

**Version Date – September 12, 2023 - Final**

**Elections and Voting  
POL 3336F  
University of Western Ontario  
Fall 2023**

**Instructor Information:**

Dr. Cameron Anderson

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**Course Description:**

This seminar course will critically assess the topic of elections and voting behaviour with an empirical emphasis on Canada. The course addresses topics including the institutions of elections, theories of voting and participation, the role of political parties, the effects of specific demographic and attitudinal factors on the vote decision and the role of elections and voting in the practice of democracy.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course students will:

- Be able to demonstrate understanding of electoral institutions
- Be able to demonstrate understanding of theories of voting behaviour and electoral participation
- Be able to demonstrate understanding of the role of elections in the practice of democracy

**Readings:**

All course readings will be available online through the UWO Libraries or in .pdf format on OWL.

**Grade Distribution:**

Participation 10%

Midterm Exam 20%

Research Paper Proposal 5%

Research Paper 30%

Final Exam 35%

## **DISCUSSION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- 1.) Participation (10%): As this is a smallish third-year course, there will be a mix of lecture and classroom discussion. Students are expected to actively participate each week. The participation grade will be based on attendance, 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 in-class performance improves, declines or stays the same.
- 2.) Midterm exam (20%): In class midterm exam on **October 25, 2023**. The exam will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. There will be choice of questions.
- 3.) Research Paper Proposal (5%): The research paper proposal will be submitted online through the OWL course page and will be due at the beginning of class on **November 8, 2023**. This proposal should consist of a 1-page outline of the paper which includes an introduction of the topic, a thesis statement, tentative plan of the paper and (on a second page) a working bibliography of at least **6 (six)** academic sources (refereed books and journal articles) (not on the course outline).
- 3.) Research Essay (30%): You are required to write a research paper of 12-15 double-spaced pages in length using 12-point font. This paper will be submitted online through the OWL course page and will be due at the beginning of class on **December 6, 2023**. The intent of this assignment is to have you write a research essay that probes some topic of relevance within the field of elections and voting. 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 **10 (ten)** academic sources (books and refereed journal articles) to develop and support your arguments/ideas.
- 4.) Final Exam (35%): A final exam to be scheduled during the December examination period. The exam will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. There will be choice of questions.

## **Important Course Policies**

### **TURNITIN:**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class. All written assignments (including each of the public opinion analysis, research essay proposal and research essay) are 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>). Assignments must include a copy of the originality report generated by Turnitin.com to be accepted. Students must submit their work to Turnitin through the course web site, in the folder labelled "Submit Assignments to Turnitin".

### **PENALTIES FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Assignments handed in after the due date and time (beginning of class) will be subject to a 5% penalty off the final grade out of 100%. The penalty for each day after the due date will be 2.5%. Exceptions will only be granted for valid and documented health reasons, at the discretion of the Professor.

## Course Schedule

### 1. Introduction – September 13

#### 2. Electoral Institutions – September 20

G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, ch. 1.

Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell. 2018. “Dimensions of Variation in Electoral Systems.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*, ed. Erik S. Herron, Robert J. Pekkanen, and Matthew S. Shugart.

Louis Massicotte. 2016. “Roll Back! The Conservatives Rewrite Election Laws, 2006-2015.” In *The Canadian Federal Election of 2015*, ed. Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan. Toronto: Dundurn.

Anderson, C and L. Stephenson. 2010. “Reading Political Behaviour Research: A Note on Methodology.” In *Voting Behaviour in Canada*, ed. Cameron D. Anderson and Laura B. Stephenson. Vancouver: UBC Press, Appendix.

Video to watch:

- FPTP vs. PR <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2ljLsg9UFk>

#### 3. Models of Voting – September 27 – Columbia, Michigan, Valence

Cameron D. Anderson and Laura B. Stephenson. 2010. “The Puzzle of Elections and Voting in Canada.” In *Voting Behaviour in Canada*, ed. Cameron D. Anderson and Laura B. Stephenson. Vancouver: UBC Press, chapter 1.

Patrick Fournier, Fred Cutler, Stuart Soroka, Dietlind Stolle and Éric Bélanger. 2013. “Riding the Orange Wave: Leadership, Values, Issues, and the 2011 Canadian Election.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 46 (4): 863–97. doi:10.1017/S0008423913000875.

Harold D. Clarke, Jason Reifler, Thomas J. Scotto and Marianne C. Stewart. 2016. “It’s Spring Again! Voting in the 2015 Federal Election.” In *The Canadian Federal Election of 2015*, ed. Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, pp. 327-356.

R. Michael McGregor. 2013. “Measuring “Correct Voting” Using Comparative Manifestos Project Data.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 23(1): 1-26.

#### 4. Political Parties and Party Systems – October 4

William Cross. 2016. “The Importance of Local Party Activity in Understanding Canadian Politics: Winning from the Group Up in the 2015 Federal Election.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 49(4): 601-20.

Thomas Poguntke, Susan E. Scarrow, Paul D. Webb et al. 2016. “Party rules, party resources and the politics of parliamentary democracies: How parties organize in the 21st century.” *Party Politics* 22(6): 661-78.

Andrew Chadwick and Jennifer Stromer Galley. 2016. “Digital Media, Power, and Democracy in Parties and Election Campaigns: Party Decline or Party Renewal?” *International Journal of Press/Politics* 21(3): 283-293.

Alan C. Cairns. 1968. “The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-1965.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1(1): 55-80.

#### 5. Political Participation – October 11 -

- Ruth Dassonneville and Marc Hooghe. 2017. "Voter turnout decline and stratification: Quasi-experimental and comparative evidence of a growing educational gap." *Party Politics* 37(2): 184-200.
- Kostelka, F., Blais, A. and Gidengil, E., 2019. Has the gender gap in voter turnout really disappeared?. *West European Politics*, 42(3), pp.437-463.
- Kostelka, F. and Blais, A., 2021. The generational and institutional sources of the global decline in voter turnout. *World Politics*, 73(4), pp.629-667.
- Hilde Coffé and Catherine Bolzendahl. 2010. "Same Game, Different Rules? Gender Differences in Political Participation." *Sex Roles* 62: 318-33.

#### 6. Sociodemographics and Voting – October 18

- Goodyear-Grant, E. and Tolley, E., 2019. Voting for one's own: racial group identification and candidate preferences. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 7(1), pp.131-147.
- Gidengil, E., Hennigar, M., Blais, A. and Nevitte, N., 2005. Explaining the gender gap in support for the new right: The case of Canada. *Comparative Political Studies*, 38(10), pp.1171-1195.
- Cutler, F., 2002. The simplest shortcut of all: Sociodemographic characteristics and electoral choice. *Journal of Politics*, 64(2), pp.466-490.
- Blais, A., 2005. Accounting for the electoral success of the Liberal party in Canada presidential address to the Canadian political science association London, Ontario June 3, 2005. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique*, 38(4), pp.821-840.

#### 7. In Class Midterm Exam – October 25

OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 5 \*\*\*READING WEEK\*\*\*

#### 8. Partisanship – November 8

- Samara Klar. 2014. "Partisanship in a social setting." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(3): 687-704.
- Leonie Huddy and Alexa Bankert. 2017. "Political Partisanship as a Social Identity." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*.  
[https://calgara.github.io/Pol157\\_Spring2019/Huddy%20&%20Bankert%202017.pdf](https://calgara.github.io/Pol157_Spring2019/Huddy%20&%20Bankert%202017.pdf)
- Shaun Bowler and David J. Lanoue. 1996. "New Party Challenges and Partisan Change: The Effects of Party Competition on Party Loyalty." *Political Behavior* 18(4): 327-343.
- Merkley, E., 2022. Polarization eh? Ideological divergence and partisan sorting in the Canadian mass public. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 86(4), pp.932-943.

#### 9. Economic Voting and Issues – November 15

- Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Richard Nadeau. 2011. "Economic voting theory: Testing new dimensions." *Electoral Studies* 30(2): 288-294.
- Ruth Dassonneville and Michael S. Lewis-Beck. 2017. "Rules, institutions and the economic vote: clarifying clarity of responsibility." *West European Politics* 40(3): 534-559.
- François Gelineau and Éric Bélanger. 2005. "Electoral Accountability in a Federal System:

National and Provincial Economic Voting in Canada.” *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 35(3): 407-24.

Cameron D. Anderson, R. Michael McGregor, Aaron A. Moore and Laura B. Stephenson. 2017. “Economic Voting and Multilevel Governance: The Case of Toronto.” *Urban Affairs Review* 53(1): 71-101.

#### 10. Leaders and Candidates – November 22

Jason Roy and Christopher Alcantara. 2015. “The Candidate Effect: Does the Local Candidate Matter?” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 25(2): 195-214.

Meital Balmas and Tamir Sheafer. 2010. “Candidate image in election campaigns: Attribute agenda setting, affective priming, and voting intentions.” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 22 (2): 204-229.

Alex Badas and Katelyn Stauffer. 2019. “Voting for women in nonpartisan and partisan elections.” *Electoral Studies* 57: 245-255.

Amanda Bittner. 2018. “Leaders always mattered: The persistence of personality in Canadian elections.” *Electoral Studies* 54: 297-302.

#### 11. Campaigns – November 29

André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. 2003. “Campaign Dynamics in the 2000 Canadian Election: How the Leader Debates Salvaged the Conservative Party.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 36(1): 45-50.

Cindy D. Kam and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2013. “Name Recognition and Candidate Support.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4): 971-986.

Richard R. Lau, Lee Sigelman and Ivy Brown Rovner. 2007. “The Effects of Negative Political Campaigns: A Meta-Analytic Reassessment.” *The Journal of Politics* 69(4): 1176-1209.

R. Kenneth Carty, D. Munroe Eagles and Anthony Sayers. 2003. “Candidates and Local Campaigns: Are there Just Four Canadian Types?” *Party Politics* 9(5): 619-36.

#### 12. Democracy for Realists – December 6

Achen, Christopher and Larry Bartels. 2017. *Democracy for Realists*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1.

Fournier, P. (2002). The uninformed Canadian voter. In J. Everitt & B. O'Neill (eds), *Citizen politics: Research and theory in Canadian political behaviour*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Elisabeth Gidengil, Janine Giles, and Melanee Thomas. 2008. “The Gender Gap in Self-Perceived Understanding of Politics in Canada and the United States.” *Politics & Gender* 4 (4): 535–61.

Blais, A., Gidengil, E., Fournier, P. and Nevitte, N., 2009. Information, visibility and elections: Why electoral outcomes differ when voters are better informed. *European Journal of Political Research*, 48(2), pp.256-280.