

University of Western Ontario: Department of Political Science

POLITICAL SCIENCE 2511F
The Politics of Economics
Fall 2023

Course Director

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Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:15 am or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the politics of economic issues. It focuses on the competition between free market and interventionist economic ideas and how businesses, unions, think tanks, and lobby groups seek to influence government policy on issues such as taxes, spending, regulations, recessions, trade, finance, diversity, and labour. No prior economics training is required.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to: recognize and apply the key economic theories that underpin contemporary policy debates at the domestic and international level; demonstrate knowledge of the key actors, interest groups and institutions which influence contemporary policy debates in Canada, the United States and more broadly; identify and apply key economic, political and policy concepts related to monetary, fiscal, regulatory, trade, financial, labour, and other policies; acquire knowledge of Canadian and U.S. economic history and recognize key milestones and events; recognize the inherently political nature of economic policy debates in terms of the relationship between ideas and interests; demonstrate an ability to critically assess policy arguments; acquire and apply knowledge in communicating in a clear and analytic fashion, in written and verbal as well as scholarly and public outreach formats; recognize the importance of time management, listening and proper note-taking skills; and apply research skills.

Required Readings

All course readings are posted on the course OWL website in the 'Resources' folder and then the 'Readings' folder under their specific week. All readings in the folders are required readings for the tutorials and will be tested on the Midterm and Final Exam as outlined in class. See the Reading Guide for the specific points that will be tested from each reading.

Course Structure

The course includes a two-hour lecture on Mondays from 3:30-5:20 followed by a one-hour tutorial from 5:30-6:20 pm. The first two tutorials will be run by the course instructor in the lecture room and used to discuss the course assignments. After that, the class will be divided in half with the tutorials being comprised of 4 on 4 teams of students debating an assigned economic policy issue with other students as the audience (see the Debate assignment below). Students who sign-up for debates in Tutorial 1 will remain in SSC 3022. Students who sign-up for debates in Tutorial 2 will move to SSC 3014.

Tutorial and Debate Sign-Up

There are two double-sized tutorials for this class, both on Mondays from 5:30-6:20 pm. The tutorial the system registered you in when you enrolled in the course does not apply. Instead, the debate you sign up for determines which tutorial (1 or 2) you will attend. You must then go to that tutorial all semester to have your attendance counted. Keep this in mind when you and your friends sign-up in case you want to be in the same tutorial. Both tutorials will have the same debate in each week. With two teams of 4 students per debate, there are 16 spots per week. You must pick which topic/date, whether you want the 'yes' or 'no' side of the debate, and which tutorial (1 or 2). The sign-up will be open as soon as the course OWL site is published on September 1st. An announcement will be sent when this occurs. The list of debate topics and dates are in the Resources – Debate folder.

To sign up, go to the course OWL page – Site Info – Groups You Can Join – Join button on right (ensure you pick the correct tutorial number and side of the debate). As soon as the course OWL site is available, you will receive an email announcement letting you know that the sign-up is open. Debates start in the third week of classes. Students are encouraged to volunteer for the first couple of debates. We go easier on the marking for these two weeks.

You must be signed up for a debate by the end of our class on 18 September or you will be assigned randomly by the course instructor. You cannot change debates after this date without the course instructor's permission. If some topics are under-subscribed, some students may be asked to choose other topics to ensure at least three students per team.

Evaluation

Debate	10%	In scheduled tutorials
Midterm Exam	25%	Monday 23 Oct – in class Friday 10 Nov: make-up exam
Essay	30%	Friday 17 Nov: e-copy on OWL Monday 20 Nov: bring hard copy to class
Final Exam	35%	In-person during Exam Period

Debate, Debate Write-Up, and Tutorial Attendance **10%**

Each student will participate in one debate. Debates will take place from 5:30-6:20 pm during the tutorial period after the lecture. A list of debate topics and dates will be available on the course website in the Resources – Debate folder. The topics are also available when you sign-up through

the Site Info – Groups You Can Join function. The debates will be graded based on an overall team mark worth 10% of the course. A debate instruction sheet and grading guide is available on the course website. Students who miss their debates without prior arrangement with the course instructor will be given a grade of zero. Tutorial attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be taken with penalty marks being deducted from individual debate grades as below.

Missed Tutorials

- Tutorial attendance is mandatory. Any tutorials missed without an accommodation will be penalized with 0.5/10 per tutorial missed off your overall debate grade.
- If you have to miss a tutorial (other than your own debate), please do not email me or your TA. Accommodations for missed tutorials will only be dealt with at the end of the course. This is due to the otherwise prohibitive number of emails that must be managed.
- If you have to miss a tutorial for a medical or compassionate reason, make sure you get and retain the relevant documentation to hand-in at the end of the course. If you receive an accommodation from student counselling, keep a screenshot of it to hand in at the end of the course.
- If you have accommodations for any missed tutorials, you must send one overall email to your TA within 2 days of your last tutorial. The email must contain:
 - A numbered list of the specific dates you missed and the reason for each.
 - A screen shot of each of your accommodations from student counselling and/or your specific documentation for each missed tutorial.
- If you do not send this email by the deadline, including all necessary screenshots/documents, your tutorial participation will be graded as if you received no accommodations and absences will count against you.
- It is your responsibility to send this email to your TA by the deadline.

Debate Write-Up Bibliography

- The TAs must be able to confirm all sources in your bibliography through a hyperlink or because it is easy to Google or locate on Factiva, etc. This means that, for each source in your bibliography, you must have either:
 - a hyperlink (active if possible) to the source; or
 - a brief description of where you got the source and how to find it.
 - keep copies of all sources cited as the TAs may ask for any they can't find.

Mid-Term Exam

25%

The midterm exam will occur in-person during the scheduled class time. Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time must register with Accessible Education as soon as possible. If you miss their registration deadline, you will have to write the exam with the rest of the class.

It will be a 1 hour exam with 50 multiple choice questions based on all the lectures and readings before the midterm. A brief study guide with example questions will be posted one week before the midterm.

The multiple-choice questions on the lectures will comprise 35/50 questions. They will focus on concepts, individuals, organizations, acronyms, and historical events associated with the

free market and interventionist approach, Canadian economic actors, economic history, and domestic and international macroeconomics. Some questions will cross different lectures.

The multiple-choice questions on the readings will comprise 15//50 questions and will be based on the points listed in the Reading Guide including the main arguments/points, main supporting points/concepts, and, where relevant, any basic history from each of the articles. You must also know the approach of the author where relevant. The last page of the exam will include a list of the authors and titles of each of the readings as a memory aide as this is how some articles will be referred to in the questions. If you actually do the readings, take decent notes and study them, you will be well prepared. If you leave many of the readings until the end of the semester, or only try to look for Control F shortcuts based on the reading guide, you won't be.

Accessibility Accommodations

- Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time etc. must be registered with Accessible Education.
- You will write the exam with them and not with the rest of the class. They will tell you where you write. If you have not heard from them, make sure you contact them.
- We are not able to provide extra time or other accommodations in the main exam.
- Having the 'flexibility with assignment deadlines' accommodation does not apply to the date you write the exam.

Make-Up Exam

- All requests for medical or compassionate extensions must go through academic counseling only. The course instructor will not grant any extensions. Please do not email me unless it is absolutely necessary and not just because you are advised to by counselling. I will only return your email if your situation is not covered in the examples below.
- Exams cannot be written early under any circumstances.
- If you miss the main exam without an accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero.
- **The one hour make-up exam is scheduled for 1:00 pm Friday 10 November.**
- The format for the make-up exam is exactly the same as for the main exam and it will cover the exact same material as the main exam and no more.
- Having another class or tutorial scheduled during the make-up exam will not be accepted as a reason to miss it. If you have a test or assignment that makes it impossible for you to miss the conflicting class, you must email me the course name and number, its exact start/finish times on the day, the professor's name and email (not a TA), and the reason you can't miss it. I will contact them to confirm.
- We cannot schedule multiple make-up exams. Accordingly, any requests to also miss the make-up exam will be denied without very good and very documented reasons that we will follow up with phone calls to confirm.
- If you miss the make-up exam without further accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero.
- If you miss the make-up exam with an accommodation, it will be replaced with a significant written assignment based on all the lectures and readings covered on the midterm.
- Under no circumstances will you be allowed to miss the midterm and have your other grades reweighted.

Essay

30%

Students will write one essay that must be 9-10 typed double-spaced pages in length (not including the title page, endnotes, and bibliography). An essay instruction sheet and list of topics are available in the Resources – Essay folder and will be discussed in the first few tutorials. Essays must be submitted on the course OWL site (through turnitin) by 11:55 pm on the due date. Late essays will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day - including weekends, holidays, and reading week - to a maximum of 10%. Late essays not handed in by 11:55 pm on the day of the last class will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Fraud and Plagiarism

- There will be zero tolerance for academic fraud. Students submitting essays based in whole or in part on AI technologies such as Chat GPT will automatically receive a grade of zero on the essay. They will also be reported to the university. In most cases, two instances of academic fraud will get you expelled.
- The required format for the essay is no longer a suggestion. Papers that do not follow the required format will be penalized by 10 percent.
- The TAs must be able to confirm all sources in your bibliography through a hyperlink or because it is easy to Google or locate on Factiva, etc. This means that, for each source in your bibliography, you must have either:
 - a hyperlink (active if possible) to the source; or
 - a brief description of where you got the source and how to find it.
 - keep copies of all sources cited as the TAs may ask for any they can't find.
- Turnitin.com is excellent. Do not copy-and-paste from your own or others' previous papers as they are in the Turnitin international database. Do not copy-and-paste from media, blogs, etc. as the Turnitin search engine will find it.
- Plagiarism and fraud are about intent, and we can tell the difference between that and legitimate misunderstandings about citations. If you make an honest mistake in your citations, that is no problem.

Extensions

- All requests for medical or compassionate extensions must go through academic counseling only. The course instructor will NOT grant any extensions. Please do not email me unless it is absolutely necessary and not just because you are advised to by counselling. I will only return your email if your situation is NOT covered in the examples below.
- If it is approved by student counselling, your extension will be for exactly how many days they approve. For example, if the due date was the 10th, and your accommodation is from the 10th to 12th, you will get a 3-day extension (10, 11, 12) meaning your essay is then due by 11:55 pm on the 13th. You must then submit your essay through OWL by 11:55 pm on the new due date. After that it will be counted as late, and the late penalty will start to apply.
- If the accommodation dates given by counselling start a day or two after the essay due date, your extension is still only for the number of days between their start and end dates. For example, if the essay is due on the 10th, and your accommodation is from the 12th to 13th, you will receive a 2-day extension only from the original due date, making it due on the 12th with

a penalty applying after that. Applying for an accommodation on a Friday and not hearing back from counselling until the Monday will not give you extra days.

- Students who have the ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation from Accessible Education do NOT need to email me. You must contact academic counselling to have an extension approved and it will be for a maximum of 3 days. Longer extensions will not be granted. Therefore, if the due date was the 10th, and you receive the 3 day ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation, your essay is then due by 11:55 pm on the 13th.

Final Exam

35%

This will be an in-person exam held on a time and date to be determined by the Registrar’s Office during the scheduled exam period. The course instructor has no control whatsoever over the time and date of the exam. Exams cannot be written early under any circumstances. Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time must register with Accessible Education as soon as possible. If you miss their registration deadline, you will have to write the exam with the rest of the class.

It will be a 90 minute exam with 75 multiple choice questions that will cover: the lectures and readings from after the midterm until the end of the semester as well as the lectures and readings from the two weeks on the Free Market Approach and the Interventionist Approach. A brief study guide with example questions will be posted at least one week before the final exam.

The multiple-choice questions on the lectures will comprise roughly 2/3 of the exam. They will focus on concepts, individuals, organizations, acronyms, and historical events associated with the various areas of economic policy. Some questions will cross different lectures.

The multiple-choice questions on the readings will comprise roughly 1/3 of the exam and be based on the points listed in the reading guide including the main arguments/points, main supporting points/concepts, and, where relevant, any basic history from each of the articles. The last page of the exam will include a list of the authors and titles of each of the readings as a memory aide as this is how some articles will be referred to in the questions. If you actually do the readings, take decent notes and study them, you will be well prepared. If you leave many of the readings until the end of the semester, or only try to look for Control F shortcuts based on the reading guide, you won’t be.

Accessibility Accommodations

- Students with a formal accommodation to write the exam separately and/or with longer time etc. must be registered with Accessible Education.
- You will write the exam with them and not with the rest of the class. They will tell you where you write. If you have not heard from them, make sure you contact them.
- We are not able to provide extra time or other accommodations in the main exam.
- Having the ‘flexibility with assignment deadlines’ accommodation does not apply to the date you write the exam.

Make-Up Exam

- Final exams cannot be written early under any circumstances. Avoid booking any flights or trains too early until the exam schedule is released.

- All requests to write a make-up exam must go through academic counseling only. The course instructor will not grant any accommodations related to the exam. Please do not email me unless it is absolutely necessary and not just because you are advised to by counselling. I will only return your email if your situation is not covered in the examples below.
- Make-up exams for finals are very difficult to schedule and converting them to online exams is not possible. Accordingly, any requests to miss the final exam will be denied without very good and very documented reasons that will be followed up with phone calls to confirm.
- Make-up exams will occur either in-person in January or they will be replaced with a substantial written assignment based on all the lectures and readings covered on the final exam. Converting final exams to online exams is not possible.
- If you miss the main exam without an accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero.
- The format for the make-up exam is exactly the same as for the main exam and it will cover the exact same material as the main exam and no more.
- If you miss the make-up exam that you agree to, without a further accommodation, you will receive a grade of zero. Or, if you failed to complete the writing assignment substitute for the exam within 30 days of the main exam, you will receive a grade of zero.
- Under no circumstances will you be allowed to miss the final exam and have your other grades reweighted.

Appeals

All grade appeals must go through the TAs first by email and NOT in-person. You must email your TA a list of the reasons why you believe your assignment deserves a better grade (not why you need a better grade). No appeals will be considered more than 3 weeks after the assignment grades were released. If the student is not satisfied with the TA's explanation of the grade/new grade, they can ask for it to be marked by a second reader (either another TA or the course instructor). If this option is approved, and the second reader assigns a grade that is 5% higher or lower than the original grade, the original grade will stand. If the second marker assigns a mark that is more than 5% higher or lower than the original grade, then the final grade will be the average of the two grades, whether or not this is higher or lower.

Lecture Notes and PPT Slides

Lecture notes and PowerPoint slides will NOT be posted. If you miss class, you will need to get notes from other students. For students with accommodations, and accessibility accommodations, notes will be available from a volunteer notetaker.

Notice on Pre/Anti-requisites

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have NOT taken an anti-requisite course (i.e. POLS 2211E Business and Government). Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for appeal. If a student is found to be ineligible for a course, they may be removed from it at any time and they will receive no adjustment to their fees. This decision cannot be appealed. If a student finds that they do not have the course requisites, they should drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. This will not only help their academic record but will also ensure that spaces are made available to other students.

Turnitin.com

Electronic copies of all assignments submitted on OWL are automatically processed by the plagiarism detection service turnitin.com Please be advised that: 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.

How to Take Notes on the Readings

- For each article, know: the main arguments/points, main supporting points/concepts/history and, where relevant, whether the author leans free market or interventionist.
- Also know any points/sections of the article specifically listed in the Reading Guide.
- You don't need the small details/history/concepts or author names unless listed as above.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

- Sept. 11** **Lecture (3:30-5:20): Course Introduction and The Politics of Economics**
The first part of the class will be used to introduce the general subject matter of the course and to outline the course structure, readings, and requirements. The remainder will introduce the politics of economics including the relationship between economic ideas and interests and some of the key conservative and progressive actors in the Canadian economy.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Discussion of Debate Assignment and Research Skills*
This tutorial will be run by the course instructor with all students remaining in the main lecture room. It will cover the requirements for the student debates and some tips on conducting research for them.
- Sept. 18** **Lecture (3:30-5:20): The Free Market Approach**
This week examines the key assumptions, intellectuals, and arguments of the free market approach to economic policy.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Discussion of Essay Assignment and Writing Skills*
This tutorial will be run by the course instructor with all students remaining in the main lecture room. It will cover the essay instructions, how to write an introduction, and citations.
- Sept. 25** **Lecture (3:30-5:20): The Interventionist Approach**
This week examines the key assumptions, intellectuals, and arguments of the interventionist approach to economic policy.

Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate

This tutorial will be the first debates. Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.

Oct. 2 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Free Trade and Globalization

This week examines current debates over free trade and economic globalization including the competing views of libertarians, liberals, progressives, and populist conservatives.

Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate

Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.

Oct. 9 Thanksgiving – No Class

Oct. 16 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Economic History and the Future of Globalization

This week examines the macro history of the international economy and what lessons it offers for the current state of economic globalization.

Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate

Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.

Oct. 23 MIDTERM EXAM DURING CLASS TIME (3:30)

Oct. 30 Reading Week - No Class

Nov. 6 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Domestic and International Macroeconomics

This week examines some of the key concepts and relationships related to the politics of domestic and international macroeconomics. This includes: supply, demand and price signals; inflation, unemployment, interests rates, and the business cycle; and exchange rates, investment flows, and the ‘impossible trinity’ of international economics.

Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate

Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.

- Nov. 10 FRIDAY – MIDTERM MAKE-UP EXAM
- Nov. 13 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Taxes and Fiscal Policy**
This week examines different types of taxes and spending as well as government deficits, debts, and surpluses.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate*
Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.
- Nov. 17 FRIDAY – ESSAYS DUE ON OWL BY 11:55 PM
- Nov. 20 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Gender, Race, and Diversity in the Canadian Economy**
BRING ESSAY HARD COPIES TO CLASS
This week examines issues of diversity in the Canadian economy including: different forms and examples of bias (e.g. algorithmic bias) as well as free market and interventionist approaches to discrimination and diversity policies.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate*
Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.
- Nov. 27 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Unions and Labour Policy**
This week examines the structure of trade unions in Canada as well as the practices and policies related to union certification, collective bargaining, and strikes.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate*
Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.
- Dec. 4 Lecture (3:30-5:20): Economic Constitutionalism and Federalism**
This week examines the competition between free market and interventionist ideas and actors over issues of constitutionalism and federalism in Canada.
- Tutorial (5:30-6:20): Debate*
Students assigned to Tutorial 1 will remain in the main lecture room. Students assigned to Tutorial 2 will move to the overflow room. Attendance will be taken.