

Political Science 2220
STRUCTURES OF CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT
Lectures Tuesdays and Thursdays: 8:30-9:55 am, WINTER 2013
Location: Henry Hicks 212

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Course Synopsis

This course examines the primary institutions of politics and governance in Canada, including: the House of Commons, the Senate, the Prime Minister's Office, the Constitution, the public service, political parties, pressure groups, and the judiciary. The focus is on current events and themes in Canadian politics. The goal of the course is to understand how responsible government works (or doesn't work) in Canada.

** This course was created and is regularly taught by Dr. Lori Turnbull who is presently on sabbatical leave. Some modifications to the syllabus have been made.*

REQUIREMENTS

In-class essay (January 31 st , 2013)	25%
Review Paper (due March 5 th , 2013)	35%
Final exam (date to be set by registrar)	40%

In-class Essay

This essay is designed to test your knowledge of parliamentary government as it is practiced in Canada. All course material assigned from January 8-29 (inclusive) will be covered for test preparation.

Review Paper

The essay assignment for this class is a **critical review of a scholarly article**. On January 24th students will receive a selection of three articles from which to choose for the assignment. Essays should be structured as follows: spend no more than the first two pages summarizing the article's main assertions, and then devote the remainder of the essay (6-8 pages) to critical analysis. The essay should be no more than 10 double-spaced pages in length, using 12-point Times New Roman font. Students are expected to consult at least **five** scholarly sources in addition to assigned course material. In-text citations **and** works cited are required for each paper. Plagiarism is a very serious academic offence. Please see the Department's [Policy on Plagiarism](#). Late papers will be penalized at a rate of **3% per day**, including Saturdays and Sundays.

Please observe the following:

- 1) Students must complete the in-class essay, the research paper, and the final examination in order to receive anything other than a failing grade.
- 2) The in-class essay is a test and is to be written on the date given. Students who miss the test on account of illness are expected to write it **within one week of their return to class**, with a

medical certificate in hand, as per academic regulations found in the [Dalhousie University Calendar](#).

3) Tests written late without valid reason are subject to a late penalty of **five per cent per day**.

4) The final exam is scheduled by the Registrar and held during exam period. Students should not make any travel arrangements prior to the scheduled end of the examination period. Students who have a profoundly compelling reason for their unavailability during this time must submit a letter to the Chair of the Department of Political Science in advance of the scheduled exam. The Chair will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Required Textbook

Aucoin, Peter, Jarvis, Mark and Lori Turnbull. 2011. *Democratizing the Constitution: Reforming Responsible Government*. Toronto, Ontario: Emond Montgomery Publications. (Available at the University Bookstore, basement of SUB).

Readings

All other mandatory readings have been placed in BBLearn (New OWL) as either pdf documents or are linked to library resources. Several supplementary readings have been placed on reserve at the Killam Library. The loan period is 2 hours for both articles and books.

COURSE AGENDA

Week 1 (Jan. 8 and 10): Responsible Government in Canada's Parliament

Aucoin, Jarvis and Turnbull, *Democratizing the Constitution: Reforming Responsible Government*, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 1-72.

Week 2 (Jan. 15 and 17): Constitutional Conventions in Canada

Aucoin, Jarvis and Turnbull, Chapter 3, pp. 75-108.

Week 3 (Jan. 22 and 24): The Powers of the Prime Minister

Aucoin, Jarvis and Turnbull, Chapter 4, pp. 111-151.

Week 4 (Jan. 29): Members of Parliament: What do they do?

David Docherty, "Parliament: Making the Case for Relevance," in Bickerton and Gagnon eds, *Canadian Politics*, 4th ed. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004: 163-183.

(Jan. 31): In class essay (25%)

Week 5 (Feb. 5 and 7): Are Elections Enough?

Aucoin, Jarvis and Turnbull, Chapter 5, pp. 155-198.

****IRPP Interview:** Laura and Tanguay, Why Do Canadians Say No to Electoral Reform? Research program: Strengthening Canadian Democracy (2009, 13 min).

http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol15no10_podcast.mp3

Week 6 (Feb. 12): The Canadian Public Service

Reg Whitaker, "Politics vs. Administration: Politicians and Bureaucrats," in Whittington and Williams eds, *Canadian Politics in the 21st Century*, 6th ed. Toronto: Thomson Nelson Canada, 2004: 57-81.

(Feb. 14): Special Guest Speaker

Week 7 (Feb. 19 and 21): Political Parties

Ken Carty, "[The Shifting Place of Political Parties in Canadian Public Life](#)," *Choices* Vol. 12 No. 4, June 2006, pp. 3-11.

William Cross and Lisa Young, "[Are Canadian Political Parties Empty Vessels?](#)," *Choices* Vol. 12 No. 4, June 2006, pp. 14-27.

**** February 25th - March 1st Study Break: No Classes**

Week 8 (March 5 and 7): Pressure Politics * Review Paper Due March 5th**

Miriam Smith, "Interest Groups and Social Movements," in *Canadian Politics in the 21st Century*, 213-229.

Neil Seeman and Adalsteinn D. Brown. [Clicktivism: We Are Not Bowling Alone](#). IRPP, November 2012.

Week 9 (March 12 and 14): Mass Media

Linda Trimble and Shannon Sampert, "Who's in the Game? The Framing of the Canadian Election 2000 by The Globe and Mail and The National Post," in *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 37 (March 2004): 51-69.

Week 10 (March 19 and 21): The Judiciary and The Charter

Donald Songer and Susan Johnson, "Judicial Decision Making in the Supreme Court of Canada: Updating the Personal Attribute Model," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 40:4.

Raymond Bazowski, "The Judicialization of Canadian Politics," in *Canadian Politics*, 4th ed., 203-220.

Week 11 (March 26): Officers of Parliament

Robin V. Sears, "[Harnessing High Tech to Transform Parliament](#)," IRPP, September 2010.

Kristen Douglas, Nancy Holmes, "[Funding Officers of Parliament](#)," in *Canadian Parliamentary Review*. Vol. 28, No. 3, 2005.

***IRPP Interview: How the Internet is Changing Policy Development*, Joseph Peters, Manon Abud, Kathleen McNutt (commentator) and Colin McKay (commentator) (2009, 17 min). http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol15no1_podcast.mp3

(March 28): Political Ethics in Canada

Michael Atkinson and Gerald Bierling, "Politicians, the Public and Political Ethics: Worlds Apart," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38, 2005.

Week 12 (April 2): Senate Reform

Bruce Hicks, Andre Blais, "[Restructuring the Canadian Senate Through Elections](#)," IRPP *Choices* 14:15, 2008.

** *Interview with Hicks and Blais (13 min)*:
http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol14no15_podcast.mp3

(April 4): Class discussion and debate—Responsible Government? Assessing Proposals for Reform

Aucoin, Jarvis and Turnbull, Chapter 6, pp. 203-251.

Class end. April 11th-26th Exam Period.

GRADING SCALE AND RUBRIC

Grading Scale			
Letter Grd.	% Grade	GP Value	Definition
A+	90-100	4.30	Excellent: Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyse and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89	4.00	
A-	80-84	3.70	
B+	77-79	3.30	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	3.00	
B-	70-72	2.70	
C+	67-69	2.30	Satisfactory: Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.
C	63-66	2.00	
C-	60-62	1.70	
D	50-59	1.00	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	0.00	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

Grading rubric for review paper _____ /35				
	100-80% (A+ to A-)	79-70% (B+ to B-)	69-60% (C+ to C-)	59 and less% (D & F)
Summary _____/10	Strong thesis, demonstrating insight and independent thought. Succinct analysis of author's core argument with demonstration through supporting points/quotes.	Clearly-stated thesis, forecasting book review's organisation. Some relevant quotations of author's argument. Most of book summarized, sometimes related to thesis. Discusses argument, but excess/not enough detail.	Vague or unclear thesis. Few relevant quotations of author's argument. Some summary. Thesis neglected. Neglects argument, excess/not enough detail.	Missing, invalid, or inappropriate thesis. Little or no summary, thesis ignored. Focus on details and not on the author's argument.
Critical analysis _____/10	Thorough development of major ideas, strong grounding in the literature. Describes and analyses how author's argument is constructed. Provides pertinent examples of author's use of evidence including examples of logic, bias, and plausibility.	Concrete support for each major point; adequate grounding in the literature. Provides some examples of author's use of evidence. Discusses author's effectiveness with some examples of logic, bias, and plausibility.	Illogical or incomplete development of ideas; poor grounding in the literature. Asserts author's effectiveness with few examples.	Insufficient, vague, or illogical support; extremely weak grounding in the literature. No discussion of author's sources; use of evidence or effectiveness,
Organization/structure _____/5	Logical arrangement of supporting points in coherent paragraphs; effective transitions.	Acceptable arrangement of ideas; satisfactory paragraph construction; adequate transitions.	Confusing arrangement of ideas; unclear paragraph construction; weak transitions.	No discernible pattern of organization; unfocused paragraphs; coherence problems.
Style and mechanics _____/5	Appropriate tone; clear sentences and structure; strong, jargon-free diction. Few to no errors in usage, spelling, and punctuation.	Appropriate tone; clear sentences; effective diction. No major errors in usage, spelling, or punctuation.	Inappropriate tone; little variety or emphasis in sentence structures; vague diction, imprecise word choices. Distracting errors in usage, spelling, or punctuation.	Inconsistent tone; awkward/ unclear sentences; weak diction. Many or major errors in usage, spelling, or punctuation.
References _____/5	Well-incorporated and thoughtful selection of references showing critical reading. (10-8 points)	Appropriate selection and use of references. (7.9-7 points)	Weak incorporation and selection of reference material. (6.9-6 points)	Inappropriate and inadequate use and selection of references. (5.9-4.9 points)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality.

DALHOUSIE REGULATIONS

- From the University Calendar: "Students are expected to complete class work by the prescribed deadlines. Only in special circumstances ... may an instructor extend such deadlines."
- Late papers will be assessed a late penalty at the instructor's discretion. Students who miss a deadline on account of illness are expected to hand in the assignment within one week of their return to class, with a medical certificate, per academic regulations of the Dalhousie Calendar.
- Papers should be submitted directly to the instructor, or the teaching assistant, or in person to the Political Science office between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm on weekdays only. The instructor cannot assume responsibility for papers otherwise submitted.
- The final exam is scheduled by the Registrar's office. Make **no travel plans** until you know the date of the exam. Students who think they are obliged to be absent from an examination for some profoundly compelling reason need to elaborate that reason in the form of a letter to the chair of the department of Political Science well in advance of the scheduled exam, and the chair will render a decision on the matter.
- For Winter-term classes, the deadline by which a student may withdraw is March 8th. (Early deadline: February 1st.)

REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. 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. 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 494-2836 for more information.