

**POL 2103 A**  
**Current Issues in Canadian Politics**  
**Fall 2018 Course Syllabus**

Professor: Dr. Cristine de Clercy  
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Office Hours: Mondays 1:15 to 2 pm, or by Appointment

Course Time: Thursdays, 3:30-5:20pm  
Classrooms: SSC 2032

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introductory examination of a few selected issues within the subfield of Canadian politics and government. The study of Canadian politics and government is one of the main subfields of political science, and gaining some exposure to it has utility for people who live and work in Canada after completing their post-secondary studies.

Our inquiry is focussed on four main issues of current interest concerning political institutions that are chosen by the instructor. Some examples of the sorts of questions we will discuss are: should Canada move to a presidential system of government? Can political parties behave legally in the new, rapid-paced world of social media and the digital information environment? Does the modern, less partisan Senate serve Canada well?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of the fall term, students should be able to:

- Identify a few of the main patterns of Canadian political life as they have developed over time;
- Describe the actors and institutions that generate these patterns;
- Identify the core federal political institutions and explain their role in effecting government;
- Identify and discuss some of the key issues and problems concerning the reformation of extant political institutions;
- Possess more knowledge and confidence in understanding Canada's political system and basic method of government.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

All students are expected to attend all lectures, to do the readings each week BEFORE the class, and to participate actively in class discussions. You'll learn more when you prepare for each class, share views with your colleagues and are willing to learn from them. You are encouraged to contribute your views during class discussions, and also to treat all class members with courtesy and respect. You are expected to pay due attention, refrain from distracting the other students, and turn off all electronic devices during class time (of course, with the exception of those used for class, or any anticipated emergency or medical situation).

**Class attendance is mandatory.** Each meeting students will sign a register of attendance. Note that students who miss more than 50% of all the classes without documented, extenuated circumstances may be debarred from the final exam. The course instructor claims material and image copyright. Please consult The University of Western Ontario Code of Student Conduct (at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>) for more detailed rules and procedures governing all classes conducted at Western University.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOK and READINGS:

The textbook is available for purchase at the UWO Bookstore. Use it thoroughly and often. Note each week's lecture assumes that you have read and understood the textbook material BEFORE you arrive to the lecture.

Stephen Brooks. *Canadian Democracy*. 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Other readings are available online, through OWL and/or in the Library.

## ANTIREQUISITE

Political Science 2230E is an antirequisite for this course.

## CONSULTATION

I welcome the opportunity to speak on a one-to one basis with you about your assignments, your comprehension of the material, useful courses to take in the future or politics in general. Normally, the best occasion for these exchanges is during my office hour, or during a specific appointment.

## LECTURES

Each lecture class follows the Lecture and Reading Schedule, provided at the first meeting. It is the responsibility of students to read the assigned material **beforehand**, prepare for class and contribute actively to class discussion.

## REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:

### Mid Term Test:

**Date:** Thursday November 1, 2018, in class.

**Worth:** 50% of final mark

**Miss penalty:** Students who do not write the midterm test will receive a grade of zero, except in the case of documented extenuating circumstances such as sickness or injury, as supported by Academic Counseling. Note this test will not be rescheduled or forgiven in the event you are away because you booked travel for this date.

### December Final Exam

**Date:** To be announced.

**Worth:** 50% of course grade.

**Miss penalty:** Students who do not write the final exam will receive a grade of zero, except in the case of documented extenuating circumstances such as sickness or injury, as supported by Academic Counseling. Note this exam will not be rescheduled or forgiven in the event you are away because you booked travel for this date.

## IMPORTANT POLICIES

### ***Grade Appeals:***

To appeal your grade, you **must author and submit a formal 1 page written explanation** stating why you think your exam was improperly graded. The instructor will respond to your appeal in writing.

### ***Resources:***

Students are encouraged to visit the library and use the services of the reference librarians. The Writing Support Centre at UWO is available to help students with their assignments (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/index.html?main>).

Students can also make use of the Martin Westmacott Political Science Resource Room, located in SSC 4109. The room has a variety of resources (videotapes, books, journals and newspaper articles) and program information about undergraduate programs offered by the department. The room is open Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Various support services are also available through UWO. You can access information about the Registrar's Office at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca> and Student Development Services at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>.

***Academic Offences and Plagiarism:***

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy about what constitutes a scholastic offence, here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

***A Note Regarding Computer Problems:***

Students are expected to back up their written work and lecture/tutorial notes. Furthermore, students will be responsible for finding replacement lecture/tutorial notes where they fail to back-up their files.

***Academic Accommodation:***

If a situation should arise where you require accommodation because of a medical or personal issue, Social Science Academic Counselling (located at SSC 2105/2114) is available to help you. You can talk to a counsellor, who can then pass along any recommendations for accommodation. Their contact information is:

Telephone: 519 661-2011  
Recorded information: 519 661-2052  
Fax: 519 661-3384  
Email: [ssaco@uwo.ca](mailto:ssaco@uwo.ca)  
Office hours: 9:30am - 4:00pm

This procedure means that you do not have to provide your instructor with any details of your situation, but ensures that the proper documentation has been provided. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SPEAK WITH A COUNSELLOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER AN ISSUE ARISES. Academic accommodation will ONLY be provided if you speak with an Academic Counsellor and provide them with documentation of your issue and if the issue is brought to their attention in a timely fashion. While academic accommodation may be warranted, students should not assume that a full week's extension will be granted. Instead, the accommodation will reflect the seriousness of the situation. For example, if a student produces medical documentation detailing that s/he was sick for two days, a two-day extension normally will be granted. Therefore students should

submit their work accordingly, even if the academic accommodation process is still underway.

Note students who are entitled to **exam accommodations** to allow them to take tests or exams fairly (e.g. writing in a quiet environment) MUST make these arrangements 2 weeks before the test or exam date to be so accommodated. Ensuring these provisions are in place is not the responsibility of the teaching assistants or the instructor; it is the responsibility of the student. For more information see “How to Schedule Accommodated Exams with Exam Services”, at [http://registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html) .

### ***Use of Electronic Devices:***

Laptops, iPads, smartphones and related devices are amazing tools, with remarkable capabilities. Among other things, they allow us to download PowerPoint slides, maintain a portable work station, keep neatly typed lecture notes, and stay in touch with friends through social networking sites, texting, and instant messaging. Because activities that provide entertainment for an individual (e.g., movie trailers, party photos, status updates) often prove distracting for others, there is a need to follow basic rules of electronic etiquette in a classroom setting. Whether you are sitting with friends or by yourself, please consider the impact of your electronic activities on those who are attempting to listen to lectures, watch class films, and participate in discussions. **All students are expected to comply with a simple principle: if it might distract someone sitting beside you or near you, don't do it.**

### **Lecture Copyright:**

The course instructor claims material and image copyright. So, please ask for permission if you want to audio record or video record any part of the course.

### **Statement on Contact:**

If you have questions or concerns, or wish to meet with the course instructor in person, you can contact her via email or by attending the posted office hours. Owing to the volume of traffic received, **expect at least a 48 hour delay ( 2 working days ) in receiving a response** to emails, although responses may occur sooner.

**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/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.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.**

## **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

EXAMINATIONS/ATTENDANCE (Sen. Min. Feb.4/49, May 23/58, S.94, S.3538, S.3632, S.04-097) A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations: 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year. 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

## **Medical Policy, Late Assignments, etc.**

Students registered in Social Science should refer to

[http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having\\_problems/index.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having_problems/index.html) 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.

## **University Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct**

**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/academic\\_policies/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html)

## 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**

The Registrar's office can be accessed for Student Support Services at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services (including the services provided by the USC listed here) can be reached at:  
<http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Services can be reached at: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

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.