POLITICAL SCIENCE 1119—SECTIONS 001 & 002

INTRODUCTION TO CANADIAN POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

FALL 2011

Instructor:   Dr. Stephen Phillips
Office:       Room B247c
Telephone:    604-323-5828
E-Mail: sphillips@langara.bc.ca
Office Hours: Monday, Thursday: 1030 – 1130; Tuesday: 1030 - 1130; 1800 – 1830; Friday: 1030 - 1100; or by appointment

Required Textbooks


Note: This textbook may instead be purchased as an e-book. On purchasing the e-book at the College Bookstore, students will be given a receipt bearing a url and access code. On entering that information into their computer, students will be given the option of downloading the book to their computer or accessing it online. The e-book sells at a discount of up to 50%, but it expires after 180 days.


Reference (recommended but not required for purchase):


In addition to the above, students will be provided with several handouts throughout the term. Time permitting, several videos will be presented in class.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the structure of Canadian government at the national level and examines some of the social and political forces that shape the political system. Topics
include federalism, Parliament, constitutional developments since the 1960's, political parties, regionalism, and the Charter of Rights. In addition to providing students with knowledge of the major institutions and processes of Canadian government, the course is designed to help students think critically about government and politics. As such, the course should be of interest both to students who wish to take a single course in political science and to those who intend to pursue further political science studies.

**Learning Objectives**

On the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1) identify the major institutions of Canadian national government;
2) recognize the principal forces that shape political behaviour in Canada;
3) describe and critically appraise leading academic theories of Canadian politics; and
4) develop an informed understanding of current issues in Canadian politics.

**Course Requirements**

Students are expected to attend and participate in seminars, to do the weekly readings (indicated below), to write four quizzes, to take a mid-term examination, to research and write an 8-page term paper, and to take a final examination. Several seminars will be held throughout the term, the object of which is to allow students to discuss selected issues raised in the readings. Seminar marks will be awarded for attendance and participation. Seminar topics and discussion questions will be distributed in class in the week prior to the seminar.

As seminar and class discussions will frequently refer to current national political events, students are strongly encouraged to read a daily newspaper (preferably the *Globe and Mail*), watch the CBC or CTV National News, or listen to the CBC Radio News. The on-line edition of the *Globe and Mail* is highly recommended ([http://www.globeandmail.com](http://www.globeandmail.com)).

The mid-term and final exams will be based on the assigned readings and on materials covered in the lectures. The quizzes will be based on specific chapters in the textbooks, notice of which will be provided in advance. A list of topics for the term paper will be distributed in class early in the term. In the absence of a documented medical excuse, late papers will be subject to a deduction of 2 percentage points per day.

**Evaluation**

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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Examination</td>
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<td>Term Paper</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Seminars</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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Final marks will be awarded in the form of letter grades. The percentage point equivalents of letter grades are indicated below:

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<td>A</td>
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Course Outline

September 6-9  
Introduction; historical context  
Readings: Dyck: Chp.2

September 12-16  
Principal cleavages  
Readings: Dyck: Chps. 3, 5

September 19-23  
Constitution  
Readings: Dyck: Chps. 17; Reader: Items 1-6

September 26-30  
Federalism (1)  
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 18; Reader: Items 7-10

October 3-7  
Federalism (2)  
Readings: Reader: Item 11

Seminar 1

*** No classes on Monday, October 10th: Thanksgiving Day ***

October 10-14  
The Executive  
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 21; Reader: Items 12-16

*** Mid-Term Exam: Tuesday, October 18th ***

October 17-21  
Parliament (1)  
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 23 (pp.617-644); Reader: Items 17-19

October 24-28  
Parliament (2)  
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 23 (pp.644-653); TBA

October 31-Nov. 4  
The Judiciary  
Readings: Dyck: Chp.24; Reader: Items 20-23

*** Term Paper Due: Monday, November 7th ***

*** No classes on Friday, November 11th: Remembrance Day ***

November 7-11  
The Charter of Rights  
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 19; Reader: Items 24-26
November 14-18  Political parties (1)
Readings: Dyck: Chp. 14

November 21-25  Political parties (2)
Readings: Reader: Item 27

Seminar 2

November 28-Dec. 2  Elections
Readings: Dyck: Chp.13; Reader: Items 28-30

FINAL EXAM PERIOD:
MONDAY, DECEMBER 5th - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16th

Online Resources

- There is a website for this course located on the Langara College server. There I will post important announcements previously made in class. It will also serve as a discussion board on which you can post questions and comments about the course material and I can post replies. Lecture notes, however, will not be posted there, so be sure to attend class regularly!
  To access the online site for POLI 1119, log into myLangara then click the myCourses tab. Here you will find all of the courses in which you are registered that have established online pages. Click the link to POLI 1119. For further details, go to the online orientation page at http://www.langara.bc.ca/edtech/orientation_online/index.html

- The Thomson Nelson website contains some useful features, including self-tests for each of the chapters in the textbook. The URL is:
  http://www.canadianpolitics6e.nelson.com/student/