

# PSCI 260: Canadian Government and Politics

Winter, 2013

DC 1351, Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:30am-12:50pm

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**Instructor:** Dr. Anna Esselment

**Email Address:** [alesselm@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:alesselm@uwaterloo.ca)

**Office Location:** Hagey Hall 304

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 1:00-3:00pm or by appointment

**Contact Policy:** Email is likely the best way to get in touch with the professor or your TA outside of usually scheduled office hours. A few things to remember when emailing:

- **Please use your official UW email account.** To ensure your privacy, your professor/TA will not reply to emails sent from a non-UW account (such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, Sympatico, etc.).
- Please address your email to the professor or TA appropriately (i.e. 'Dr. Esselment', 'Professor', Isaac, Katie, Michael, etc.).
- Please remember to sign your email with a first and last name.
- Please allow 24-48 hours for a response to your email.
- Please note that your professor and TA generally do not answer emails after 4:00pm on weekdays or on weekends (4:00pm Friday to 9:00am Monday).
- **Email should be used for brief questions that can be answered quickly.** If you want to discuss course material, assignments, or another matter in greater detail, please see the professor or TA during his or her office hours or make an appointment to meet at some other time convenient for both

## Teaching Assistants:

**Isaac Illankeswaran**

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**Katie Nelson**

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**Course Description:** This course is designed to familiarize you with key concepts, institutions, political processes, issues, and cleavages inherent in the study of Canadian politics. Canada is known as a thriving liberal democracy, and yet we often hear criticisms that our politics

and political institutions suffer from a “democratic deficit”. Through our examination of Canadian government and politics, we aim to understand where areas of our democratic structure could use improvement or, perhaps, simply a better understanding of their functions by Canadians themselves.

**Pre-Requisites:** PSCI 101 or PSCI 110.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students should:

- Have a basic understanding of the main institutions and key concepts tied to the study of Canadian politics.
- Be able to identify areas where a “democratic deficit” may exist.
- Be able to critically assess the structures and processes of politics in Canada.
- Have enhanced reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.
- Be able to better evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of arguments based on their logic and supporting evidence.

### **University Regulations:**

#### **Cross-listed courses:**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

#### **Academic Integrity:**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Please be sure to review the information and take the tutorial on Academic Integrity and what it means from the U Waterloo Academic Integrity website at <http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/index.html>

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>.

[Academic Integrity website \(Arts\): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

[Academic Integrity Office \(uWaterloo\): http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

**Turnitin.com:** Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course. If you do not wish to have your assignments submitted to Turnitin, an alternative arrangement between you and the professor can be worked out where your work can still be rigorously assessed to ensure its academic integrity.

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

**Note for students with disabilities:** The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

### **Academic/Personal Counselling:**

Life at university can sometimes have unexpected challenges. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, or have other personal or academic issues that are affecting how you are managing your workload, please see counselling services offered at U Waterloo. You do not need to divulge personal information to me, you can simply talk to a counselor and he or she can advise your professors whether or not you require accommodation vis-à-vis extensions, etc.. Visit the following website for more information: <https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/academic-and-life-wellness-services>.

### **Text:**

Brooks, S. (2012). *Canadian Democracy*, (7<sup>th</sup> ed). Don Mill, ON: Oxford University Press. (Required)

You can purchase the Brooks text as a single book or as package with a writing handbook. If you do not already own a writing handbook, I strongly urge you to consider buying the package. You'll find you'll use the Handbook for numerous courses throughout your undergraduate education at the University of Waterloo!

Texts are available for purchase at the University of Waterloo bookstore.  
Texts are on 3-hour reserve at the Dana Porter Library.

## Course Requirements, Expectations, and Standards:

### Assignments, Tests, and Examinations:

#### 1. *The Cabinet Memo* 15% (5-6 pages) **DUE February 5, 2013**

Consider yourself a Deputy Minister – the most senior civil servant in a Canadian department. Your job is to support the minister (an elected politician who usually has little idea of what to do or how to do it) and often you can influence what it is the minister should do because, let's face it, you're the one with the expertise. What do you consider the most pressing problem in Canadian politics? Is it the threat of Quebec separatism? Is it the funding of health care? Is it the state of our First Nations communities? The imminent problem of labour shortages? The undermining of the American economy and what it means for Canada? In a memo to your cabinet minister, you need to outline the most pressing problem Canada faces, give reasons why it is a problem and deserving of attention, and set out how the Canadian government can go about solving it. You need to be concise, persuasive, and have good evidence to support your position. More detail on the assignment, including "problem areas" from which you can make a selection to write about in your memo, will be available on our LEARN website.

#### 2. *Midterm Test* 20% **February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013:**

The midterm test will be administered in class and will cover all lecture and text material to this point.

#### 3. *Research Paper* 30% **DUE March 14, 2013 :**

Everyone will write a 9-11 page research paper on an aspect of Canadian politics. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate your ability to write a research essay with a clear and concise argument and to demonstrate an understanding of the subject of enquiry. To write a successful paper you must take a position, construct an argument and marshal evidence to support your position. Students also must consider the arguments against their own position and, where possible, rebut those counter arguments. Your objective is to present and defend an argument in a clear, logical, and organized manner. A detailed description of the assignment will be posted on our LEARN website, including a selection of topics on which you can choose to write.

#### 4. *Final Exam* 35% (scheduled during normal final exam period)

A final exam will take place during the regularly scheduled exam period. The content of the entire course will be reflected in the exam which may include a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. You will have 2.5 hours to complete the exam.

#### ***Bonus (up to 5%) Interactive participation***

To encourage participation and discussion, PSCI 260 will use a software programme from Top Hat Monocle that acts like an iClicker. You don't need an actual clicker – your laptop, cell phone, tablet, iPad, iPod Touch, or other technology that can access the internet is sufficient. If you would like to opt in to the interactive participation component of the course, you must purchase a license either online from Top Hat Monocle or from the bookstore (approx \$20). You then register for an account and add our course. You are now ready for interactive participation! Information about THM, how to set up an account, how to use the software to participate in class, and access to 24/7 student technical support is available on our LEARN website.

## **Other Course Policies:**

### **Course Website**

The course outline, detailed assignments, class announcements, grades, etc. will be available on the course website on LEARN . If you have questions about when assignments are due, late policies, sickness accommodation, etc., your first source of information is the course outline. Users can login to LEARN via: [LEARN http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/](http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/). Use your WatIAM/Quest username and password.

### **Class Attendance and Participation**

The professor will not be taking attendance at lecture but attending lectures is crucial if you are hoping to do well in the course. Up to 5% bonus for interactive participation is built into the course. If you are sick or must be away from class, find a friend from whom you can borrow notes. While lecture slides MAY be posted on the class website, there is no obligation on the professor to do so, nor will she be supplying any of her lecture notes to the class.

### **Late Penalties**

All late assignments (that is, assignments submitted after 4:00pm on their due date) will be penalized 3% a day (including weekends). A waiver of this penalty will only be considered in the event of an officially documented extenuating circumstance (this does NOT include a note from your mother). See "Extension Policy" below. Late assignments can be placed in the professor's drop box in the Department of Political Science. This is cleared out daily.

### **Final Submission Date for Assignments**

The final submission date for assignments is one week (7 days) after their due date (with the imposition of late penalties). The instructor WILL NOT accept the assignment for grading after one week has passed without a documented extenuating circumstance. If an extenuating circumstance may prevent you from submitting an assignment by its submission date, please contact the professor at the earliest possible convenience and be prepared to provide her with official documentation concerning your situation.

### **Extension Policy for Assignments**

All requests for assignment extensions must be directed to your instructor. Your TA does not have the authority to grant extensions.

The professor will only consider granting an extension in the event of an officially documented extenuating circumstance (that is, serious personal illness, critical personal or family crisis, etc.). If a situation arises that may prevent you from completing an assignment, contact the professor as early as possible, ideally before the assignment is due.

The UW Verification of Illness Form can be found at: [Health Services www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health\\_Services/verification.html](http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html). Please note that midterms will not be deferred. Instead, the final exam will be re-weighted appropriately.

## **Computer Problems**

Students are expected to back up their written work and lecture notes. Extensions will NOT be granted for computer-related issues. Furthermore, students will be responsible for finding replacement lecture notes where they fail to back-up their files.

## **Grade Appeals**

If you are concerned that your assignment was not graded fairly, you should first meet with the TA who marked your work.

To request a review of your assignment from your TA and, later, your professor if required, you must provide a 1 page explanation as to why you think your assignment was improperly graded (i.e. what do you think you did that should have been given more weight?). The explanation, the original assignment, and a clean copy of the assignment should be submitted to your tutorial leader no later than 3 weeks after the assignment was **made available for return**. If you are unsatisfied after consulting and discussing the matter with your TA, the assignment will be passed on to the Professor for final grading.

**NOTE:** Students must take responsibility for picking up their marked work in a timely manner. No appeals will be considered more than 3 weeks after the assignment/exam was made available for return. *Grades may be either raised, stay the same, or lowered on appeal.* Students who wish to appeal an examination grade should follow the same procedure noted above for assignments.

## **Schedule:**

### **PART I - Introduction**

January 8 – Introduction to course and expectations

January 10 – Confederation (reading: Chapter 1)

### **PART II – The Institutional Context**

January 15 – The Executive (reading: Chapter 8)

January 17 – Guest Speaker (Sandra Pupatello)

January 22 – Parliament (reading: Chapter 8)

January 24 – The Bureaucracy (reading: Chapter 9)

January 29 – The Judiciary (reading: Chapter 8)

### **PART III – The Constitutional Context**

January 31 – Federalism (reading: Chapter 7)

February 5 – The Constitution I (reading: Chapter 5) **(Cabinet Memo Due!)**

February 7 – The Constitution II (reading: Chapter 5)

February 12 – Midterm Review

February 14 – MIDTERM TODAY! (in class)

February 26 - The Charter (reading: Chapter 6)

#### **PART IV – The Societal Context**

February 28 – Quebec (reading: Chapter 13)

March 5 – Regionalism (reading: Chapter 4)

March 7 - Diversity and Multiculturalism (reading: Chapter 14)

March 12 – Indigenous Politics (reading: Chapter 16)

March 14 – Gender Politics (reading: Chapter 15) **(Research Paper Due!)**

#### **PART V – Political Actors and Competition**

March 19 – Political Parties (reading: Chapter 10)

March 21 – Elections and Voting (reading: Chapter 10)

March 26 – Interest Groups (reading: Chapter 11)

March 28 – The Media (reading: Chapter 12)

April 2 – Canada in the World (reading: Chapter 17)

April 4 – Democratic Deficit and Reform and Final Exam Review