



Saint Mary's University  
Department of Political Science  
Political Science 2310.2 — Government and the Media  
Fall 2011

Tuesday (s) 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.  
LA 178

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### Objective

The principal objective of this course is an examination of the influence of the media, and the impact of government policy, especially as set out in federal and provincial legislation, on the growth and operation of the mass media in Canada. Particular attention will be given to the continuing debate over television and radio regulation and ownership, restraints on film and the press, and issues raised by new technologies.

### Ground rules

A few simple rules will make POLI 2310 a good learning experience for all. First, it is important to listen while others are talking, and this applies to the instructor as well. Second, computer use for class purposes will be allowed, but use of computers for gaming, social messaging and the like during class will not be tolerated. Third, cell phone and BlackBerry use during class is prohibited.

### Learning Materials

Kinsella, Warren, *The War Room*, Toronto: Dundurn, 2007.

Nesbitt-Larking, Paul, *Politics, Society and the Media* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Peterborough: Broadview, 2007.

Sampert, Shannon and Linda Trimble (eds.), *Mediating Canadian Politics*. Toronto: Pearson Canada, 2010.

Additional readings/other materials will be placed on reserve and/or distributed in class.

## Method of Evaluation

The requirements for this course are:

Assignment	Due Date	% of Final Mark
Discussion assignment #1	October 4, 2011	15%
Discussion assignment #2	November 1, 2011	15%
Discussion assignment #3	November 29, 2011	15%
Mid-term examination	October 18, 2011	20%
Final examination	During formal examination period December 2011	25%
Attendance and participation	Throughout term	10%
<b>Total</b>		100%

Students are expected to submit class work on the assigned deadlines. Make-up examinations or deadline extensions will not be given, unless a proper medical certificate of illness is presented. Students are responsible for knowing the due dates for assignments and exam.

Late assignments will be subject to a 10% penalty per day. After three (3) calendar days, the assignment will not be accepted and a mark of zero will be applied. Students, who miss a deadline because of illness and produce a medical certificate as outlined in the *2011-2012 Saint Mary's University Academic Calendar*, must provide the assignment within one week of their return to class. Students are advised to read relevant regulations carefully.

Please note that no final grade will be issued until each of the course requirements have been completed and graded by the instructor.

## Course Requirements

### *Discussion Assignments*

These are individual essay assignments that will be distributed in class and students are expected to engage the assigned topic, answering the question from your personal perspective. You can be critical and provocative, provided your criticisms are argued clearly, logically, and persuasively. The purpose here is not to test your prior knowledge, but to have you respond in a thoughtful way to the assigned question, without instigating significant research.

### *Mid-term Examination and Final Examination*

There will be a mid-term examination and an end - of - term examination. Both will be based on topics addressed during lectures, assigned readings and other materials distributed during class. In addition to the substance of your answers, spelling, grammar, syntax and paragraph structure will be evaluated.

*Attendance/Participation*

POLI 2310 is a combination of lecture and discussions. Course sessions are conducted with the expectation that students attending class have read all assigned materials in advance and are prepared to discuss materials. Grading points will also be based on class participation.

Students must be knowledgeable of current affairs as they to government and the media. Current affairs discussed in class are examinable material.

Attendance sheets must be signed at the beginning of each class as attendance will be a factor in determining students' attendance/participation marks. If students wish to enhance their attendance/participation mark, they must be prepared to share their views and questions on current events in class.

Students will be provided with one (1) "free" absence throughout the term for which no penalty will be recorded. Students who wish to take advantage of this absence are still responsible for the material covered during class. For any additional absences, students will have one (1) point deducted from their final course mark for each missed class without a medical doctor's verification of illness.

Note:

1. Signing someone else's name on the attendance sheet is considered a breach of academic integrity and will have consequences.
2. Students may only sign the attendance sheet if they attend the entire class.

## Grading of Written Work

Written work will be assessed based on the following:

Clarity/Language/Structure	<p>Students must express their ideas in a manner that is clearly understood and logically organized.</p> <p>Students must employ correct grammar.</p>
Content	<p>Students must demonstrate a clear understanding of the author's position and provide documented evidence to support such.</p>
Presentation	<p>Written assignments must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have title page</li> <li>• include student name and date of paper</li> <li>• include page numbers</li> <li>• be double spaced</li> <li>• include one-inch margins</li> <li>• be in 12 pt Arial font</li> <li>• not have elaborate folders attached</li> <li>• be stapled</li> <li>• be provided both in hard copy and electronically in MS Word</li> </ul>

## Course schedule and reading assignments

Provided is the course schedule and reading assignments that outlines the topics to be addressed and accompanying required readings.

Date	Topic and Reading Assignment
	<b>PHASE I - INTRODUCTION</b>
September 13	<b>Course overview and introduction</b>
September 20	<p><b>Introduction to government and the media and current issues</b></p> <p>Christopher Waddell, “The Future For the Canadian Media”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June 2009, pp. 16-20 (Available at <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/">http://www.irpp.org/po/</a>)</p>
	<b>PHASE II - HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA IN CANADA</b>
September 27	<p><b>Newspapers</b></p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 29-48</p> <p>Robin Sears, “Extra! Extra! Read All About the Death of Newspapers”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June 2009, pp. 21-29 (Available at <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/">http://www.irpp.org/po/</a>)</p> <p><b>Special Guest Speaker:</b></p> <p>Dan Leger, Director of News Content, The Chronicle Herald</p>
October 4	<p><b>Broadcasting</b></p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 49-74</p> <p>David Taras, <i>Power and Betrayal in the Canadian Media</i> (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), pp. 117-140 – on reserve, Patrick Power Library</p> <p>David Taras, <i>Power and Betrayal in the Canadian Media</i> (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), pp. 171-197 – on reserve, Patrick Power Library</p>
October 11	<p><b>Broadcasting Regulation</b></p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 125-149</p>
October 18	<p><b>Alternative Sources of News and Information</b></p> <p>Curtis Brown, “White Noise: The Blogosphere and Canadian Politics”, in Shannon Sampert and Linda Trimble (eds.), <i>Mediating Canadian Politics</i>. Toronto: Pearson Canada, 2010, pp. 173-183</p> <p>Graham Longford and Steve Patten, “Great Expectations: The Internet and the</p>

	<p>Changing Character of Democratic Politics”, in Sampert and Trimble (eds.), pp.184-204</p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 205-230</p> <p>Matthew Sears, “My New Media”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June 2009, pp.30-32 (Available at <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/">http://www.irpp.org/po/</a>)</p>
October 25	<p><b>Mid-term examination</b></p> <p>Includes all topics addressed during lecture, assigned readings and other materials distributed during class.</p>
	<b>PHASE III - AGENDA SETTING AND MESSAGING</b>
November 1	<p><b>Who Sets the Agenda?</b></p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 315-347</p>
November 8	<p><b>How do we Assess Messaging?</b></p> <p>Christopher Adams, “Polling in Canada: Calling the Elections”, in Sampert and Trimble (eds.), pp. 151-168</p> <p>Robert Bragg, “Encountering Spin: The Evolution of Message Control”, in Sampert and Trimble (eds.), pp.243-255</p> <p>Paul Nesbitt-Larking, <i>Politics, Society, and the Media</i> (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), pp. 289-313</p>

	<b>PHASE IV - POLITICS AND THE MEDIA</b>
November 15	<p><b>Political Campaigns</b></p> <p>Yaroslav Baran, “Social media in Campaign 2011: A Noncanonical Take on the Twitter Effect”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June-July 2011, pp. 82-85  <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/espey.pdf">http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/espey.pdf</a></p> <p>Bob Cox, “Covering Political Campaigns: A Practitioner’s View”, in Sampert and Trimble (eds.), pp. 97-112</p> <p>Jennifer Espey, David Herle and Alex Swann, “The Blurred Snapshot of the Election Polls”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June-July 2011, pp. 86-90  <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/espey.pdf">http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/espey.pdf</a></p> <p>Marjory LeBreton, “Thirty-Seven Days “In the Bubble” with the National Media”, <i>Policy Options</i>, June-July 2011, pp. 78-81 (Available at <a href="http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/lebreton.pdf">http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jun11/lebreton.pdf</a>)</p> <p>Stuart Soroka and Blake Andrew, “Media Coverage of Canadian Elections: Horse-Race Coverage and Negativity in Election Campaigns”, in Sampert and Trimble (eds.), pp. 113-128</p> <p>Tamara A. Small, “Still Waiting for an Internet Prime Minister: Online Campaigning by Canadian Political Parties”, in <i>Election</i>. Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications Limited, 2010, pp. 173-199, on reserve, Patrick Power Library</p> <p>André Turcotte, “Polling as Modern Alchemy: Measuring Public Opinion in Canadian Elections”, in <i>Election</i>. Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications Limited, 2010, pp. 199 – 217, on reserve, Patrick Power Library</p> <p>Christopher Waddell, “The Campaign in the Media 2008”, in Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan (eds.), <i>The Canadian Federal Election of 2008</i>. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2009, pp. 217-256 – on reserve, Patrick Power Library</p>
November 22	<p><b>Political Campaigns (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>Special Guest Speaker:</b>  Jennifer Stewart, Press Secretary, NS Office of the Premier</p>
November 29	<p><b>Film: Minority Report: Inside the 2004 Canadian Election</b></p> <p><b>Catch-up and Review</b></p>
—	<p><b>End - of - term examination</b></p> <p>Includes all topics addressed during lectures, assigned readings and other materials distributed during class</p>

### Plagiarism and Intellectual Honesty

All universities, Saint Mary's included, consider it a serious matter to present the work of someone else in such a way as to give one's reader reason to think it to be one's own. This is called plagiarism and is a form of intellectual dishonesty. If plagiarism is suspected, the matter must go immediately to the University Senate for adjudication and the imposition of an appropriate penalty, which may involve forfeiture of credit for the course or even outright dismissal from the University.

### *Grading*

Letter grades will be assigned as outlined in the *2011-2012 Saint Mary's University Academic Calendar*. Plus and minus grades are included within these categories:

A+	88-100
A	84-87
A-	80-83
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D	50-59
F	0-49