

POLI 1100X — Introduction to Politics and Government
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:35 – 12:55
Sir James Dunn Building, Rm. 117

Coordinating Instructor: Marcella Firmini

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1pm – 2:30pm (or appointment)

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In this team-taught introductory course, you will be exposed to the diverse worlds of political life through the research and teaching interests of a diverse range of professors in the Political Science department. They will introduce you to a range of key issues and approaches that animate both their own research and contemporary politics in various parts of the world. Topics addressed will include: fundamental concepts in political science; political philosophies and the bedrocks of various ideologies; the nature and limits of democracy; the relationship between economic wealth and political power; the quest for human rights; the nature of diplomacy and international organization; the challenge of defining and promoting international security; the challenges of global inequality and development; forms of political participation; the politics of environmental sustainability; and the relationship between politics and the media.

TEXTBOOK: *An Introduction to Government and Politics: a conceptual approach* (9th ed.) by Dickerson, Flanagan & O'Neill. Available at the bookstore.

Other **Required** readings will be posted to OWL/BBL.

It is very important to keep up with class readings in order to gain the full benefit of the class lectures. ****ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE DONE THE READINGS FOR CLASS.** **

Syllabus for second term will be posted as soon as possible.

Assignments and Grading: (due dates indicated and highlighted on this syllabus)

There will be a quiz, a midterm and a final **PER TERM**. Grades from the first term constitute 50% of your final grade. Tests, quizzes, and finals will be composed of short answer questions, essay questions, multiple choice, and true/false.

Quizzes worth -10% (*2)= 20%

Midterms - 15% (*2)= 30%

Finals - 25% (*2) = 50%

} **TOTAL: 100% (each semester worth 50%)**

Statement on Academic Integrity

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.

For more information, see this link:

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

Requests for Student 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

http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/accessibility/accommodation-statement-for-course-syllabus.html

for more information.

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 participate in the class.

- No alternative dates for exams will be set except for serious medical conditions
- Although no grade is assigned for attendance, lectures will cover large portions of material that **will not** be posted on OWL.
- **DO NOT** book any travel before the exam schedules are known.

RULES and POLICY REGARDING USE OF TECHNOLOGY/ELECTRONICS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS.

Course 'Drop Dates' can be found here:

http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

FALL TERM 2015

September:

10: Welcome to Dalhousie!

- ❖ Course introduction and expectations
- ❖ What is 'politics'? What is 'political science'?

15 & 17: Power – the medium of exchange; the universal denominator (Dr. Firmini)

- ❖ What is power and why is it essential to 'politics' and 'political science'?
- ❖ Who has power?
- ❖ How is power exercised?
- ❖ Can those who wield power be held accountable; can they be replaced?
- ❖ What are the beliefs that justify the distribution and exercise of power?

- **Readings:** Chapter 1 & Chapter II: pp. 3-26

22 & 24: Sovereignty, the State, and Citizenship

- ❖ What is 'sovereignty'? What is the 'State'?
- ❖ What does it mean live in a 'sovereign' state?
- ❖ What is citizenship and who is a 'citizen'?
- ❖ What does it mean to be a 'sovereign citizen' and a 'sovereign individual'?

- **Readings:** Chapter III: 27-38

29: The 'Nation'

- ❖ What is a 'nation'?
- ❖ The Canadian case: Quebecois nationhood; aboriginal nationhood

- **Readings:**

1. Chapter IV: pp. 39-48; Chapter XIII: pp. 163-176
2. **OWL:** Pierre Elliott Trudeau (1968): *New Treason of the Intellectuals* (Federalism & the French Canadians).
3. **OWL:** Rene Levesque (1976): *For an Independent Quebec* – 54 Foreign Affairs 734 (pp. 741-42).

October:

1: Continue readings assigned above.

6 & 8: Ideologies

- ❖ Networks of beliefs about society and the purpose of government
- ❖ Role of 'power' in ideologies

- **Readings:** Chapter IX: 99-111

13 & 15: Liberalism & Conservatism

- ❖ What does 'liberal' mean; what does 'conservative' mean?
- ❖ What does each think about the purpose of government?

- **Readings:**

1. Chapter X & XI: pp. 112-143
2. **OWL:** Stephen Harper (2003): Rediscovering the Right Agenda. Report Magazine – June

20: Socialism & Communism and RECAP FOR QUIZ

- ❖ What does it mean to be a 'socialist'?
- ❖ What is 'socialism'?
- ❖ Communism: what is it?
- ❖ Recap for quiz

- **Readings:**

1. Chapter XII: pp. 144-162
2. **OWL:** Karl Marx - excerpt from 'The Communist Manifesto'

22: QUIZ ONE

27: The Law and Constitutionalism

- ❖ Laws, rights, obligations

- **Readings:** Chapter VI & VII: pp. 61-64; 68-71; 75-76

29: Forms of Government & Quiz Review

- ❖ What is 'government'?
- ❖ What forms of government exist?
- ❖ The President versus the Prime Minister
- ❖ Congress versus Parliament
- ❖ Unitary & federal states
- ❖ Quiz Review

- **Readings:**

1. Chapter 16: pp. 209-215; Chapter 19, pp. 258-273; Chapter 20, pp. 274-301; Chapter 302-317
2. **OWL:** Grace Skogstad (2003): *Who Governs? Who Should Govern? Political Authority and Legitimacy in Canada in the 21st Century*. Canadian Journal of Political Science, vol. 36, 5 (pp. 955-973).

November:

3, 5, 10: Continue with readings assigned above

MIDTERM: 17

19, 24, 26: Political Process & Political Parties

❖ How we vote and why.

- **Readings:** Chapter XXIII, pp. 329-356; Chapter XXIV, pp. 372-390

December:

1-3: Political Culture & Socialization (Michelle Coffin)

- **Readings:**

- 1.** Chapter V - pp. 49-59
- 2.** Additional readings on BBL (TBA)

RECAP IN PREPARATION FOR FINAL EXAM

Final Exam: 8th – in class
