

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

Department of Political Science

Political Science 2103A 001–Current Issues in Canadian Politics

September 2012 – December 2012

First Term Half Course

Instructor: M.W. Westmacott
Associate Professor

Lectures: Monday and Wednesday, 3:30- 4:30 pm

Class Location: Monday University College Room 30
Wednesday University College Room 142

Office: 4216 SSC

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

Telephone: (519) 661-2111 Ext. 85160 (Office) **Email:** mwestmac@uwo.ca
(519) 645-7203 (Home)

Course Description: An examination of selected issues in Canadian politics. Each year the course will allow for inquiry into three or four issues of current interest, to be chosen by the instructor. In each area, the focus will be on understanding the status quo, and then analyzing proposals for change.
2 lecture hours, Half Course

Antirequisite: Effective September 1, 2002: Politics 230 E. (Politics 2230E)

**Note: STUDENTS REGISTERED IN THE HONORS SPECIALIZATION
OR THE MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE MAY NOT REGISTER IN
2100 LEVEL POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES Either As A Modular or An
Elective Course**

Important Notice Re: Prerequisites/Antirequisites

Please note the following from the UWO Academic Calendar, 2012- 2013 p 43.

"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."

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.

You are expected to read the course outline carefully and be familiar with the content.

Course Content 2012

The central theme of the course will be "Challenges to Representative Democracy" and "The Democratic Deficit". In particular, the course will focus on challenges to two (2) of the major constitutional principles defining the Canadian political system- representative democracy and Westminster style parliamentary democracy. The lectures will document the evolution of these constitutional principles that have defined Canada's constitutional tradition. Five specific issues will be examined: 1) direct democracy: referenda, recall and constituent assemblies; 2) "prime ministerial government"; 3) political leadership: the selection and accountability of political leaders 4) the representational role of Members of Parliament and the convention of party discipline; 5) electoral reform: replacing "the first past the post" electoral system with an electoral system based on the principle of proportional representation .

Evaluation: Two tests:
1st Test - 40% (multiple choice)
Final exam - 60% (multiple choice)

Details regarding the content and structure of mid-term test and the final exam will be announced at least two weeks prior to the date of the evaluation.

1st Term Test: This test will be held on November 2 /2012 from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm in 3 M 3250. Students who are unable to write the test at the scheduled date and time may request a special test citing documented medical or compassionate grounds. The Special Test will be entirely essay format.

Final Exam: The exam will be scheduled during the final exam period in December 2012. The Special Final Exam will be entirely essay format.

Note: Both the mid-term test and the final exam will be based on material covered in the lectures and the assigned required readings. Required readings are designated (R), while Optional Readings are designated (O).

Note: Attendance in class will not be monitored or recorded. However, students are strongly encouraged to attend all lectures. Large classes present particular problems for both students and faculty. It is expected that students will conduct themselves courteously during lectures and will refrain from talking and or engaging in other activities that would be disruptive to students or to the instructor.

Note: A voluntary review session prior to the mid-term test and the final exam will be scheduled. The format is "question and answer" and will be related to the test/ exam

material. There will be no new lecture material presented. Dates and times will be announced in class.

Release of Grades for November Test, December Final exam and Final Course Grades

Grades for the November term test will be available from the course instructor in the classroom for two lectures after the test. Students can request to review the grades assigned on the November test. Students should consult the course instructor to make arrangements to review the November test grades.

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 should contact the course instructor to arrange a convenient time to review the final exam. **No grades for any course assignment will be released via email or by telephone**

Required Text:

Rand Dyck, *Canadian Politics, Critical Approaches*, 6th edition, Nelson, 2011.

Texts and Articles: available on one (1) day reserve in D.B. Weldon Library

Aucoin , Peter, Jarvis ,Mark D., and Turnbull ,Lori, *Democratizing the Constitution, Reforming Responsible Government* , Emond Montgomery Publications, 2011

Barker, Paul, *Public Administration in Canada, Brief Edition*, Nelson,2008

Bateman, Thomas M. J., "Party Democracy Increases the Leader's Power", in *Policy Options*, September 2001, vol 22, No.7, pp. 20 -23

Bickerton, James and. Gagnon, Alain-G, (eds), *Canadian Politics* 4th ed., Broadview, 2004.

Bickerton, James and Gagnon, Alain-G, (eds), *Canadian Politics* 5th ed., University of Toronto Press 2009

Brooks, Stephen, *Canadian Democracy*, 7th ed., Oxford, 2012.

Cross, William, *Political Parties*, University of Toronto Press, 2004

Docherty, David, *Legislatures*, University of British Columbia Press, 2005

Dyck, Rand, *Canadian Politics, Critical Approaches*, 6th ed.,Nelson, 2011.

Gagnon, Alain –G, and Tanguay, Brian (eds), *Canadian Parties in Transition*, 3rd ed., Broadview 2007

Heard,Andrew, "Constitutional Conventions and Parliament" in *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Vol 28, No 2, No 2, Summer 2005, pp.19 -22

Howe, Paul, Johnston, Richard and Blais, Andre (eds), *Strengthening Canadian Democracy*, Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2005.

Jackson, Robert and Jackson, Doreen, *Politics in Canada: Culture, Institutions, Behaviour and Public Policy*, 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2006

Malcolmson, Patrick and Myers, Richard, *The Canadian Regime*, 2nd ed Broadview Press, 2002

Malcolmson, Patrick and Myers, Richard, *The Canadian Regime*, 3rd ed. Broadview Press, 2005

Malcolmson, Patrick and Myers, Richard, *The Canadian Regime*, 4 rd ed. University of Toronto Press, 2009

Martin, Paul, "The Democratic Deficit", in *Policy Options*, December 2002 - January 2003, Vol 24, No1 pp. 10 -12

Mendelsohn, Matthew and Parkin, Andrew, *Introducing Direct Democracy in Canada*, Institute for Research on Public Policy, June 2001, Vol 7, No. 5

Mintz, Eric," Recalling Governments" in *Policy Options*, May 1998, pp. 43 - 44.

Mowrey, Tim and Pelletier, Iain, "Referendums in Canada Comparative Overview, *Electoral Insight*, Vol. 3. No.1, January 2001, pp. 18-22

Russell, Peter, H., and Sossin. Lorne,(eds), *Parliamentary Democracy in Crisis*, University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Thomas, Paul C., " Governing from the Centre: Reconceptualizing the Role of the PM and Cabinet" in *Policy Options*, December 2003 – January 2004, Vol 25, No 1, pp 79 – 85.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Sept 10	Introduction to Course, Defining the Context
Sept 12	Defining the Context: The Canadian Political System: An Overview
Sept 17,19	Canadian Constitution: Principles, Elements and Components
Sept 24,26	Representative and Responsible Government
Oct 1,3, 10	Direct Democracy: Referenda, Recall, Citizen Initiatives, Citizens' Assemblies
Oct 15	Direct Democracy: Referenda, Recall, Citizen Initiatives, Citizens' Assemblies
Oct 17	Policy Making: An Overview
Oct 22	The Formal Executive – Crown and Governor General The Formal Executive – Crown and Governor General Case Study: Parliamentary Democracy : Tensions and Conflicts (November 2008 – January 2009)
Oct 24, 29	The Political Executive-Cabinet
Oct 31	The Prime Minister

Friday November 2 Mid Term Test November 2/2012 at 4:30 pm in 3M 3250

Nov 5	Prime Ministerial Government
Nov 7,12	Leadership Conventions and Leadership Review
Nov 14, 19, 21	Parliament of Canada-House of Commons, Party Discipline
Nov 26	Senate Reform
Nov 28,Dec 3, 5	Electoral Systems-Description / Evaluation / Reform

End of Classes

Topical Course Outline and Readings

I Introduction to Course: Challenges to Representative Government: "The Democratic Deficit"

Paul Martin, "The Democratic Deficit", in *Policy Options*, December 2002 -2003, Vol 24, No1 pp. 10 -12 (R).

Rand Dyck, *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*, 6 th ed., pp.269 -273 (R)

Defining the Context: The Canadian Political System : An Overview

Rand Dyck, Chapter 2, pp.27 - 46 (R)

II The Canadian Constitution – Principles, Elements and Components

Rand Dyck, Chapter 2, pp. 27 -38, Chapter 17 pp.427 - 432 (R)

Andrew Heard, "Constitutional Conventions and Parliament", in *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Vol 28, No2, Summer 2005, pp.19 – 22. (R)

III Representative and Responsible Government in Canada - Historical Development and Evolution

Rand Dyck, Chapter 2, pp. 27 -30 (R)

Patrick Malcolmson and Richard Myers *The Canadian Regime*, 4 th ed. University of Toronto Press, 2009 Chapter 3, pp. 37 - 57 (R)

or

Malcolmson and Myers (2002), Chapter 3, pp.53 -72 (R)

or

Malcolmson and Myers (2005), Chapter 3, pp. 47 - 66 (R)

Optional Reading

Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 140 – 151 (0)

Peter Aucoin , Mark D. Jarvis, Lori Turnbull, *Democratizing the Constitution, Reforming Responsible Government* , Emond Montgomery Publications, 2011, pp. 29 – 51.(0)

IV Issue I: Direct Democracy: Referenda, Recall, Citizen Initiatives, Citizens' Assemblies

Brian Tanguay, "The Paradoxes of Direct Democracy" in Gagnon, Alain –G, and Tanguay, Brian (eds), *Canadian Parties in Transition*, 3rd ed., Broadview 2007, pp. 467 – 489 (R)

Matthew Mendelsohn and Andrew Parkin, "Introducing Direct Democracy in Canada", in Paul Howe, Richard Johnston and Andre Blais (eds), *Strengthening Canadian Democracy*, 2005, pp.315-358 (R).

Eric Mintz, "Recalling Governments" in *Policy Options*, May 1998, pp. 43 - 44. (R)

Optional Reading

Mathew Mendelsohn and Andrew Parkin, *Introducing Direct Democracy in Canada*, Institute for Research on Public Policy, June 2001, Vol 7, No. 5 pp.2-38(O)

Brenda O'Neill, "Democracy in Action: Elections, Political Participation, and Citizen's Power" in Rand Dyck (ed.), *Studying Politics: An Introduction to Political Science*, Second Edition, 2006, pp.237 -241 and 259 -261. (O)

Tim Mowrey and Alain Pelletier, "Referendums in Canada Comparative Overview", pp 18-22. (O)

James Girling, "Will Referenda Make Government More Accountable" in *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Vol 21, No 4 Winter 1998 -1999, pp. 8 -10. (O)

Lawrence LeDuc, *The Politics of Direct Democracy: Referendums in Global Perspective*, Broadview Press, 2003 (O).

V The Policy Making Process-An Overview

Rand Dyck, Chapter 20 pp. 525- 544 (R)

VI The Executive: Crown, Cabinet and Prime Minister

Crown and Governor General

Rand Dyck, Chapter 21 pp.545 - 552 (R)

Michael Valpy, "The 'Crisis': A Narrative" in Peter H. Russell and Lorne Sossin,(eds), *Parliamentary Democracy in Crisis*, University of Toronto Press, 2009, pp. 3 – 17 (R)

Andrew Heard, "The Governor General's Suspension of Parliament: Duty Done or a Perilous Precedent? in Peter H. Russell and Lorne Sossin,(eds), *Parliamentary Democracy in Crisis*, University of Toronto Press, 2009, pp. 47 – 62 (R)

Optional Reading

Peter Aucoin , Mark D. Jarvis , Lori Turnbull , *Democratizing the Constitution, Reforming Responsible Government* , Emond Montgomery Publications, 2011, pp. 51 – 73.(O)

Cabinet : Functions, Membership and Organization

Rand Dyck, Chapter 21 pp.552 - 582 (R)

Paul Barker, *Public Administration in Canada, Brief Edition*, Nelson, 2008, Chapter 11, pp.177 -190 (R)

Optional Reading

Gregory Millard and John Wright, "The People's Governor General? Restoring The Balance Between The Prime Minister and the House", *Policy Options*, June 2010, pp.14 – 18 (0)

Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 233 - 252 (0)

Graham White, *Cabinets and First Ministers*, Chapter 2 pp.29 -63 (O)

VII Issue II: Prime Ministerial Government

Rand Dyck, pp. 552 – 560 (R)

Paul C. Thomas, "Governing from the Centre: Reconceptualizing the Role of the PM and Cabinet" in *Policy Options*, December 2003 – January 2004, Vol 25, No 1, pp 79 – 85.(R)

Donald Savoie, "Power at the Apex: Executive Dominance ", James Bickerton and., Alain-G, Gagnon (eds), *Canadian Politics* 4 th ed., Broadview, 2004, pp. 145 -161.(R)

or

Donald Savoie, "Power at the Apex: Executive Dominance ", James Bickerton and Alain-G, Gagnon, (eds), *Canadian Politics* 5 th ed., University of Toronto Press 2009, pp. 115 – 131(R)

Optional Reading

Peter Aucoin , Mark D. Jarvis , Lori Turnbull , *Democratizing the Constitution, Reforming Responsible Government* , Emond Montgomery Publications, 2011, pp. 111 - 154 (0).

Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 253 - 254 (0)

Graham White, *Cabinets and First Ministers*, Chapter 3 pp.64 -101(0)

Herman Bakvis, "Prime Minister and Cabinet in Canada: An Autocracy in Need of Reform?" in *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Winter 2000-2001, Vol 35, No 4, pp. 60-79 (0)

Donald Savoie, "The Rise of Court Government in Canada" in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol XXXII: 4, December 1999, pp. 635 – 664. (O).

Hugh Mellon, "Coming to Terms with Political Realities: Exploring the Breadth of Prime – Ministerial Power" in Mark Charlton and Paul Barker (eds), *Contemporary Political Issues*, 6 th ed., Nelson, 2009, pp. 162 – 176 (0)

Paul Barker, "Limits on the Power of the Prime Minister", in Mark Charlton and Paul Barker (eds), *Contemporary Political Issues*, 6 th ed., Nelson, 2009, pp.177 -190 (0)

VIII: Issue III: Political Leadership: Selection, Accountability and Vulnerability

Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 319 – 324 (R)

Dyck, pp. 356 – 359 (R)

William Cross, *Political Parties*, 2004, pp.76 - 107 (R)

Thomas M. J. Bateman, "Party Democracy Increases the Leader's Power", in *Policy Options*, September 2001, vol 22, No.7, pp. 20 -23 (R)

Optional Reading

John C. Courtney, *Do Conventions Matter? Choosing National Party Leaders in Canada*, Chpt.13, and Chpt. 3 (0)

IX The Parliament of Canada: The House of Commons and The Senate

Rand Dyck, Chapter 23, pp. 617 – 658 and 313 - 317 (R)
Jennifer Smith, “Canada’s Minority Parliament” in James Bickerton, and Alain-G, Gagnon, (eds), *Canadian Politics* 5 th ed., University of Toronto Press 2009, pp. 133 – 154 (R)

Optional Reading

David Docherty, *Legislatures*, pp. 3 -25, 26 – 46 (0)
Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 254 -266 (0)

X Issue IV: Relaxing Party Discipline

David Docherty, *Legislatures*, pp.157 - 174, 190 -196 (R)
Rand Dyck, Chapter 23, pp.624 - 627 (R)

Optional Reading

C.E.S.Franks, "Free Votes in the House of Commons: A Problematic Reform" in *Policy Options*, Vol 18, No 9, November 1997, pp. 33 - 36. (O)

XI: Issue V: Elections and Reform of the Electoral System

Rand Dyck, Chapter 13, pp. 317 - 327 (R)
Jackson and Jackson, pp. 427 – 436 (R)
Stephen Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7 th ed., Oxford, 2012, pp. 324 - 327 (R)

Optional Reading

John Courtney, “Canada’s Electoral System” in Alain –G Gagnon and Brian Tanguay (eds), *Canadian Parties in Transition*, 3 rd ed., Broadview 2007, pp. 279 -301 (O)
F. Leslie Seidle, ” Provincial Electoral Systems in Question: Changing Views of Party Representation and Governance in, Alain –G Gagnon and Brian Tanguay, (eds), *Canadian Parties in Transition*, 3 rd ed., Broadview 2007, pp.303-334(O)

X II: Overview and Summary

A. Brian Tanguay, "Reforming Representative Democracy: Taming Canada's Democratic Deficit", in James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon (eds), *Canadian Politics*, 5 th ed., pp.221 – 248 (R)

August 15 /2012

**APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

Essay course requirements

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.

Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

Security and Confidentiality of Student Work (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar* (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/>))

"**Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams** - All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

Duplication of work

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

Grade adjustments

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

Academic Offences

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>."

Submission of Course Requirements

ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS **MUST** BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.

THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

Students registered in Social Science should refer to <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/> <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp> for information on Medical Policy, Term Tests, Final Examinations, Late Assignments, Short Absences, Extended Absences, Documentation and other Academic Concerns. Non-Social Science students should refer to their home faculty's academic counselling office.

Plagiarism

"Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking: "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

Multiple-choice tests/exams: "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

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.