combination of definitions, short, and long-answer questions. This examination will be held in the official examination period.

## Course Schedule and Readings

### Week 1: Introduction to the course

January 5

### Week 2: Historical foundations of the Canadian state

January 10 & 12

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 2. “The Constitution.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- McGrane, David & Loleen Berdahl. 2013. “Small Worlds No More: Reconsidering Provincial Political Cultures in Canada.” *Regional & Federal Studies* 23(4): 479-493.

### Week 3: Mega Constitutional politics

January 17 & 19

- Russel, Peter. 2004. Chapter 8. “Round Three: Patriation.” In *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians become a Sovereign People?* Toronto: UTP.
- Russel, Peter. 2004. Chapter 9. “Round Four: Meech Lake.” In *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians become a Sovereign People?* Toronto: UTP.

### Week 4: Federalism and Indigenous self-governance

January 24 & 26

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 3. “Federalism in Canada.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Frances Abele and Michael Prince. 2006. “Four Pathways to Aboriginal Self- Government in Canada.” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 36(4): 568-95.

### Week 5: Charter and the judiciary

January 31 & February 2

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 7. “The Justice System.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Hogg, Peter; Bushell, Allison. 1997. “The Charter Dialogue Between Courts and Legislatures.” *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 35 (1): 75–124.

\*Essay proposal due February 2

### Week 6: Midterm

February 7 & 9

\*No reading. Midterm in class will be held across both days.

### Week 7: Parliament (1)

February 14 & 16

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 6. “The Legislature.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Heard, Andrew. 2010. “Conacher Missed the Mark on Constitutional Conventions and Fixed Election Dates.” *Constitutional Forum* 19: 129-140.

**WINTER BREAK**

**Week 8: Parliament (2)**

February 28 &amp; March 2

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 5. “The Executive.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Lagassé, Philippe. 2016. “The Crown and Prime Ministerial Power.” *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 39(2): 17-23.

**Week 9: Parties and party systems**

March 7 &amp; 9

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 9. “Political Parties.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Carty, Kenneth. 2001. “Three Canadian Party Systems.” In Hugh G. Thorburn and Alan Whitehorn (eds.) *Party Politics in Canada*. Toronto: Prentice-Hall.

**Week 10: Elections and democracy**

March 14 &amp; 16

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 10. “Democracy and Elections.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- 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.” *Electoral Studies* 31(4):829-837.

**Week 11: Political communication and the media**

March 21 &amp; 23

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 11. “Political Communication.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.

**Week 12: Diversity and representation**

March 28 &amp; 30

- TEXTBOOK. Chapter 13. “Diversity and Representation.” In *Inside Canadian Politics*.
- Trimble, Linda. 2007. “Gender, Political Leadership and Media Visibility: Globe and Mail Coverage of Conservative Party of Canada Leadership Contests.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 40(4):969-993.

\*Essay due March 30

**Week 13: Review**

April 4

**University Grading Policy**

Grade	Grade Point Value	Percentage	Definition	
A+	4.30	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	4.00	85-89		
A-	3.70	80-84		
B+	3.30	77-79	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable
B	3.00	73-76		
B-	2.70	70-72		

				understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
C+	2.30	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	2.00	60-64		
C-	1.70	55-59		
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 STATEMENTS

### Territorial Acknowledgement:

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

### Internationalization

At Dalhousie, “[thinking and acting globally](#)” enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is “interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders.”

### 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. 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**

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion please contact:

- the [Student Accessibility Centre](#) (for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro)

### **Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect**

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.

### **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).

### **Code of Student 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.

### **Fair Dealing policy**

The Dalhousie University [Fair Dealing Policy](#) provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie.

### **Originality Checking Software**

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the [Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy](#). Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work, and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method.

### **Student Use of Course Materials**

These course materials are designed for use as part of the Course Code at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.

### **SECTION C: UNIVERSITY POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT**

Dalhousie courses are governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [Academic Calendar](#) and the [Senate](#).

**Important student information, services and resources are available as follows:**

#### **University Policies and Programs**

- [Important Dates in the Academic Year](#) (including add/drop dates)
- [Classroom Recording Protocol](#)
- [Dalhousie Grading Practices Policy](#)
- [Grade Appeal Process](#)
- [Sexualized Violence Policy](#)
- [Scent-Free Program](#)

#### **Learning and Support Resources**

- Academic Support - Advising [Halifax](#), [Truro](#)
- [Student Health & Wellness Centre](#)
- [On Track](#) (helps you transition into university, and supports you through your first year at Dalhousie and beyond)
- [Indigenous Student Centre](#). See also: [Indigenous Connection](#).
- Elders-in-Residence: The [Elders in Residence program](#) provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the [Indigenous Student Centre](#) or contact the program at [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca) or 902-494-6803.
- [Black Student Advising Centre](#)
- [International Centre](#)
- [South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre](#)
- [LGBTQ2SIA+ Collaborative](#)
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
- [Copyright Office](#)
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service \(DSAS\)](#)
- [Dalhousie Ombudsperson](#)
- [Human Rights & Equity Services](#)
- [Writing Centre](#)
- [Study Skills/Tutoring](#)