

**Political Science 661
Canadian National Politics
Fall Term 2010**

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This syllabus and all other course materials will be available on the PSCI 461/661 course website accessible through UW-ACE. No printed materials will be distributed in this course.

I. Prerequisites

Students who wish to register for PSCI 661 should have completed at least one undergraduate course on Canadian politics. Students without previous courses in this area will be at a distinct disadvantage.

II. Description

The official description of this course is "selected aspects of Canadian national politics." This term, the course will include a variety of topics selected by students in the class that deal with topics related to the Canadian federal system, parliamentary government and national political processes. See the document on the course website for a list of the topics to be discussed in September and early October and a proposed selection process for topics to be covered over the rest of the term.

III. Format

There will be one three-hour class per week that will consist of a series of discussions and student contributions. Topics for discussion are presented in separate document that includes the class schedule. The class will meet 9:30 - 12:20 Thursdays in RCH 106.

IV. Course Requirements

1) An important component of the final grade will be based on class participation. This portion will involve an assessment of your regular contributions to the class discussion, which should reflect some grasp of the relevant reading materials and some analytical abilities in applying those materials in the discussion. Please see the separate document Grading Student Participation on the course website at UW-ACE for more information on the criteria to be applied in determining this component of the grade.

Please note that since there will not be a final examination in the course, and to ensure your full engagement with the discussions, students are requested not to use laptop computers or other electronic devices during class.

Class participation will be worth **20% of the final grade**. Students whose attendance is irregular or consistently curtailed will, almost by definition, be penalized. Those who turn up but make no contributions will also be awarded a low participation grade.

2) To ensure that the weekly discussions are successful, students will be required to prepare and speak to **four** short (1000-1200 words) position papers at four classes during the term (details are found on the course website). The assignments will be submitted in hard copy at the outset of the class and will be used to determine **40% of the overall grade for the course**. No make-up position papers will be permitted unless documentation is provided which explains why you were unable to attend the class in question; changes to employment schedules will not normally be considered legitimate conflicts.

3) A major component of the grade will be based upon a research paper on a topic in contemporary Canadian national politics. The paper must be presented in the appropriate academic form (with citations, a central theme, appropriate standards of English usage, etc.) and it should be no more than 5000 words when completed. Topics must be formally approved through an outline and annotated bibliography that must be submitted by **October 28**.

The research paper will be worth **40% of the final grade** for the course. A draft essay may be submitted without prejudice before **November 18** and the final version is due on **December 6**. Late papers will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day.

V. Office Hours

My formal (i.e. minimum) office hours for the term will be held on Thursday from 1:30 - 3:00 and Friday (by appointment only) from 1:00-2:00 in HH 340. Other appointments may be arranged as necessary (please use e-mail to make contact since I do not have a permanent office or telephone extension on campus).

All graduate students are required to attend a workshop on academic integrity in September. Further clarification on related topics is provided here, based on information distributed to undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic

integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, 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 instructor, 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 offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, 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, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals): www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

When in doubt about any of these matters, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

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.

Making contact by e-mail: I do not open any messages with unclear or blank subject lines. Please make sure that all e-mail messages sent to me show distinctly in the subject line that they pertain to PSCI 461.

Also, if you have not had a reply or acknowledgement to an e-mail message within 48 hours (or by Monday noon if your message was sent on a Friday), please contact me again. Messages do not always get through and some that do may be deleted inadvertently. I will at least acknowledge - if not act upon - all messages. It is your responsibility to ensure that

information conveyed to me electronically has actually been received. Do not assume that your information has reached me just by pressing 'Send'.

Finally, please note that my name and my e-mail userid are not the same. My surname is Williamss but the userid does not have an 's' at the end. I would appreciate you spelling my name correctly.