

## **POLSCI 1AA3: GOVERNMENT, POLITICS AND POWER** **Spring 2020**

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**Lecture:** Mon & Wed 6:30 – 9:30  
**Room:** online

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This syllabus is adapted from Dr Todd Alway's Political Science 1AA3

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## **Course Description**

What forces shape the political process? Towards what ends? In whose interests? This course will investigate these questions by focusing on the ideas, institutions, and structures that have shaped the contemporary political landscape.

Most of us are familiar with politics as it occurs at election time: political parties competing for our votes with the promise that they and only they have the solution for whatever problems ail society. This is politics. But politics is not limited to Election Day. Politics is everywhere. It saturates our daily lives. It crisscrosses our economic and social interactions. It is embedded in the formal and informal rules under which we all live. This course will begin with an exploration of this broader sense of politics by exploring many of the key ideas and institutions that govern our lives. We will scrutinize concepts like liberty, democracy, and equality. What do these terms actually imply? How does one organize a society based on these ideas?

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Identify and develop a theoretical and historical understanding of the topics covered
- Write a theory paper
- Critically analyze, develop arguments and formulate responses to questions regarding aspects of the government and politics of Canada

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- Readings that refer to Political Ideologies are from the required text: Geoghegan, Vincent, and Rick Wilford (eds). 2014. *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, Fourth Edition. Abingdon: Routledge. Available in electronic format (at no cost) through McMaster University Library. Please download a copy as soon as possible.
- You are also required to obtain a copy of *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill. Any edition is acceptable, online, or through the Book Store. Your Theory Paper is based on this book.
- Academic Journal Articles are available online through McMaster's Libraries and will be posted in Avenue to Learn.
- Forsey, Eugene. 2016 *How Canadians Govern Themselves*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, is posted in Avenue to Learn.
- Readings that refer to [Canada Guide](#) can be found online.
- Documentaries that refer to NFB will be posted in Avenue to Learn.

## **Class Format**

The key to doing well in this course is to attend all online classes. Please note that many of the concepts covered in lecture will not be covered in the required readings and vice versa.

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

Evaluation in this course will be based on understanding and analysis of assigned material, submitting reading responses, a theory paper, and an exam. Students will be evaluated as follows:

- Reading Responses, due most classes, submitted to Avenue to Learn – 50%
- Theory Paper – *On Liberty*, due Tuesday, May 19 – 25%
- Take Home Exam, due Wednesday, June 17 – 25%

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

Students are expected to prepare for class by completing the assigned readings and submitting reading responses to Avenue over the term, writing a theory paper, and writing a final exam.

### **Reading Responses (50%), 10 submissions**

Over the course of the term, students will submit to Avenue to Learn their answer to the Reading Response question. Each Reading Response assignment is worth 5% of the final grade. Each response must: be at least 1 double-spaced page in length; directly answer the question posed; reference the readings; avoid summarizing the readings. Each response must be submitted to Avenue to Learn the day following the class in which the Reading Response question is posed. Reading Responses will not be accepted after the due date unless they are accompanied with documentation.

### ***On Liberty* Paper (25%), due May 19**

Students will submit a 5-page (double-spaced) paper that addresses the following:

In *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill argues: “If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind” (II, 1).

What is Mill’s justification for this argument? In Mill’s opinion, what limitations, if any, should there be on this right to free speech? Recollect the episode of TVO’s *The Agenda*. How would Mill respond to the speech issue in this case? Do you agree with Mill’s likely response?

The only resources needed to complete this assignment is *On Liberty* and the episode of *The Agenda*, therefore, no other resources should be used. The main goal here is to

test your ability to read through, summarize, and interpret a work of serious political theory. The paper is due May 19 submitted to Avenue to Learn Assignments (Turnitin).

### **Take Home Exam (25%), due June 17**

The Take Home Exam covering course material for the term will be assigned on June 15 and due on June 17 at 2355, submitted to Avenue to Learn (Turnitin). Late exams will not be accepted, unless they are accompanied with documentation.

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

### **Week 1 (May 4 – May 6, 2020)**

**May 4– Introduction – What is Political Science? What makes something ‘political’?**

**May 6 – Democracy**

Readings:

Held, David. 1992. “Democracy: From city states to a cosmopolitan order?”  
Political Studies XL Special Issue: 10-39.

**Reading Response: Can and should democracy be extended to the international system?**

Notes: Democracy Reading Response due May 7 submitted to Avenue to Learn

### **Week 2 (May 11 – May 13, 2020)**

**May 11 – Socialism & Conservatism**

Readings:

Political Ideologies: Chapter 4 (Socialism): 71-98 & Chapter 3 (Conservatism):  
47-70

**Reading Response: Can we have true equality in a complex modern society?**

Notes: Socialism and Conservatism Reading Response due May 12 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**May 13 – Liberty**

Readings:

Political Ideologies: Chapter 2 (Liberalism): 19-46

Youtube: When Is Free Speech Hate Speech (The Agenda by Steve Paikin-  
50:26)

Notes: By this point you should have read: J.S. Mill's On Liberty and watched the episode of The Agenda that deals with the question in the Canadian context.

**Week 3 (May 18 – May 20, 2020)**

**May 18 – Victoria Day – No Class**

Notes: **On Liberty PAPER DUE 19MAY2020 – submitted to Avenue to Learn**

**May 20 – Feminism**

Readings:

Chap 8 (Feminism): 179-212

NFB: Status Quo? The Unfinished Business of Feminism in Canada

**Reading Response: Are rights, rewards, and representation skewed against women?**

Notes: Feminism Reading Response due May 21 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**Week 4 (May 25 – May 27, 2020)**

**May 25 –The political executive in Canada.**

Readings:

Canada Guide: The Monarchy in Canada; The Governor General

Forsey, Eugene. How Canadians Govern Themselves, 32-40

Malloy, Jonathan. 2004. "The Executive and Parliament in Canada." The Journal of Legislative Studies. 10, 2/3: 206-217.

**Reading Response: Does the Prime Minister have too much power?**

Notes: The Political Executive Reading Response is due May 26 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**May 27 The Legislative: House of Commons and The Senate**

Readings:

Canada Guide: The House of Commons; The Senate

Forsey, Eugene. How Canadians Govern Themselves, 41-45

Thomas, Paul G. 2019. "[Moving Toward a New and Improved Senate.](#)" Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) Study No. 70.

**Reading Response: Should the Senate be reformed? Why or why not?**

Notes: The Legislative Reading Response is due May 28 submitted to Avenue to Learn.

**Week 5 (June 1 – June 3, 2020)**

**June 1 – The Judiciary and the Canadian Constitution**

Readings:

Canada Guide: The Constitution of Canada; The Canadian Judicial System

Forsey, Eugene. How Canadians Govern Themselves, 8-19

Russell, Peter. 2017. "Selecting Supreme Court Justices: Is Trudeau's Sunny Way a Better Way?" *New Brunswick Law Journal*. 68: 3-17.

**Reading Response: Is the selection of Supreme Court Justices fair for all Canadians?**

Notes: The Judiciary Reading Response is due June 2 submitted to Avenue to Learn.

**June 3 – Federalism and Public Administration**

Readings:

Canada Guide: Provincial & Local Governments: Bureaucracy in Canada

Forsey, Eugene. How Canadians Govern Themselves, 20-23

Ng, Eddy S. and Greg J. Sears. 2015. "Toward Representative Bureaucracy: Predicting Public Service Attraction Among Underrepresented Groups in Canada." *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. 35(4): 367-385.

**Reading Response: Is the federal government a fair employer?**

Notes: The Public Service Reading Response is due June 4 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**Week 6 (June 8 – June 10, 2020)**

**June 8 – Political Parties and Elections Review**

Readings:

Canada Guide: Political Parties: Elections in Canada

Goodman, Nicole and Zachary Spicer. 2019. "Administering elections in a digital age: Online voting in Ontario municipalities." *Canadian Public Administration*. 62(3): 369-392.

**Reading Response: Should elections in Canada include online voting?**

Notes: The Political Parties Reading Response is due June 9 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**June 10– Indigenous Peoples**

Readings:

Canada Guide: The Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. 2015. Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: **Pages 237-275.**

NFB: nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up

**Reading Response: What are the key issues facing Indigenous Peoples in Canada?**

Notes: Indigenous Peoples Reading Response is due June 11 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**Week 7 (June 15 – June 17, 2019)**

**June 15 - Quebec Nationalism**

Readings:

NFB: FLQ October Crisis 1970

**Reading Response: Can Quebec be a sovereign state?**

Notes: The Quebec Nationalism Reading Response is due June 16 submitted to Avenue to Learn

**June 17 – Final Take Home Exam Due – Submitted to Avenue to Learn**

**Course Policies**

**Submission of Assignments**

Please submit each Reading Response to Avenue to Learn Assignments the day after the class in which the question is posed.



Please submit the On Liberty assignment and the Final Exam to Avenue to Learn Assignments (Turnitin).

## **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**

On Liberty Paper is due on Tuesday May 19 at 23:55, submitted to Avenue to Learn Assignments (and Turnitin). Late Papers will be penalized at 2% per day. Therefore, if you submitted a paper five days past the deadline, the maximum mark you could receive would be 90%. The final deadline for papers is May 27. Papers will not be accepted after May 27 unless they have documentation.

The Take Home Exam deadline is June 17 at 23:55. The exam will not be accepted after June 17 unless it is accompanied with documentation.

A hard copy of the Reading Response must be submitted during the class in which the Reading Response question is posed. Reading Responses will not be accepted after the corresponding class unless they are accompanied with documentation.

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

The expectation for this course is that all components (including tutorial participation) will be completed. In the event of an illness or other approved absence (supported with documentation), an alternate submission date for written work should be arranged with the course instructor as soon as possible.

## **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.