The University of Western Ontario

Political Science 3336 F – Elections and Voting

September – December 2011

Instructor: M. Westmacott
Associate Professor

Class Time: Tuesday 1:30 pm -3:20 pm

Class Location: Room 4105 SSC

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday: 9:30am - 10:30am
              Thursday : 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm
              Other times by chance or appointment

Calendar Description
This course examines the role of elections in maintaining democratic governance from theoretical and empirical perspectives. Topics to be covered include electoral systems; the legal framework governing election campaigns, the role of parties and the media in election campaigns, and the social, psychological and economic influences on voting behaviour.

Prerequisite: Politics 2230E or Politics 2234E or Politics 244E
2 seminar hours, .05 course

Please note the following from the UWO Academic Calendar, 2011/2012 p 44.

"Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite courses(s) that they have taken. If the student does not have the requisites for a course, and does not have the written special permission from his or her Dean to enroll in the course, the University reserves the right to cancel the student's registration in the course. This decision may not be appealed. The normal financial and academic penalties will apply to a student who is dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

NOTE: You are expected to read the course outline carefully and be familiar with the content.
Detailed Description

There is an extensive body of literature that focuses on federal elections and voting in Canada. The course is organized around five themes – (1) the historical evolution of federal electoral politics (1867 – 2011), (2) the legal, constitutional and institutional environment in which federal election campaigns are conducted in Canada, (3) the role of political parties in the selection of candidates and the organization and development of electoral strategies and campaigns (4) voting behaviour and the variables that influence individual electoral choice (party identification, election issues, local candidates and national political leadership) and (5) case studies of specific federal election campaigns.

Course Work:

Essay 10-12 pages (Nov 8/2011) 30%
Seminar Presentation and Commentary Paper 30%
Participation Grade 10%
Final Exam (Scheduled during exam period in December 2011) 30%

Readings that relate to seminar topics will be assigned each week.
The participation grade is based on attendance and contributions to seminar discussions.
All final grades will be released by the Office of the Registrar. Students may review the grades assigned on final exams after final grades for the course are released by the Office of the Registrar. Students are responsible for collecting course assignments (excluding final exams) from the course instructor.

It is recommended that students consult a reputable newspaper on a regular basis. Many newspapers are available on the Internet and many newspapers will email major headline stories or the daily front page. Each seminar will begin with a brief discussion of current events that relate to the themes and issues discussed in the course.

Required Texts:

Heather MacIvor (ed), Election, Emond Montgomery Publication Limited, 2010
**Reference Texts**

In addition, there are journal articles as well as chapters from books on reserve in D.B. Weldon Library that will be assigned throughout the course. If you encounter difficulties in locating the assigned readings please consult the instructor.

**Books and Articles on (2) Day Reserve**

Anderson, Cameron D. and Stevenson, Laura B. (eds), *Voting Behaviour in Canada*, UBC Press, 2010  
Blais, Andre (ed), *To Keep or To Change First Past The Post?* Oxford University Press, 2008  
Cross, William, *Political Parties*, UBC Press 2004,  
Frizzell, Alan, Pammett, Jon , Westell, Anthony (eds.), *The Canadian General Election of 1993*, Carleton University Press, 1994,  
Le Duc, Lawrence,. Pammett, Jon H., Mc Kenzie, Judith I. , Turcotte, Andre *Dynasties and Interludes: Past and Present in Canadian Electoral Politics*, Dundurn Press , 2010,  
Meisel, John, *The Canadian General Election of 1957*, University of Toronto Press, 1962  
Pammett, Jon and Christopher Dornan (eds), *The Canadian General Election of 2008*, Dundurn Press, 2009,  
Pammett, Jon and Dornan, Christopher(eds), *TheCanadian General Election of 2004*, Dundurn Press, 2004

**Note**
A copy of the required readings for each seminar (excluding readings from required texts and journal articles that are available electronically) will be placed in the Political Science Resource Room (Room 4109 SSC).

Readings listed as optional are not placed on reserve.

Journal Articles that are available electronically will not be placed on reserve but are available online from the Weldon Library website. Readings listed as optional are not on reserve.

**Class Organization:**

The class will meet for two hours a week. Each seminar will commence with a short introduction to the topic by the course instructor followed by student presentations and class discussion. Each student will be responsible for the required assigned readings for each seminar. The examination at the conclusion of the course (December 2011) will be based on the readings assigned for the seminars. (September 2011 – December 2011). Class participation is encouraged and a participation grade is a component of the final course grade.

The course has been designated as an essay course and will involve total written assignments (essays) of at least 2,500 words.

**Participation Grade:**

Note: Attendance will be recorded each week and the participation grade will be based on an assessment of each student's contribution to class discussion and attendance at seminars. Please note that regular attendance with no significant contribution to class discussion will result in a participation grade of no more than 2/10. The participation grade will be assigned in December 2011.

**Seminar Presentation:** Literature Review, Commentary Paper and Discussant Questions
Readings are assigned for each seminar to provide context for the issues under discussion. Appropriate case studies have been assigned as readings for many of the seminars.

Each student will be required to prepare and present one (1) seminar. The seminar presentation will involve a review of literature assigned for the topic. The seminar objectives and discussion questions outlined for each class constitute the basis for the literature review. Students will select a specific theme / issue for the seminar presentation. Students must submit a written commentary paper (2500 words essay format) with direct quotations and other factual points documented one week after the seminar presentation. Deadlines will be enforced.

There will be seminar presentations each week. Seminar presentations should be no more than 25 minutes in length to ensure that there is adequate time for discussion and debate. The purpose of the presentation is to outline and to assess the major themes, issues, and conclusions that emerge from the assigned literature. The presenter of the seminar should not attempt a detailed summary of the assigned literature. Students are encouraged to use power point presentations and video clips where appropriate. Seminars will be graded on the quality of the written paper and the effectiveness of the presentation.

NOTE:
Students presenting seminars must meet with the instructor prior to the seminar to discuss the presentation.

Seminar Discussants

Each week at least two students will serve as seminar discussants. It will be the responsibility of the seminar discussants to comment on the presentations and to initiate discussion by posing a series of questions (two or three) that will encourage discussion.

Seminar discussants will be assessed on the quality of their commentary and on the originality of the discussion questions. The grade assigned for this portion of the seminar will be a component of the participation grade. Students will be assigned the role of seminar discussant for at least two seminars during the course. Students must submit the discussion questions at the end of the seminar.

NOTE: Seminars begin on September 27/2011

Deadlines for the Submission of Seminar Commentary Paper, Seminar Discussion Questions, Essay Assignment
Please note policies regarding the application of late penalties. Academic accommodation citing medical and compassionate grounds will be granted in accordance with the provisions of the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness- Undergraduate Students approved by the Senate of the University of Western Ontario effective September 1, 2008.

*Student participation grades* will be assigned in December 2011. Because participation grades will be based in part on class attendance, students will be required to provide medical documentation for extended absences from class that could affect the participation grade assigned by the instructor in each term.

1. **Seminar Commentary Paper and Discussant Questions:**

   The Seminar Commentary paper must be submitted to the course instructor one week after the date of the seminar presentation. A copy of the Discussion Questions must be submitted to the instructor at the conclusion of the class. Students must retain a copy of all assignments (essays, seminar commentary papers and seminar discussion questions). Copies of the seminar discussion questions will be retained by the instructor.

   Failure to present the seminar on the assigned date will result in a grade of 0 % unless there are compelling documented medical or compassionate grounds. **A late penalty of 5% per day including holidays and weekends will be assigned to Seminar Commentary Papers submitted after the deadline.**

   Failure to present discussion questions at the assigned seminar will be recorded and will affect the participation grade assigned for the course.

2. **Late Penalties for Essays:**

   **A late penalty of 3% per day including weekends and statutory holidays will be assigned. Therefore an essay that was due on a Friday and which is submitted on a Monday will be assigned a 6% penalty.** The late penalty will be deducted from the grade assigned to the essay. An assigned grade of 80% with a late penalty of 6% would result in a grade of 74%. Papers submitted 10 days after the due date documentation will not normally be accepted unless appropriate documentation is provided. **Essays can not be submitted via email without the permission of the instructor.**

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**Course Structure: An Overview**

- **Part I**- the evolution of federal electoral politics (1867 – 2011)
- **Part II**- the constitutional and institutional environment in which federal election campaigns are conducted in Canada
- **Part III**- the role of political parties in the selection of candidates and the organization and development of electoral strategies and campaigns
- **Part IV** - voting behaviour and the variables that influence individual electoral choice (party identification, election issues, local candidates and national political leadership).
Seminar Topics, Seminar Discussion Questions and Assigned Readings

September 13 Introduction to Course
  - Review Course Outline
  - Course Assignments
  - Assigning Seminar Topics and Seminar Discussants

September 20 Electoral Politics in Canada: An Overview

Seminar Objectives
To outline the major trends and to identify the issues that have defined federal electoral politics and federal election campaigns in Canada since 1867.

Discussion Questions
1. LeDuc, Pammett, McKenzie and Turcotte use the terms “political dynasties” and “interludes” as a framework to assess the evolution of electoral politics in Canada. Define the concepts and indicate how these concepts could be applied as a framework to review the evolution of electoral politics in Canada.

2. Courtney identifies “…the three periods of electoral and party development in Canada”. Outline the distinguishing features of each time period with reference to the evolution of the party system, the emergence of a regional parties and a “two plus party system”, the inclusiveness of the franchise and the role of the party leader as a unifying influence in a fragmented political community.

Readings

Optional Reading


Heather MacIvor,”Introduction” in Heather MacIvor (ed), *Election*, Emond Montgomery Publication Limited, 2010, pp. 3 -6 (0)


September 27 Voting Systems and the Franchise

Seminar Objectives

To review the evolution of the federal franchise in Canada
To outline and to assess benchmarks that can be used to evaluate electoral systems
To outline the strengths and weaknesses of electoral systems (single member plurality, the alternative vote, proportional representation and a “mixed system”
To outline and to evaluate recent proposals for electoral reform and to assess the impact of electoral reform on electoral politics in Canada.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the historical evolution of the federal franchise in Canada.
2. Trace the historical evolution of the debate in Canada with regard to reforming the single member plurality voting system in Canada.
What benchmarks should be used to evaluate the impact of voting systems on a political system? Outline the political and constitutional challenges to implementing reforms to the voting system in Canada.
3. Evaluate the positive and negative consequences of implementing a system of proportional representation to elect members to the House of Commons
What arguments can be made to justify the single member plurality voting system to elect members of parliament?

Readings

Background and Overview


The Franchise

Voting Systems
Louis Massicotte, “Electoral Reform in Canada” in Andre Blais, (ed), *To Keep or To Change First Past The Post?* Oxford University Press, 2008, p.112-139(R)

October 4 Electoral Politics: The Constitutional and Institutional Environment

**Seminar Objectives**
To outline and to assess the provisions of the *Constitution Act 1867*, the *Constitution Act 1982* and the *Canada Elections Act* that establish the framework for federal electoral politics in Canada
To review and assess provisions in the *Canada Elections Act* that deal with the registration of political parties, “third party” advertising, the financing of election campaigns as well as the provision of public subsidies for political parties, and the limitation of expenditures by political parties during election campaigns.

**Discussion Questions**
1. Assess the impact of the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* that regulate the activities of political parties and politicians during election campaigns
2. Outline and assess the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* that limit the expenditures and sources of funds available to political parties to finance electoral activities. Should there be restrictions on donations to political parties by corporation and unions? Should there be limits on individual donations to political parties. Should campaign expenditures by political parties be limited during election campaigns? Should political parties receive a public subsidy to support electoral activities?
3. Should “third party advertising” be restricted/ limited during election campaigns?

**Readings**

**Overview :Background**
Political Parties and Public Financing of Election Campaigns

Optional Readings

John C. Courtney, *Elections*, University of British Columbia Press, 2004, pp.77-126 (0)

October 11
Election Campaigns - Nominating Candidates

Seminar Objectives
To assess the role of political parties (local constituency associations) and the party leader in the recruitment and nomination of candidates in federal elections

Discussion Questions
1Outline and assess the role of the local constituency party organization in the recruitment and nomination candidates.
2Should the procedures for nominating candidates be revised to promote a more transparent and inclusive process?.
3Should party leaders be required to endorse a candidate before the name of the political party is included on the election ballot?
4Should incumbent members of parliament be required to compete for the party nomination in their constituencies or should incumbents be guaranteed a party nomination in the next general election?
5. Should political parties adopt guidelines to ensure that local candidates reflect the diversity of the local community and of Canadian society?

**Readings**


**Optional Reading**


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**October 18**  
**Election Campaigns - Organizing the Constituency Campaign**

**Seminar Objectives**

To define the role of constituency campaigns in national election campaigns.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Discuss and assess the influence of local campaigns and local candidates on election outcomes.

2. Discuss the impact of revisions to federal legislation in 2004 and 2006 on the organizational structure of political parties at the constituency level and on the relationship between the national and constituency organization.

**Reading**


**Optional Reading**


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**October 25**  
**National Party Leaders and the National Campaign**
Seminar Objectives
To assess strategies for the organization of national election campaigns and the relationship between national and local campaign organizations
To review the role of the “leaders’ tour” in national election campaigns

Discussion Questions
What factors influence the electoral strategies of political parties in the organization of a national election campaign?
What factors influence the relationship between national and local campaigns?
What factors influence the organization of a leader’s tour? Assess the impact of the national party leader’s tour on a local election campaign

Reading

Optional Readings

November 1 Electoral Choice

Background


Reading

Discussion Questions
1. Assess the influence of party identification, the local candidate and the national party leader on individual voting behaviour in Canada
2. Assess the influence of gender, religion, ethnicity and class on voting behaviour in Canada.
3. Define the term “party identification”. Does “party identification” influence voting behaviour?

November 8 - Case Studies of Selected Federal Election Campaigns
December 6

The following seminars (November 8 – December 6) are devoted to case studies that focus on particular federal elections and are designed to demonstrate how federal politicians (prime ministers and leaders of opposition parties) contest federal elections in Canada. For an overview of federal elections see Heather MacIvor, “Appendix 2.2:A Brief History of Canadian Elections” Heather MacIvor (ed), Election, Emond Montgomery Publication Limited, 2010, pp. 22 -31.

Lawrence LeDuc, Jon Pammett, Judith McKenzie and Andre Turcotte use the terms “dynasties” and “interludes” Lawrence Le Duc, Jon H. Pammett, Judith I. Mc Kenzie, Andre Turcotte, Dynasties and Interludes: Past and Present in Canadian Electoral Politics, Dundurn Press, 2010, pp24and25 as a framework to assess the evolution of federal electoral politics in Canada. Using these concepts as a framework for analysis, the seminars are designed to demonstrate how federal party leaders organize election campaigns and design electoral strategies to build support for a policy initiative/platform or to obtain or renew a mandate from the Canadian electorate.

In preparing the seminars the following issues/themes should be included in the presentation

a. Identify the key political actors that are central to the election you have selected. Provide a short biographical note on the federal politicians that are key figures in the election that you have selected. Outline the results of the election (national popular vote and number of seats as well as the provincial/regional distribution of seats and votes for each party.)

b. Place the election campaign in historical context. Define the central issues in the campaigns and outline the strategy and tactics employed by each party and party leader during the campaign. Assess the influence of party label, local candidate and the party leader on individual voter choice.

c. Assess the role and influence of the media in the election campaign.

November 8 The Federal Elections 1957 and 1958

Readings


Optional Readings


Readings

November 22 The Federal Election  1988

Reading

Optional Readings

November 29  The Federal Election 1993

Reading
Optional Readings


Alan Whitehorn, “The NDP’s Quest for Survival”, in *The Canadian General Election of 1993*, Carleton University Press, 1994, pp. 43 -59 (0)


December 6  The Federal Election 2011

Reading

**Background and Context**


**Election 2011**


Nik Nanos,”From A Nothing Election To A Seismic Shift”, *Policy Options*, Vol 32, No 06, June – July 2011,pp.14 – 16(R)


Essay Assignment

**Format:** 10-12 pages typed (double spaced) excluding footnotes and bibliography

**Submission of Essay:** November 8 /2011

**Value:** 30%

**Note:** Please read the material attached to the course outline with regard to plagiarism and paraphrasing. Please ensure that all sources are documented
and that all direct quotations from sources are clearly marked with quotation marks and an appropriate footnote. All footnotes must include the page reference from the source cited in the footnote.

Late Penalties For Essays:

A late penalty of 3% per day including weekends and statutory holidays will be assigned. Therefore an essay that was due on a Friday and which is submitted on a Monday will be assigned a 6% penalty. The late penalty will be deducted from the grade assigned to the essay—an assigned grade of 80% with a late penalty of 6% would result in a grade of 74%. Papers submitted 10 days after the due date will not normally be accepted. Essays can not be submitted via email or "fax without written permission.

Essay Proposal: Students are encouraged to meet with the course instructor early in the term to discuss an essay topic. Note: You may not choose a topic that directly duplicates research prepared for a seminar presentation. If there is any doubt, please contact the course instructor.

Essay Topics

Students should select an essay topic that relates to the general themes that established a framework for the course. Note: You may not choose a topic that directly duplicates research prepared for a seminar presentation. If there is any doubt, please contact the course instructor.

The following are examples of essay topics

Fixed election dates
Federal public funding for political parties
Mandatory voting in federal elections
Third party advertising during election campaigns
Comparative case studies of federal election campaigns
Electoral reform
Representation in the House of Commons - allocation of seats, drawing constituency boundaries
Political parties and the nomination of candidates
Negative advertising and electoral politics
The impact and influence of public opinion polls on electoral politics
The impact of the internet and the social media on electoral politics and election campaigns
The influence of national party leaders on electoral choice and election campaigns
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 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.