

# CANADIAN DEMOCRACY

## Fall 2019

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**Lecture:** Tues. & Thurs. 2:30-3:20  
**Room:** KTHB135

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**Office Hours:** Thursday 3:30-4:30

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## **Course Description**

This course examines the basic structure and operation of democracy in Canada, thereby bringing democracy to life. Class lectures will focus on the structures underlying Canada's governing system, providing students with a detailed understanding of its rules and institutions. Current events and classic debates will frequently be employed as examples and used as a basis for class and tutorial discussions. Knowing the rules will equip students with the ability to make informed predictions for both political behaviour and future political outcomes. Guest lecturers from practitioners will also shed light on how these rules work in practice.

## **Course Objectives**

Our core objective will be to understand how the governing structures have evolved over time, and why institutions and institutional design are important for explaining the dynamics of political outcomes in Canada.

Student performance in this course is evaluated primarily on the basis of original written work and a final exam.

The assignment focus is designed to develop writing and research skills, but also to engage students with democratic life in Canada.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- Stephan Brooks, *Canadian Democracy*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford, 2012. **(CD)**  
**\*other editions are also acceptable**
- James Bickerton and Alain Gagnon, *Canadian Politics*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 2014. **(B&G)**

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

Assignment 1 - 20%, due October 8

Mini Assignment Electoral Prediction - 5%, due October 8

Assignment 2 - 20%, due November 14th

Tutorial Participation - 15%

Guest Lecture Attendance - 10%

Final Exam - 30%, December 2019

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

You are to complete two essays for this course, and one mini assignment.

Students will be asked to engage critically with materials covered in class by constructing an argument which is supported by academic resources. Details of assignment topics will follow. Your analysis should be summarized in a clear statement in the first paragraph. The reader should be very clear on what you are arguing. While

the balance of the response will defend your argument, you should also acknowledge the counterargument and seek to demonstrate that your argument is superior.

Each essay should be 8 pages in total (excluding the bibliography and title page), 12 pt Times New Roman font with standard margins. Include a title page with your name, the date, the course number, and **your TA's name**. A minimum of at least 4 academic should be cited, not including course readings, which can also be included in your argument. All essays will be graded using a course rubric which your TA will provide.

The mini assignment will be a one page analysis of the election polls, with your prediction of the seat count and popular vote. Details will follow.

All assignments should be submitted using 'Turnitin' by the deadline, unless other arrangements have been made with the professor.

Tutorial attendance will be taken for all of the eight tutorials. Bickerton and Gagnon readings will be the source of debate for tutorial, and participation grading will be based on the ability of the student to demonstrate that they have read the material and can thoughtfully engage with the issues. Students should be careful to engage at least once during weekly tutorial, but also not to dominate debate.

Attendance will be taken for guest lectures.

The final exam will cover material from readings and lecture, as well as additional readings that have been introduced in lecture. There will be three short answer questions that require understanding key terms in the course, and two essay questions that require the ability to demonstrate understanding of both sides of the argument. You will be given two hours to complete the exam, and should allot your time carefully

In completing the written assignments, students must cite all facts and figures that are not common knowledge and must cite all ideas that are borrowed from other authors including the text. Students must use a recognized standard format correctly when formatting their bibliographies, references, and footnotes. Failure to do so will result in substantial penalty in calculating your assignment grade. Consult your TA if you have any questions.

Cornell University provides useful online guides to the APA and MLA citation styles:

[http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res\\_strategy/citing/apa.html](http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/apa.html)

[http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res\\_strategy/citing/mla.html](http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html)

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (September 3 & 5)**

#### **Introduction to Political Life in Canada**

Readings: No required reading

## **Week 2 (September 10 & 12)**

### **Understanding Canada**

Readings:

- Chapter 1, “Introduction to Political Life” **(CD)**
- Chapter 1, “Understanding Canada’s Origins” **(B&G)**

Note: Tutorials begin

## **Week 3 (September 17 & 19)**

### **The Constitution: A Living Tree**

Readings:

- Chapter 5, “The Constitution” **(CD)**
- Chapter 5, “Constitutional Politics” **(B & G)**

## **Week 4 (September 24 & 26)**

### **The Principle of Responsible Government**

Readings:

- Chapter 11, “Reforming Representative Democracy” **(B & G)**

Guest Lecture: “Democratic Deficit in Canada”, Andrew Coyne, National Post

## **Week 5 (October 1 & 3)**

### **The Political Executive: PM, Cabinet & Central Agencies**

Readings:

- Chapter 8, “The Machinery of Government” **(CD)**
- Chapter 6, “Power at the Apex: Executive Dominance” **(B & G)**

## **Week 6 (October 8 & 10)**

### **Parliament and Lawmaking**

Readings:

- Chapter 8, “The Machinery of Government” **(CD)**
- Chapter 7, “Canada’s Minority Parliament” **(B & G)**

Note: Essays due in class

Guest Lecture: “My Life as a Government Critic”, Doly Begum, Member of Provincial Parliament, NDP

**Week 7 (October 15 & 17) – Mid-Term Recess**  
**No lecture, tutorials, or readings**

**Week 8 (October 22 & 24)**  
**Parties and Elections**

Readings:

- Chapter 10, “Parties and Elections” **(CD)**
- Chapter 14, “Women not in Politics” **(B & G)**

Guest Lecture: “Unpacking the Polls”, Nik Lopez, Research Manager, Maru

**Week 9 (October 29 & 31)**  
**Parties and Elections continued**

Readings:

- Chapter 10, “Parties and Elections” **(CD)**
- Chapter 12, “Representation and Political Parties” **(B & G)**

**Week 10 (Nov 5 & 7)**  
**Federalism**

Readings:

- Chapter 7, “Federalism” **(CD)**
- Chapter 8, The Dynamics of Canadian Federalism **(B & G)**

**Week 11 (November 12 & 14)**  
**The Administrative State**

Readings:

- Chapter 9, “The Administrative State” **(CD)**

Note: Essays due in class

Guest Lecture: Jane Philpott, “What it’s like at the Center”, Member of Parliament, Markham

**Week 12 (November 19 & 21)**  
**The Charter and Lawmaking**

Readings:

- Chapter 6, “Rights and Freedoms” **(CD)**

- Chapter 10, "The Judiciary and Charter" (**B & G**)

Guest Lecture: Michael Chong, "Democracy in Practice", Wellington-Halton Hills

### **Week 13 (November 26 & 28)**

#### **The Charter and Lawmaking**

Readings:

- Chapter 6, "Rights and Freedoms" (**CD**)

### **Week 14 (December 3)**

#### **Conclusion**

No readings

Guest Lecture: "Why Canada Politics?", Steve Paikin, Host, The Agenda

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

Paper copies of all assignments will be submitted at the beginning of class—in class.

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

Late penalties for written assignments will be 2% per day, including weekends. Late papers must be submitted to the Department of Political Studies. TAs are not permitted to accept essays via email, or late papers.

### **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **University Policies**

#### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.



Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.