

**The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Political Science  
Political Science 4419F  
Voting Behaviour: Canada, the United States and the  
United Kingdom Compared**

**Instructor:** Cameron D. Anderson

**Office:** SSC 4140

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 11:30am-1pm

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**Course Description:**

This seminar course will critically assess the topic of voting behaviour in comparative politics. While Canada will be the focus, each week's topics will be assessed in light of their applicability in other democratic contexts including the United States and the United Kingdom. The course opens with a broad introduction to the major theoretical traditions in voting behaviour research before taking up a number of thematic areas and debates within the literature.

**Course Readings:**

Anderson, C. and L. Stephenson (eds.). 2010. *Voting Behaviour in Canada*. University of British Columbia Press: Vancouver.

Denver, D., C. Carman and R. Johns. 2012. *Elections and Voters in Britain*. Palgrave Macmillan: London.

Gidengil, E., N. Nevitte, A. Blais, J. Everitt and P. Fournier. 2012. *Dominance and Decline*. University of Toronto Press: Toronto.

Lewis-Beck, M. W. Jacoby, H. Norpoth and H. Weisberg. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor.

These books can be purchased at the UWO bookstore and are available on reserve at the Weldon Library. All other course readings will either be available on the OWL course page or online through the Western Libraries webpage.

**Course Requirements:**

Participation 25%

Class Presentation 20%

Research Paper Proposal 5%

Research Paper 50%

**DISCUSSION OF COURSEWORK:**

**a) Class Participation** - As this is a 4<sup>th</sup> year seminar course, there will be no lectures and students are expected to actively participate each week. The participation grade will be based on the quality of comment, evidence of preparation, willingness to challenge accepted ideas and concern for the views expressed by others. If unable to attend, please inform the instructor in advance. Students will be given a preliminary grade for participation in the seventh week of the course. The final participation grade may change based on whether performance improves, declines or stays the same.

**b) Presentation and discussion**- All students will be required to give at least one presentation (depending on course numbers). Your presentation should not be a summary of the assigned readings. Rather, in your presentation, you should seek to provide critical analysis of the ideas, arguments and issues arising from the readings. Following your presentation, you are expected to pose directions/questions for and lead class discussion. Please provide a copy of your presentation to the instructor.

**c) Research Paper Proposal** - Due in class on **October 29, 2013**. This proposal should consist of a 2 page outline of the paper which includes an introduction of the topic, a thesis statement, tentative plan of the paper and a working bibliography of at least **8 (eight)** academic sources (books and refereed journal articles).

**d) Research Essay** - You are required to write a research paper of 13-15 double-spaced pages in length using 12-point font. This paper will be due at the beginning of class on **December 3, 2013**. Papers handed in after this date and up until 4pm on **December 10, 2013** will not receive a late penalty but will not receive written comments. The intent of this assignment is to have you write a research essay which probes some topic of relevance within the field of voting behaviour. You may choose to further delve into a topic covered in class or you may find something outside of the class which is both of interest to you and within the broad subject nature of the class. As this is a research essay, you will be expected to utilize a minimum of **15 (fifteen)** academic sources (books and refereed journal articles) to develop and support your arguments/ideas. **NOTE FOR MA STUDENTS:** Your research paper should be 18-20 pages in length and draw on at least **20 (twenty)** sources.

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON READINGS:** The amount of readings assigned for this course is heavy for an undergraduate load. To help make the load manageable, undergraduate students will be required to read all readings on Canada and then choose either the readings on the United Kingdom or the United States on a week by week basis. As a class we will decide which students are reading on which country. This will occur for classes on September 17, 24; October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; and November 19. However, for the week in which you present you will be required to complete all readings. MA students are required to complete all readings.

## IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES

### ***Submission of Assignments:***

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date that they are due.

### ***Academic Offences:***

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

### ***Late penalty:***

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day. Assignments that are more than 1 week late will **not be accepted** for grading.

### ***Extensions:***

Extensions are not given. However, if there are genuine and unavoidable family or medical circumstances, please consult with Academic Counselling in the Social Science Centre. They are located at <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/>.

**Course Topics and Readings:**

**September 10:** Course Introduction

Readings: none

**September 17:** Introducing Vote Models I

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 1

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 1

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 1 & 2

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* Chapter 1

**September 24:** Region, Language, Race, Religion and Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 2

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 2-4

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 11&12

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* pp.53-61, 65-70

**October 1:** Party Identification and Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 4

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 5

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 6 & 7

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* pp. 61-65. 70-89

**October 8:** Economic Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 5

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 6 (Chapter 7 is recommended not required)

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 13

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* pp.108-121

Lewis-Beck, M. and M. Stegmaier. 2007. "Economic Models of Voting." in Dalton and Klingemann (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* Oxford University Press: pp. 518-537.

**October 15:** Issue Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 6

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 8

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* pp.90-108,121-122

Blais et al. 2004. "Which Matters Most? Comparing the Impact of Issues and the Economy in American, British and Canadian Elections" *British Journal of Political Science* 34 (3) 555-63.

Fournier et al. 2003. "Issue Importance and Performance Voting" *Political Behavior* 25: 51-67.

**October 22:** Leader Effects on Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 7

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 8

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 3

OR

*Elections and Voters in Britain* Chapter 5

**October 29:** Campaign and Poll Effects on Voting

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 8

*Voting Behaviour in Canada* Chapter 9-10

*Elections and Voters in Britain* Chapter 6 (recommended but not required)

Farrell, D. and R. Schmitt-Beck. 2002. *Do Political Campaigns Matter?* Routledge: London. Chapters 1 and 11 (available through UWO Library website as an e-book)

**November 5:** Personality and Voting

Readings:

Barbaranelli, C. et al. 2007. "Voters' personality traits in presidential election." *Personality and Individual Differences* 42, 7, 1199-1208.

Gerber, A., G. Huber, D. Doherty and C. Dowling. 2012. "Personality and the Strength and Direction of Partisan Identification." *Political Behavior* 34, 4, 653-88.

Mondak, J. 2010. *Personality and the Foundations of Political Behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1,2,5

**November 12:** Correct Voting

Readings:

Lau, R. and D. Redlawsk. 1997. "Voting Correctly." *The American Political Science Review*, 91, 585-98.

Lau, R. R., Andersen, D. J. and Redlawsk, D. P. (2008). "An Exploration of Correct Voting in Recent U.S. Presidential Elections." *American Journal of Political Science*, 52: 395-411.

McGregor. 2013. "Measuring 'Correct Voting' Using Comparative Manifestos Project Data" *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 23, 1, 1-26.

**November 19:** Turnout

Readings:

*Elections and Voters in Britain* Chapter 2

OR

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 5

Blais et al. 2004. "Where Does Turnout Decline Come From?" *European Journal of Political Science* 43, 2, 221-36.

Rubenson et al. 2004. "Accounting for the Age Gap in Turnout" *Acta Politica* 39, 4.

**November 26:** Voting in Canada, Britain and the USA

Readings:

*Dominance and Decline* Chapter 11

*Elections and Voters in Britain* Chapter 8

*The American Voter Revisited* Chapter 14 and 15

**December 3:** Conclusion and Catch-up

Readings: none

**APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility**

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

**Essay course requirements**

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

**Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")**

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.

Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

**Security and Confidentiality of Student Work** (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar* (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/>))

"**Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams** - All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

**Duplication of work**

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

**Grade adjustments**

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

**Academic Offences**

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>."

## Submission of Course Requirements

ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS **MUST** BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.

THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

Students registered in Social Science should refer to <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/> <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp> for information on Medical Policy, Term Tests, Final Examinations, Late Assignments, Short Absences, Extended Absences, Documentation and other Academic Concerns. Non-Social Science students should refer to their home faculty's academic counselling office.

## Plagiarism

"Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking:** "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> )."

**Multiple-choice tests/exams:** "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

### **PLAGIARISM\***

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different types of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.



**A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.**

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication, and page number.

Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

**B. In adopting other writers' ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.**

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases in their suspension from the University.

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Adopted by the council of the Faculty of Social Science, October, 1970; approved by the Dept. of History August 13, 1991

**Accessibility at Western:** Please contact [poliscie@uwo.ca](mailto:poliscie@uwo.ca) if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.