

POLA51H3S Critical Issues in Canadian Democracy

Thursday 9-11am, Rm: HW216

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1 Course Description

This course examines from the standpoint of fundamental concepts in political science the merits and feasibility of alternative courses of action on critical issues in Canadian democracy. Should Canada have a system of universal publicly funded health care? Should Canada provide financial aid to poor countries? Should Canada reduce its carbon emissions to combat global warming? Should Canada reform its electoral system? By the end of this course, students will understand the main ideas behind alternative positions on these and other issues, as well as the challenges and consequences of implementing these positions in the Canadian context. Coverage includes aboriginal rights, Quebec separatism, multiculturalism, electoral reform, parliamentary reform, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, health care policy, foreign policy, and environmental policy.

2 Assessment

2.1 Schedule and Weighting

Tutorials	10%	
Midterm Exam	25%	Date: February 10.
Essay	30%	Due: March 17.
Final Exam	35%	Final Exam Period

2.2 Tutorials

The participation component of your grade is based on the quality and quantity of your contributions to tutorial discussion.

2.2.1 Tutorial Enrollment

Students who are unable to enroll in one of the available tutorial times must provide to the instructor, at the beginning of the course, a copy of their course timetable and a note indicating the conflict between their class schedule and all other available tutorial times. Where such conflicts are proven to exist, students will be added to a tutorial that does not conflict with their class schedule.

2.2.2 Tutorial Schedule

- January 27: What is sovereignty? What does it mean to be a sovereign country? Is Canada sovereign? Does the concept of Aboriginal sovereignty make sense? Why or why not? Is it compatible with the concept of Canadian sovereignty?
- February 3: Multiculturalism: What was the policy of multiculturalism intended to accomplish? Did it accomplish those objectives? (+ Midterm Review)
- February 17: Is the prime minister too powerful? List the levers of prime ministerial power. List the limits and checks on prime ministerial power.

- March 3: Essay writing tutorial - The research for your paper should be finished by now.
- March 10: How do views about representation shape proposals for parliamentary reform? How do competing views about democracy influence arguments about the judiciary? Is the Charter undemocratic? Who benefits and who loses from the Charter? Did the Charter change Canadian society?
- March 17: Should Canada adopt a system of proportional representation? List the costs and benefits of SMP and PR systems. Who benefits and who loses from these system? What are the political obstacles to electoral reform in Canada?
- March 31: Should Canada privatize health care? Should Canada decrease foreign aid spending? Try to reach agreement on lists of costs and benefits of alternative positions on these issues? Try to reach agreement on the importance that should be assigned to each element on these lists. Where is agreement hardest to reach?
- April 7: In what ways are Canadian policymakers constrained politically in the pursuit of the different policy objectives that have been discussed over the past three weeks? (+ Essays Returned)

2.3 Essay Assignment

The essay assignment in this class requires a demonstrated understanding of relevant academic readings and an ability to synthesize these readings into a coherent analytical argument. The essay is 7 pages, double-spaced, with 3.5cm margins and 12pt Times New Roman Font. Students who struggle with writing are expected to seek help from the UTSC Writing Center.

2.3.1 Essay Grading Criteria

- Style (10%): The essay follows perfectly the formatting guidelines laid out in the APSA Style Manual for Political Science or, equivalently, the author-date style in the 15th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. The essay is devoid of typographical errors.
- (15%) Writing: The essay is well-written. It is grammatically sound and easy to read. Each paragraph contains a single major idea. There are no run-on or incomplete sentences. Punctuation is used properly. The writing is succinct: it is creative, but not wordy. All quotations are properly introduced by preceding text.
- Research and Understanding (50%): The essay draws on relevant, academically rigorous and documentable sources of existing research, including articles in refereed journals, books from university and other established presses, and official government documents and sources of data. It does not use any unsourced or anonymous internet sources (e.g., Wikipedia), nor does it rely extensively on easy sources of general information like news media, political party websites, and interest group websites. If students are unsure about the quality of a source, they should consult their TA. The essay demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the cited readings. The essay cites relevant components of these readings but is not stacked with general citations to irrelevant sources. The in-text citations to specific arguments from sources include at least one exact page number on which the argument appears.
- Argument (25%): The essay analyzes and synthesizes the arguments in relevant course readings to support the development of a single central thesis. This thesis is creative. It is stated clearly at the outset of the essay, and the remainder of the essay is organized explicitly and logically around supporting this thesis. The essay does not rely heavily on quotations or on tight paraphrasing of wording from sources. Rather, the essay uses original language to characterize the main points from relevant sources.

2.3.2 Contesting a Grade

Students who are not satisfied that their grade on the midterm or the essay is a fair assessment of the quality of their work should arrange a meeting with the TA. This meeting should take place no earlier than one week and no later than two weeks after the student has received their grade. Students who wish to have their work reevaluated will need to provide to the TA a (maximum) one-page description of why they consider the grade to be lower than it should be in light of the specific criteria of evaluation spelled out in this syllabus in the case of essays, or in the summary of midterm answers in the case of the midterm. The TA will use this letter as a guideline for reevaluation. If students are still not satisfied with their grade after it has been reevaluated, students may ask the instructor to reevaluate their work. In order to request reevaluation by the instructor, students must provide to the instructor the original copy of the submitted essay/exam, all comments from the TA, the student's one-page request for reevaluation that was submitted to the TA, and a further (maximum) half-page description of precisely why the comments from the TA's reevaluation do not address the student's concerns about their grade. The instructor will use the student's written comments as a guideline for reevaluation.

2.3.3 Essay Late Penalties

The essay assignment is due in hardcopy and to turnitin.com on March 17. **Work is not considered to have been submitted until it has been submitted both in hardcopy and to turnitin.** The late penalty is 5% for each day, or part thereof, that the work is late (including weekends).

2.3.4 Extensions

Extensions will be granted in cases where students have official documentation from a qualified professional indicating clearly that a medical or psychological condition precluded them from completing the assigned work by the deadline. The documentation must indicate the date of the professional assessment as well as the specific period of time for which the student has been incapacitated. In terms of what constitutes official documentation, University policy stipulates that

petitions based on medical grounds must be supported by an original medical certificate stating both that the student was examined and diagnosed at the time of illness and was examined on the day of the exam or immediately after (i.e. the next day). A statement from the physician that merely confirms a report of illness and/or disability made by the student will not be acceptable to justify the absence.

If students are experiencing family or personal difficulties, they may also provide detailed documentation from the Health & Wellness Center. The regular late penalty will be imposed in all other cases, without exception. All requests for extensions will be handled by the instructor according to these criteria.

2.3.5 Statement on Academic Integrity

Students who work hard and play by the rules will not come out of this course with a lower grade than someone who cheats. As the University Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities points out:

Honesty and fairness are considered fundamental values shared by students, staff and faculty at the University of Toronto. The University's policies and procedures that deal with cases of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, are designed to protect the integrity of the institution and to maintain a community where competition is fair. As a result, U of T treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. If it has been alleged that you committed an academic offense, you will find that the allegation is dealt with formally and seriously, and that the penalties can be severe if it is determined that you did cheat. All of the policies and procedures surrounding academic offenses are dealt within one

policy: The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (the 'Code'). This booklet on Academic Integrity is intended to supplement the Code, but not to take its place as the official document on these matters. Nor does this booklet take the place of legal counsel. The full text of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters can be found in your Faculty Calendar or online at www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/behaveac.html.... **Ignorance of the rules does not excuse cheating or plagiarism.**

All instances of academic misconduct will be forwarded to the Dean's office for further review and discipline, without exception. For more information, please visit the website of the Center for Teaching Support and Innovation at the University of Toronto: Academic Integrity at the University of Toronto. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask the instructor, your teaching assistant, or the staff at The Writing Center. There are many sources of support and information available about this issue for students at the University of Toronto. It is solely the responsibility of the student to take advantage of these resources. To reiterate, uncertainty about what constitutes plagiarism will not at all mitigate the severity of the consequences in cases where plagiarism occurs.

2.3.6 Statement on the Use of *Turnitin*

To deter and detect academic misconduct, this course uses, among other things, *turnitin.com*, a tool which facilitates an analysis of textual similarities between sources. Thus,

students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

For instructions re: how to sign up for turnitin, see the University's *Turnitin Guide for Students* After you have created your own account, you may register for the course with the following information:

- The Course ID is: 3711967
- The Course Password is: Canada

2.4 Exams

The examinations in this class will be comprised of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The final exam will cover material from the entire course, though it will focus primarily on material covered after the midterm.

2.4.1 Missing the Midterm

Students who do not write the midterm will have to provide to the instructor appropriate documentation, as per University policy. University policy stipulates, for example, that

petitions based on medical grounds must be supported by an original medical certificate stating both that the student was examined and diagnosed at the time of illness and was examined on the day of the exam or immediately after (i.e. the next day). A statement from the physician that merely confirms a report of illness and/or disability made by the student will not be acceptable to justify the absence.

If you are experiencing family or personal difficulties that you are not comfortable discussing with me, I can also accept documentation from the Health & Wellness Center.

2.4.2 Missing the Final

For information about missing the final exam, which is not handled at the course level, please see The Office of the Registrar.

3 Texts and Materials

- Charlton, Mark, and Paul Barker, eds. 2009. *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*. 6th Edition. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education (available in the bookstore).
- Griffiths, Rudyard, ed. 2010. *The Munk Debates*. Vol.1. Toronto, ON: House of Anansi Press (will be available in the bookstore later in the semester).
- All other readings are available on-line through the library website or, if they are not available there, via blackboard. If students have questions about how to access academic articles via the library website, they should consult the email and communication policy in this syllabus (below).

4 Email and Communication Policy

The number of students in this course necessitates a communication policy. For most issues, a student's first point of contact in the course is the syllabus. Questions about course content, exam and essay expectations, and deadlines should first be directed to the syllabus, and then to a TA.

Substantive questions should first be directed to a TA. The TAs in this course are very capable of answering questions about political science, and they are happy to help.

Questions about research should first be directed to the library Help Section and, if that does not resolve the issue, students should contact a librarian via appointment, email, telephone or chat. For more information, see the UTSC Library Contact Information.

Questions may also be directed to other students, the TAs, and the instructor via the discussion board on the class blackboard page. The instructor and TAs will monitor the class discussion board on a regular basis.

5 Class Schedule

Class Attendance: In the event that a student has to miss a class, they are encouraged to use the discussion board on the class website to catchup. In the interests of fairness and efficiency, neither the instructor nor the TAs will provide information about missed classes. Students are invited to use the discussion board whenever they have a question, and to monitor this board regularly for an opportunity to answer the questions of others. The instructor and the TAs will monitor the discussion and interject when absolutely necessary, though, ideally, students are encouraged to answer one another's questions to the best of their abilities.

5.1 January 13: Introduction

5.1.1 Lecture

Introduction to Canadian Politics

5.1.2 Readings

- POLA51H3S Course Syllabus.
- APSA. 2006. Style Manual for Political Science <http://www.ipsonet.org/data/files/APSASStyleManual2006.pdf> (Accessed December 5, 2010).

5.2 January 20: From Colony to Nation to Colony?

5.2.1 Lecture

“Limited Identities” in Canada

5.2.2 Discussion

Is Canadian political culture becoming Americanized?

5.2.3 Readings

- Nesbitt-Larking, Paul. 2009. “Canadian Political Culture: The Problem of Americanization.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 4-21.
- Adams, Michael. 2009. “Canada and the United States-Separated at Birth.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 22-33.

5.3 January 27: Aboriginal Peoples

5.3.1 Lecture

5.3.2 Discussion

Are Aboriginal claims to sovereignty justified?

5.3.3 Readings

- Townshend, Roger. 2009. “The Case for Native Sovereignty.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 37-42.
- Flanagan, Thomas. 2009. “Native Sovereignty: Does Anyone Really Want an Aboriginal Archipelago?” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 43-53.

5.3.4 Tutorial

What is Sovereignty? What does it mean to be a sovereign country? Is Canada sovereign? Does the concept of Aboriginal sovereignty make sense? Why or why not? Is it compatible with the concept of Canadian sovereignty?

5.4 February 3: Multiculturalism

5.4.1 Lecture

The Mosaic and the Melting Pot: Is there really a difference?

5.4.2 Discussion

Does a policy of multiculturalism accommodate the competing demands for recognition in Canada? Was it supposed to?

5.4.3 Readings

- Seymour, Michael. 2009. "Quebec and Canada at the Crossroads: A Nation within a Nation." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 137-147.
- Chong, Michael. 2009. "Canada as One Nation." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 148-158.
- Trudeau, Pierre. 1971. "Announcement of Implementation of Policy of Multiculturalism Within Bilingual Framework." *House of Commons Debates*, October 8, 1971, 8545-8.

5.4.4 Tutorial

Multiculturalism: What was the policy of multiculturalism intended to accomplish? Did it accomplish its objectives? (+ Midterm Review)

5.5 February 10: Midterm

5.6 February 17: Executive Power

5.6.1 Lecture

The Laws and Conventions of Executive Power

5.6.2 Discussion

What are the benefits and drawbacks of a powerful executive?

5.6.3 Readings

- Mellon, Hugh. 2009. "Coming to Terms with Political Realities: Exploring the Breadth of Prime-Ministerial Power." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 162-176.
- Barker, Paul. 2009. "Limits on the Power of the Prime Minister." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 177-192.

5.6.4 Tutorial

Is the prime minister too powerful? List the levers of prime ministerial power. List the limits and checks on prime ministerial power.

5.7 March 3: Legislative Power and Representation

5.7.1 Lecture

Parliamentary reform and the concept of representation

5.7.2 Discussion

What does it mean to represent somebody?

5.7.3 Readings

- Kilgour, David, John Kirsner, and Kenneth McConnell. 2009. "Discipline versus Democracy: Party Discipline in Canadian Politics." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 219-224.
- Jackson, Robert J. 2009. "The Imperative of Party Discipline in the Canadian Political System 2007." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 225-231.
- Schouls, Tim. 2009. "Why Group Representation in Parliament is Important." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 339-351.
- Redekop, John H. 2009. "Group Representation in Parliament Would be Dysfunctional for Canada." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 352-367.

5.7.4 Tutorial

Essay Writing - An opportunity to ask questions about essay writing. This absolutely does not replace the help that you can get at the writing center. The research for your essay should be finished by now. (+ Midterms Returned)

5.8 March 10: Judicial Power and the Charter

5.8.1 Lecture

The Charter of Rights: The legalization of politics? The politicization of the judiciary?

5.8.2 Discussion

Who guards the guards?

5.8.3 Readings

- Martin, Robert. 2009. "The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is Antidemocratic and Un-Canadian." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 92-96.
- Bryder, Philip L. 2009. "The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is Antidemocratic and Un-Canadian: An Opposing Point of View." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 97-103.

- Hogg, Peter W. 2009. “Appointment of Justice Marshall Rothstein to the Supreme Court of Canada.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 195-204.
- Glenn, H. Patrick. 2009. “Constitutional Law, Politics, and the Supreme Court of Canada Appointments.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 205-216.

5.8.4 Tutorial

How do competing views about representation influence proposals for parliamentary reform? How do competing views about democracy influence arguments about the judiciary? Is the Charter undemocratic? Who benefits and who loses from the Charter? Did the Charter change Canadian society? How would you prove if it did or did not?

5.9 March 17: Elections and Voting

5.9.1 Lecture

The Politics of Electoral Reform

5.9.2 Discussion

Should Canada adopt a system of proportional representation?

5.9.3 Readings

- Hiemstra, John L., and Harold J. Jansen. 2009. “Getting What You Vote For.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 234-247.
- Wiseman, Nelson. 2009. “Not Knowing What You’ll Get.” In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 248-262.
- Cairns, Alan C. 1968. “The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-1965.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1(March): 55-80.

5.9.4 Assignments

Essay is Due to Turnitin; Hardcopy is due in Tutorial. Hardcopies will not be accepted during the lecture.

5.9.5 Tutorial

Should Canada adopt a system of proportional representation? List the costs and benefits of SMP and PR systems. Who benefits and who loses from these system? What are the political obstacles to electoral reform in Canada?

5.10 March 24: Healthcare Policy

5.10.1 Lecture

Why Canada has universal healthcare and the United States does not. Is it a good thing?

5.10.2 Discussion

Is universal healthcare a good thing for Canada?

5.10.3 Readings

- Heard, Andrew, and Daniel Cohn. 2009. "The Federal Government Should Stay Involved: The Case for a Strong Federal Role in Health Care." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 106-116.
- Parker, Paul. 2009. "The Case against a Strong Federal Role in Health Care." In *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, eds. Mark Charlton and Paul Barker. Toronto: Nelson Education, 117-134.
- Bell, Robert, Howard Dean, William Frist, and David Gratzner. "Health Care: Be it resolved that I would rather get sick in the United States than in Canada." In *The Munk Debates*, ed. Rudyard Griffiths. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 225-277.

5.11 March 31: Foreign Policy

5.11.1 Lecture

The Foundation of Canadian Foreign Policy

5.11.2 Discussion

How should Canada contribute to the international community?

5.11.3 Readings

- Belton, John, Rick Hillier, Gareth Evans, and Mia Farrow. 2010. "Humanitarian Intervention: Be it resolved that if countries such as Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Burma will not end their man-made humanitarian crises, the international community should." In *The Munk Debates*, ed. Rudyard Griffiths. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 59-111.
- Collier, Paul, Stephen Lewis, Dambisa Moyo and Hernando de Soto. 2010. Foreign Aid: Be it resolved foreign aid does more harm than good." In *The Munk Debates*, ed. Rudyard Griffiths. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 115-167.

5.12 Tutorial

Should Canada privatize health care? Should Canada decrease foreign aid spending? Try to reach agreement on lists of costs and benefits of alternative positions on these issues? Try to reach agreement on the importance that should be assigned to each element on these lists. Where is agreement hardest to reach?

5.13 April 7: Environmental Policy

5.13.1 Lecture

The politics of environmental policy in Canada

5.13.2 Discussion

Should Canada contribute to the fight against global warming? If so, how? What political obstacles might Canada have to confront in implementing such a policy?

5.13.3 Readings

- May, Elizabeth, George Monbiot, Lord Nigel Lawson, and Bjørn Lomborg. 2010. "Climate Change: Be it resolved climate change is mankind's defining crisis and demands a commensurate response." In *The Munk Debates*, ed. Rudyard Griffiths. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 171-221.

5.13.4 Tutorial

In what ways are Canadian policymakers constrained politically in the pursuit of policy objectives that have been discussed over the past three weeks? (+ Essays Returned)