

**Current Issues in Canadian Politics – 2103A**  
**Fall 2014 Course Outline**

**Course Instructor and Location:**

Instructor: Rob Leone

Office Hours: Thursday – 14h00 to 15h00 (please e-mail for an appointment)

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Lectures: Thursday 10h30 to 12h20

Classroom: SSC 2028

**Course Overview & Learning Objectives:**

The study of Canadian politics has many different permutations and combinations. There are a variety of institutional and societal issues that governments have to contend with on a daily basis. Each of these issues can typically be explored as stand alone courses. Yet, one question that perhaps deserves a little more analysis is how each of these institutional and societal pressures produces policies that people actually want. Discovering the institutional processes in more detail and examining policy implications will be the focus of this course.

This course is structured so that students will become acquainted with the various institutional and societal issues in government, to go into greater detail with some of the contemporary pressures, and to finally use policy research to explain how each of these institutional and societal processes affected a particular policy.

At the end of this course students should:

1. Understand how institutions and societal pressures affect contemporary policy issues.
2. Appreciate that policy is not simply an institutional calculation; there are various possible policy outcomes that exist and the final choice is sometimes associated with the preference of decision-makers and/or voters.
3. Students should be able to apply a more objective approach to policy rather than a more normative, opinion-driven perspective.

**Course Format**

- A. Each class will be devoted to exploring the course material in detail by answering critical questions on different issues associated with urban politics.

**Assessment of Learning**

Participation:	20%
Mid-Term Exam:	30%
Final Exam:	50%

### Expectations:

Students are expected to attend lectures, read the required readings, and complete all of their tasks to the best of their ability, on time, and honestly. The principles of Western's policy on academic integrity will be strictly enforced. Students should be aware of what constitutes a breach of academic honesty, and they should also be aware of other aspects of appropriate student conduct. It is expected that students attend every seminar, preferably on time.

Students who cannot complete any of the course requirements due to medical illness or bereavement are expected to follow university policies as early as possible. Students should be aware of the rules for acceptable practices in this regard.

### Participation:

Regular attendance is critical for achieving success in the class and ensuring an overall valuable experience in the course. Students are expected to be prepared for the class and to have completed their required readings before arriving to class. The students will also have opportunities to engage in discussions of a given week's topic. Course lectures and reading materials are designed to complement one another. Regular attendance of classes is essential for a successful completion of the course. Participation is worth 20% of the course grade.

### Midterm Test:

A midterm test will take place in-class **on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014**, and it will last one hour. Students will be provided guidance on how to prepare for the midterm during lectures. The Midterm is worth 30% of the course grade.

### Final Exam:

Final exam will be scheduled for the Fall exam period. The exam will cover the entire course, although more material will be drawn from the second half of the course. Students will be provided guidance on how to prepare for the final exam during the last day of class. The final exam is worth 50% of the course grade.

### Required Textbooks:

- Bickerton, James and Alain-G. Gagnon (eds.) *Canadian Politics* 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014)
- Malcolmsen, Patrick and Richard Myers. *The Canadian Regime: An Introduction to Parliamentary Government in Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012.)

### Schedule of Lectures:

#### **Week 1 – September 10** *Introduction to the Course*

## **Week 2 – September 17**

*Institutional foundations, public policy, and policy analysis*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, chapters 1

## **Week 3 – September 24**

*The locus of power in Canadian politics*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, chapters 3 and 6
- o Bickerton and Gagnon (Savoie – Chapter 7, Docherty – Chapter 8)

## **Week 4 – October 1**

*Do cabinet ministers get along?*

- o Bickerton and Gagnon (Thomas – Chapter 9)
- o David Johnson, *Thinking Government: Public Sector Management in Canada* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), ch. 4 (pp. 167-216).
- o Edward Greenspon and Anthony Wilson-Smith, *Double Vision: The Inside Story of the Liberals in Power* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1996), ch. 19 (pp. 229-251).
- o Janice MacKinnon, *Minding the Public Purse: The Fiscal Crisis, Political Trade-offs and Canada's Future* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), ch. 5 (pp. 97-129).

## **Week 5 – October 8**

*Federalism, intergovernmental relations: Barriers to collaboration?*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, Ch. 4.
- o Bickerton and Gagnon (Simeon, et. al. – Chapter 4 and Gagnon – Chapter 5)
- o Mark S. Winfield, "Environmental Policy and Federalism," in Herman Bakvis and Grace Skogstad (eds) *Canadian Federalism: Performance, Effectiveness and Legitimacy* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002), 124-137.
- o Antonia Maioni and Miriam Smith, "Health Care and Canadian Federalism," in François Rocher and Miriam Smith (eds.) *New Trends in Canadian Federalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003), 295-312.

## **Week 6 – October 15**

*Judge made policy?*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, chapters 5 and 8
- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (Bazowski – Chapter 10).

## **Week 7 – October 22**

\*\*\* Mid Term \*\*\*

## **Week 8 – October 29**

*The politics of choice in Canada: The battle between science and ideology*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, chapters 9 and 10 ("Elections," and "Political Parties")
- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (Bickerton – Chapter 12, Tanguay – Chapter 13).
- o Paul Kershaw, "'Choice' Discourse in BC Child Care: Distancing Policy from Research," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 37:4 (2004) 927-50. (on-line)

## **Week 9 – November 5**

*Does interest group organization matter?*

- o Malcolmsen and Myers, chapter 11 ("Interest Groups, Public Opinion, and Democratic Citizenship")
- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (Montpetit – Chapter 15, Orsini – Chapter 16).

- o Francesca Scala, Éric Montpetit and Isabelle Fortier, "The NAC's Organizational Practices and the Politics of Assisted Reproductive Technologies in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38:3 (2005) 581-604. (on-line)

### **Week 10 – November 12**

*Issues related to gender in politics and public policy*

- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (Thomas and Young – Chapter 17, Abu-Laban – Chapter 18).
- o Katherine Tetgthonian, "Disparate Fates in Challenging Times: Women's Policy Agencies and Neoliberalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand and British Columbia," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38:2 (2005) 307-33. (on-line)

### **Week 11 – November 19**

*Creating a sense of nationalism through public policy*

- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (La Selva – Chapter 1 and Kymlicka – Chapter 2).
- o Jane Jenson, "Fated to Live in Interesting Times: Canada's Changing Citizenship Regimes," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 30:3 (1997) 627-644.
- o Kenneth McRoberts, "Canada and the Multinational State," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 34:4 (2001) 683-713. (on-line)

### **Week 12 – November 26**

*Contemplating the pressures of globalization on Canadian politics and public policy*

- o Bickerton and Gagnon, (Brawley – Chapter 21, Brooks – Chapter 20, Cooper – Chapter 21).

### **Week 13 – December 3**

*Concluding Thoughts and Exam Review*

## **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/>*

## **PLAGARISM\***

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.