

University of Waterloo
Department of Political Science
PSCI 491
New Books in Canadian Politics
Spring 2015
Tuesday/Thursday 11:30-2:20, HH227

Instructor Information

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Course Description

This seminar course undertakes a broad survey of the most recent works in political science relating to the politics and government of Canada.

It is structured as a simulation of a book prize jury. Four recent book-length works relating to the politics and government of Canada will be nominated for reading by the jury (class) with each jury member (student) making a recommendation as to the book making the most important contribution to the understanding of Canadian government and politics. By way of conclusion, the jury will, as a whole, attempt to come to a consensus (or not!) in this regard.

The course is based heavily on student preferences in determining the actual reading material – taking advantage of recent innovations in availability of online book information, expedited online book ordering and shipping, and university e-book holdings which no longer necessitate that a reading list be constructed and books ordered in advance of a course taking place.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. demonstrate a broad command of the political science literature relating to the politics and government of Canada
 - identify the major sub-fields of Canadian politics
 - demonstrate a broad knowledge of the most recent works and trends across a number of major sub-fields of Canadian politics
- B. demonstrate an ability to provide a meaningful critical assessment of individual works in the political science literature relating to the politics and government of Canada
 - demonstrate an ability to write a concise critical review of an individual work

- demonstrate an ability to write a concise critical review which compares and contrasts the contribution of multiple works
- C. demonstrate an appreciation of different theoretical and methodological approaches within the field of Canadian political science
- demonstrate an ability to identify and assess the theoretical approach underpinning a work including its strengths and weaknesses
 - demonstrate an ability to identify and assess the methodological approach underpinning a work including its strengths and weaknesses
 - demonstrate an understanding of how an individual researcher conceptualizes, situates relative to the existing literature and designs a major research project

Required Text

- There are no pre-determined required texts. Seminars will each be based on one recent research monograph – each of which is to be determined by class discussion on Week 1. Please see list below.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Seminar Participation	Ongoing	20%
Single Book Review #1 – Draft	Student Choice – Books 2 or 3	5%
Single Book Review #1 – Final Version	Student Choice – Books 2 or 3	20%
Single Book Review #2 – Draft	Student Choice – Books 3 or 4	5%
Single Book Review #2 – Final Version	Student Choice – Books 3 or 4	20%
Multiple Book Review -- Draft	Friday, June 12th, 5:00 pm	10%
Multiple Book Review – Final Version	Friday, June 19th, 5:00 pm	20%
Total		100%

Assessment 1 Ongoing Seminar Participation

Participation is graded on the basis of two equally-weighted criteria – frequency of class contributions and the quality of class contributions. Regarding the first criteria, students contributions should be sufficient in number to demonstrate that the student is engaged with the developing discussion. In regard to the second criteria, student contributions should demonstrate that students have adequately read and thought about the material in question. With 10 graded seminars, participation (with a cumulative weight of 20% of the final course grade) in each seminar is worth approximately 2% of the final grade.

Assessment 2a: Book Review #1 Draft Version

Students will be required to write a 2000 word book review providing a critical assessment of the book under review. The initial draft version (approximately 1000 words) should clearly and concisely identify the work's central argument (although it should NOT provide an overview of the book) and the basis on which the argument is established. The review should then outline the book's main contribution (identifying whether the central contributions are empirical, methodological, or theoretical.) All single book review drafts are due electronically before class on the first date for which the book is assigned.

Assessment 2b: Book Review #1 Final Version

In addition to revising the draft version of the book review in light of class discussion and/or instructor comments, the final version will include the elements outlined above for the draft version and, in addition, the final version (approximately 2000 words) should also identify the book's main weaknesses (again, identifying whether these are primarily empirical, methodological or theoretical) and provide a balanced overall assessment of the books contributions and weaknesses. All single book review final versions are due electronically before class on the second date for which the book is assigned.

Assessment 3a and 3b -- Book Review #2

See description under Assessment 2a and 2b above.

Assessment 4a Multiple Book Review -- Draft

Students will be required to write a 2500 word book review outlining which of the three books (Books 2-4) in the course was, in their opinion, the work that makes the most valuable contribution to an understanding of Canadian government and politics. The review will clearly and concisely outline the reasons for this assessment by outlining the works main contributions (e.g. empirical/methodological/theoretical.) It will also place the work in the broader context of the other works considered in the course and assess the weight of its contribution relative to the contributions of the other works considered in the course.

Due Friday, June 12th, 5:00 pm electronically.

Assessment 4b Multiple Book Review

See description above (4a). Students will receive feedback on the draft multiple book review which they will be expected to consider in writing a revised version.

Due Friday, 19th, 5:00 pm electronically.

Course Outline

Readings to be determined based on class preferences and in-class discussion on Week 1 (May 5-May 7)
– please see book inventory below.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	May 5	Orientation and Syllabus Overview (class to pick first book)	n/a
2	May 7	Curriculum Planning/Overview of Critical Review (class to pick next three books)	Course Syllabus
3	May 12	Book Set 1	TBD
4	May 14	Book Set 1 (cont'd)	TBD
5	May 19	Book Set 2	TBD
6	May 21	Book Set 3	TBD
7	May 26	Book Set 2 (cont'd)	TBD
8	May 28	Book Set 3 (cont'd)	TBD
9	June 2	No class	n/a
10	June 4	Book Set 4 (cont'd)	TBD
11	June 9	Book Set 4 (cont'd)	TBD
12	June 11	Final Discussion	None

Late Work

The book reviews are due before class on each seminar date for two reasons: first, to ensure that the student is prepared to make a strong contribution to class discussion and, secondly, to ensure the originality of the ideas presented in the book review. As such, late reviews will not be accepted. The penalty for a late review is that the student must write a review on another seminar topic at a later date. No exceptions will be made to this provision.

The late penalty for the multiple book review is 5% per day or part thereof.

Attendance Policy

As a seminar, this course relies exclusively on student participation although no grades are assigned solely for attendance. (That is, students who attend seminar but do not participate in the discussion will receive a grade of zero for that date.) The participation grade for one scheduled seminar may be waived provided the student notifies the instructor of the absence in advance and provides appropriate documentation for the absence (e.g. medical note.) Further absences also require appropriate formal documentation in which case the determination of grading procedure and final weighting of the participation component of the final grade will be determined on a case-by-case basis through discussion with the instructor and, if necessary, Associate Chair, Undergraduate or Graduate as appropriate.

Book List

The class will collectively choose four topics (and books) from the eleven topics on the following list. Book 1 may be from any section. Books 2-4 will include at least one from each of the two broad sections (political institutions/axes of political competition.)

Although there are a handful of exceptions, the basic criteria for inclusion in the Canadian politics survey inventory are as follows:

- the book is a monograph (e.g. written on a single topic by a single author) rather than an edited collection of essays by a single author or multiple authors (the rationale for this criteria is that monographs typically have a clear, singular central argument which makes them easier to assess than edited collections which may lack continuity or even a singular central argument);
- the book is academic (e.g. rather than a popular treatment of a topic) which is usually indicated by a combination of the credentials of the author, whether the publisher is a university press, that the book is properly referenced with appropriate citations and full bibliography (the list below contains a number of books that do not meet this criteria and are designated as 'popular' or non-academic);
- the book is recent and has a publication date of 2014 or later (this is to ensure that the work is consistent with the theme of the course as a survey of recent works in Canadian politics as well as to help ensure the originality of student reviews.)

Students are encouraged to choose additional non-listed books for the purposes of the book review assignment so long as the book meets the requirements identified above (or a compelling argument is provided as to why a work does not meet the criteria but should still be considered) and is approved in advance by the instructor.

*eligible for choice for first book

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS - Venues of Political Competition

Topic 1 Parliament and Political Control

*Loat, Allison and Michael MacMillan. 2014. *Tragedy in the Commons: Former Members of Parliament Speak out About Canada's Failing Democracy*. Toronto: Random House.

Topic 2 The Judiciary and Judicial Politics

McCormick, Peter. 2015. *The End of the Charter Revolution: Looking Back from the New Normal*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

*Macfarlane, Emmett. 2013. *Governing from the Bench: The Supreme Court of Canada and the Judicial Role*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Topic 3 Parties and Elections

*Flanagan, Tom. 2014. *Winning Power: Canadian Campaigning in the 21st Century*. Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Topic 4 Federalism

*Michael M. Atkinson, Daniel Béland, Kathy McNutt, Greg Marchildon, Peter Phillips and Ken Rasmussen. 2013. *Governance and Public Policy in Canada: A View from the Provinces*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Topic 5 The Media

Taras, David. 2015. *Digital Mosaic: Media, Power and Identity in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

AXES OF POLITICAL COMPETITION - Political Cleavages in Canada

Topic 6 Gender and Politics

*Goodyear-Grant, Elizabeth. 2014. *Gendered News: Media Coverage and Electoral Politics in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press. (Short-Listed Finalist, CPSA Smiley Prize, 2014.)

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Topic 7 First Nations

*Asch, Michael. 2014. *On Being Here to Stay: Treaties and Aboriginal Rights in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Coates, Ken. 2015. *Idle No More and the Remaking of Canada*. Regina: University of Regina Press.

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Topic 8 Multiculturalism and Immigration Politics

*Stevenson, Garth. 2014. *Building Nations from Diversity: Canadian and American Experience Compared*. Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

-available from Chapters-Indigo with additional expedited shipping fee

Bouchard, Gerard. 2015. *Interculturalism: A View from Quebec*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Topic 9 Regionalism

Berdahl, Loleen and Roger Gibbins. 2014. *Looking West: Regional Transformation and the Future of Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Topic 10 Dualism and Québec Nationalism

Gagnon, Alain-G. 2014. *Minority Nations in the Age of Uncertainty: New Paths to National Emancipation and Empowerment*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Topic 11 Economic Interests and Political Economy

*Klassen, Jerome. 2014. *Joining Empire: The Political Economy of the New Canadian Foreign Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

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.

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](#).

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](#).

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](#).

Other sources of information for students

[Academic integrity](#) (Arts) [Academic Integrity Office](#) (uWaterloo)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services office](#), 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 AS office at the beginning of each academic term.