

POLI 2304.0
CANADIAN POLITICS IN THE 21st CENTURY
Fall / Winter 2011 - 2012

Time: M, W 2:30- 3:45pm **Professor:** Dr. Alexandra Dobrowolsky
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Classroom: LA 297

Office: MN 405
Office hours: Tue. 2-4pm; Wed. 12:30-1:30pm; Thurs. 11:30-2:30pm (or by appointment)

This course introduces students to the institutions, ideas and identities that structure and shape Canadian governance in the 21st century. Fundamental political features and forces are outlined, grounded historically and considered in light of contemporary developments. Changes in Canadian politics will be discussed in relation to a shifting political as well as economic, social and cultural climate. For example, a range of issues will be explored including: democratic deficits; the impact of neo-liberalism /post-neo-liberalism; "care" concerns; the environment; the economy; social inclusion/exclusion/cohesion; security; the selection of new party leaders; institutional changes such as Senate reform; along with other topical concerns and developments. Throughout the course, fundamental representational and democratic challenges are examined and evaluated. Finally, both in lectures and through group work, students consider major political debates. The intent here is to foster a critical awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the state of Canadian democracy, its political institutions and actors, and to contemplate various political alternatives.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- 1) Rand Dyck, *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*, **6th** edition (2011)
- 2) Michael S. Whittington & Glen Williams eds., *Canadian Politics in the 21st Century*, **7th** edition (2008) (#1 & #2 to be purchased now)
- 3) Mark Charlton & Paul Barker eds., *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, **6th** edition (2009) (#3 can be purchased in January)

All three of these books are required; be sure to purchase the most current edition; note:
**Charlton & Barker can be purchased in January for use in the winter term.*

RECOMMENDED (not a required text, but *recommended* for further reading):

James Bickerton & Alain G. Gagnon, *Canadian Politics*, 5th edition (2009)

FORMAT & EVALUATION

Fall Term

* Concept Quiz (Oct. 5)	10%
* Class Presentation	5%
* Critical Commentary (6 - 7 pgs.; due Nov. 16)	15%
* Attendance / Participation	5%
* Mid-course Test- in class (Nov. 30)	10%

Winter Term

* Essay Outline and Preliminary Bibliography (2-4 pgs.; due: Feb. 15)	5%
* Research Essay (10 - 12 pgs.; due: Mar. 21)	20%
* Participation / Group Debates	10%
* Final Examination - in final examination period	20%

Fall Term Presentation

In the fall term, students will be required to prepare a short, individual presentation (approx. 10 minutes in total that includes a newspaper article/editorial to hand out to the class, and a related internet item e.g., video or You-tube clip, for discussion purposes). The subject matter will relate to the student's choice of topic for their critical commentary (see below), and the presentation will revolve around an issue of interest and concern having to do with Canadian politics. The objective of the presentation is to analyze the chosen topic & how it is being presented in the media, and then stimulate informed, class discussion on the issue.

Fall Term Critical Commentary

From mid September until early November, students are required to track newspaper/magazine/internet reports/articles/editorials/commentaries around one current, contentious issue in Canadian politics of their own choosing. Students may select any topic related to Canadian politics (the scope is very broad: i.e., from environmental and security concerns or Canada/US relations to Aboriginal or multicultural claims; from developments within the political parties such as leadership selection to political scandals and patronage issues; and from Senate reform to the status of Supreme Court appointments and decisions; or various forms of broader political mobilization (women, racial, ethnic, religious minorities, GLBTQ, immigrants) to the impact/influence of a particular Canadian politician (the Prime Minister, leader of the Opposition etc).

Decisions on topics must be made in the first few weeks of the fall term, given that students must begin assembling a file folder in which they will collect, **on a weekly basis**, newspaper/magazine clippings and/or Internet news items/ articles on their chosen issue. Then, based on what they have gathered in their folders, students will be required to write a short paper (due November 16). This paper will review the nature and effects of the subject chosen, **and** will offer a **critical analysis** of the issues in question and how they are portrayed in the press.

This assignment has two objectives. First, it prompts students to follow and consider their position on a contemporary, controversial issue in Canadian politics. This is meant to inspire students to critically assess problems arising from Canada's current political context. Second, students have an opportunity to develop their writing skills in this assignment. This writing exercise encourages students to craft a concise essay that has a well-defined and persuasive point of view.

Fall/Winter Term Class Participation and Winter Term Group Debates

Students are expected to come to class with their assigned readings completed. They will draw on their readings and their notes on the readings in order to contribute to class discussions (and raise any questions). Students will be provided with ample opportunities to discuss and debate topics related to the lectures and readings in smaller groups. Participation marks reflect these efforts, as well as attendance and class debates in the winter term.

Winter Term Essay Outline and Research Essay

A list of suggested research topics will be provided, although, **subject to approval**, students may formulate their own research questions. Essays must include not only a general understanding of the topic chosen, but also an assessment. In other words, this assignment requires the formulation of an **argument** and the development of an informed **analysis**. Moreover, this is a **research** essay. Therefore, papers must be properly researched and referenced or they will not be graded.

Concept Quiz and Examinations

The concept quiz will be comprised of "identify and give the significance" questions which will determine the students' comprehension of key terms, ideas and political figures or theorists. The end of fall term test, and the final examination, will contain both "identify and give the significance" questions and essay questions.

Students with disabilities: please meet with the professor at the beginning of the course to discuss accommodations/alternative arrangements.

****NOTE:** All assignments must be completed to fulfill the requirements of this course. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, proof read and handed in on time. Writing style is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of assignments. **NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED.** Late papers will only be accepted in the event of illness, in which case, medical documentation is required.

PLAGIARISM: constitutes a serious academic offence. Taking someone else's work or quoting another person's research/writing without reference; taking unattributed material from the Internet; submitting a piece of work for credit in more than one course, are all examples of academic fraud (see the 11 -12 Academic Calendar on "Academic Integrity" pages 21-22). Students found committing these or other academic offences will receive a grade of zero for the work in question, will be reported, and may fail the course.

TOPICS & READINGS

Major topics and readings are listed below. Short reading assignments may be added as appropriate. To complete the first presentation and first writing assignment, as well as to relate the course materials to contemporary events throughout the year, students are encouraged to read one or more Canadian newspapers, news magazines, current affairs blogs etc.

CLASS SCHEDULE: FALL TERM

Note: Required readings must be read **BEFORE the appropriate class.

I) September 7: Introductions

- a) course objectives, requirements and expectations
- b) introductory comments, considerations and questions

Required:

-buy your textbooks and familiarize yourself with them:

Dyck= a general textbook

Whittington & Williams= a reader with analyses of current challenges

Charlton & Barker= short debates on contemporary political issues

Brooks, Canadian Democracy= recommended but not required

Bickerton & Gagnon= recommended but not required, additional reading

-start reading your required readings for next week

-consider which issue you would like to track for your first assignment

II) Sept. 12/14: Canadian Politics, interesting eh? Institutions, Ideas, Identities

Required:

Dyck, Chapters 2 & 9

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 1 (by S. LaSelva)

Brooks, Chapter 1

III) Sept.19: Canadian Politics & Democracy: Approaches

Sept. 21: Political Culture Ideology and Identity

Required:

Dyck, Chapters 1 & 11

Whittington & Williams, Chapter 10 (by D. Bell)

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 2 (by W. Kymlicka)

Brooks, Chapter 2

REMINDER:

****be prepared to select your presentation / writing assignment topic & to sign up for a presentation date**

IV) Sept. 26 / Sept. 28 / Oct. 3: Canadian Political Parties: Ideal vs. Real Representational Vehicles; Brokerage vs Ideology?

- a) what are they and what do they do?
- b) past, present, future
- c) crisis and challenge; less brokerage more ideology?; inclusion and exclusion

Required:

Dyck, Chapter 14

Whittington & Williams, Chapter 6 (by A. Sayers)

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 12 (by W. Cross)

Brooks, Chapter 9

***** October 5: CONCEPT QUIZ (in class test)**

OCT 10: NO CLASS, Thanksgiving

V) Oct. 12 / 17: Does your vote Count? Parties/ Elections / Electoral Systems

- a) elections how they work and what they mean for democracy
- b) the 2008 Election Campaign
- c) comparing and contrasting systems
- d) reform proposals

Required:

Dyck, Chapters 13 & 15

Whittington & Williams, Chapter 7 (by J.H. Pammett)

Recommended:

Charlton & Barker, Chapter 10

VI) Oct. 19 / 24: Evolution and Devolution: Parliamentary Democracy and Federalism

- a) what is parliament, what is federalism? how have they evolved?
- b) shifting federal-provincial relations
- c) state and nation(s) including First Nations

Required:

Dyck, Chapter 18

Whittington & Williams, Chapter 4 (by G. Stevenson)

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 8 (by R. Simeon and I. Robinson)

Brooks, Chapter 7

VII) Oct. 26 / 31/ Nov. 2: Institutional Foundations: Crucial or Cracked Building Blocks?

- a) machinery of Canadian government: an overview
- b) House of Commons and Senate: the specifics
- c) institutional reform issues and alternatives

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 23****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 1 (by D. Docherty)***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 7 (by J. Smith)

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 11 (by B. Tanguay)

Brooks, Chapter 8

****REMINDER: Keep adding to your files: your critical commentary is due: Nov. 16****VIII) Nov. 7 / 9: Majesty and Power: Symbolic and Real**

a) the Crown & Governor General: reigning but not ruling

b) Prime Minister, cabinet & central Agencies

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 21****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 2 (by M.S. Whittington)***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 6 (by D. Savoie)

Charlton & Barker, Chapter 7

IX) Nov. 14 Bureaucracy and Policy Making: In or Out of Control?

a) public service duties / debates

b) accountability and ministerial responsibility

c) new public management

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 22****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 3 (by R. Whitaker)******** NOVEMBER 16 Critical Commentary Due!****X) Nov. 16 / 21: Alternative Representational Forms: Interest Groups & Social Movements**

a) duelling representational forms?

b) detracting from or adding to democracy?

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 16****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 8 (by M. Smith)***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 13 (E. Montpetit)

Brooks, Chapter 10

XI) Nov. 23 : Media, Politics, Polls & the Public

a) role of the media

b) democratic pluses and minuses

c) polling pros and cons

d) NITs: new information technologies

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 12****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 14 (by F. Fletcher & R. Everett)***Recommended:*

Brooks, Chapter 11

XII) Nov. 28= Catch Up/Review

Nov. 30= Mid-course Test (in class)***Good Luck with Exams and Happy Holidays!*****CLASS SCHEDULE: WINTER TERM 2012****I) Jan. 4 / 9: Constitutional Debates and Dilemmas**

a) BNA / Constitution Act 1867

b) Constitution Act 1982 & Charter

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 17***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 5 (by R. Gibbins)

Brooks, Chapter 5

II) Jan. 11: From the early 80's to the Meech and Charlottetown Accords

a) constitutional and Charter controversies:

the end of parliamentary supremacy and rise of rights talk /courts dialogue?

b) changing times and shifting ideas, identities & institutions

c) the citizens vs governments & the challenges of megaconstitutional politics

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 19****Charlton & Barker, Chapter 4***Recommended:*

Brooks, Chapter 6

III) Jan. 16 / 18: The Courts in Canada

a) Courts and Legislatures: Deference, Deviation or Dialogue?

b) Charter and Court Party debates

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 24**

**Whittington and Williams, Chapter 9 (by R. Jhappan)
Charlton & Barker, Chapter 8**

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 10 (by R. Bazowski)

****REMINDER: Essay outlines due: February 15**

IV) Jan. 23: Current & Future Constitutional Dilemmas

- a) executive federalism
- b) fiscal imbalance
- c) current, contentious debates around: religion, the environment & health

Required:

Charlton & Barker, Chapters 13 & 15

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 17 (by P. Stoett)

**V) Jan. 25 : Representational Challenges 1: Regionalism,
Provincial /Territorial Priorities versus National Standards**

- a) territorial identities, regions, provinces, territories
- b) accommodating difference or devolution and down-loading?
- c) equalization and standardization

Required:

**Dyck, Chapter 18 (re-read)
Charlton & Barker, Chapter 5**

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 4 (by J. Bickerton & A.G. Gagnon)
Brooks, Chapter 4

VI) Jan. 30/ Feb. 1 / 6: Representational Challenges 2: Quebec

- a) historical distinctiveness
- b) Plan A and Plan B & the consequences
- c) contemporary conflicts and contentions

Required:

**Dyck, Chapter 5
Whittington & Williams, Chapter 13 (by K. McRoberts)
Charlton & Barker, Chapter 6**

Recommended:

Brooks, Chapter 12

VII) Feb. 8 / 13 / 15: Representational Challenges 3: Aboriginal Peoples

- a) historical claims and injustices vs new developments
- b) sovereignty, self government and constitutional battles

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 4****Charlton & Barker, Chapter 2***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 9 (by M. Papillon)

Brooks, Chapter 14

HAND IN ESSAY OUTLINES FEB. 15*******Reading week: February 20-24 / 2012****VIII) Feb. 27 / 29: Representational Challenges 4: Women & Gender**

- a) un, under and misrepresentation
- b) party politics and policy
- c) the status of women's (in)equality today

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 7****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 11 (by S. Burt)****Charlton & Barker, Chapter 11***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 14 (by L. Young)

Dobrowolsky, "Charter Champions?: Equality Backsliding, the Charter and the Courts"

IX) Mar. 5 / 7 / 12: Representational Challenges 5: Diversity Issues

- a) Canada's multi-racial, ethnic mosaic vs racism and ethnocentrism
- b) im/migration & security

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 6****Whittington & Williams, Chapter 12 (by D. Stasiulis and Y. Abu-Laban)****Charlton & Barker, Chapter 14***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 15 (by Y. Abu-Laban)

Brooks, Chapter 13

MARCH 14: ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP**ESSAYS DUE: MARCH 21****X) Mar. 19 / 21: Representational Challenges 6: Class, Economic Crises, Globalization**

- a) class defined and considered
- b) class played out in policy: economic policy priorities; private versus public healthcare

Required:**Dyck, Chapter 8****Charlton & Barker, Chapter 12***Recommended:*

Bickerton & Gagnon, Chapter 16 (by M. R. Brawley)
Brooks, Chapter 3

XI) Mar. 26 / Mar. 28: Canada in the World
a) continentalization versus global politics
b) trade and foreign policy

Required:

Dyck, Chapter 10

Whittington & Williams, Chapter 5 (by G. Williams)

Recommended:

Bickerton & Gagnon, chapter 18 (by A. F. Cooper)

Brooks, Chapter 15

XII) April 2: Catch Up, Wrap Up & Review

Required:

Catch up on any missed readings

Start studying for the final exam

Good Luck with Final Exams!