

POLB50H3F Canada's Political Institutions

Wednesdays 9-11am, Rm: SY110 / Science Research Building

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1 Course Description

This course examines the institutional foundation of Canadian government. Institutions are written and unwritten rules that shape the relationships between actors. At the end of this course, students should be able to examine and assess the intentions and consequences of institutional design and reform in Canadian government. Topics include: sovereignty and the Canadian state; the Constitution and federalism; the formal and political executives; the House of Commons and the Senate; the bureaucracy; the Charter of Rights and the courts; the public policy process; and Canada's participation in international institutions.

2 Assessment

2.1 Schedule and Weighting

Participation	10%	
Writing Assignment#1	10%	Due October 5th
Midterm Exam	20%	November 2nd
Writing Assignment#2	25%	Due November 23rd
Final Exam	35%	Final Exam Period

2.2 Participation

The participation component of your grade is based on the quality of your contributions to tutorial discussion. Contributing to tutorial discussion does not mean talking all of the time. It means: a) reading the required readings; b) making thoughtful and relevant comments in tutorial; c) being courteous to your fellow students and respectful of opposing points of view; and d) not sitting quietly or monopolizing tutorial discussion.

2.3 Essay Assignments

The essay assignments in this class will involve doing research in addition to the course readings.

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.
- Writing (15%): 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.

- **Demonstrated Understanding (25%):** The essay demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the relevant course readings. The essay cites the relevant 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.
- **Research (25%):** The paper uses appropriate academic sources (e.g., journal articles and books) and does use as secondary sources unpublished work (e.g., internet sites), work by anonymous authors (e.g., Wikipedia), media reports, or the assigned readings from the course. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a source, please ask your TA or the professor.

2.3.2 Essay Late Penalties

The essay assignments are due to turnitin.com by the beginning of class on their respective due dates. The late penalty is 5% for each day, or part thereof, that the work is late (including weekends).

2.3.3 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 University for further review and discipline. 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 me.

2.3.4 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.

2.4 Exams

The examinations in this class will be comprised of short answer and essay questions, with approximately equal weight assigned to both types of questions in the midterm, and 2/3rds weight assigned to the essay questions in the final exam.

2.4.1 Missing the Midterm

Students who do not write the midterm exam will have to provide 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

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, Sixth Edition. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education.
- The course text is available at the bookstore. All supplemental readings are available on blackboard and/or online via the University of Toronto library website.

4 Class Schedule

Class Attendance: In the event that you have to miss a class, please use the discussion board on the class website to catchup. I encourage you to use this board whenever you have a question, and to monitor this board regularly for an opportunity to answer the questions of others. I will monitor the discussion and interject when absolutely necessary, though, ideally, I would encourage you to answer each other's questions to the best of your abilities.

4.1 September 14: Introduction

4.1.1 Lecture

Why Study Canadian Politics?

4.2 Tutorial

No tutorial this week.

4.2.1 Readings

- POLB50H3F Course Syllabus.

4.3 September 21: The Foundation and Evolution of the State

4.3.1 Lecture

Coercion, Authority, and the Canadian State

4.3.2 Tutorial

No Tutorial this week

4.3.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. 3-10, 27-46.

4.3.4 Assignment

Writing Assignment#1 Begins (10%)

4.4 September 28: The Pattern of the Constitution

4.4.1 Lecture

The Canadian Constitution

4.4.2 Tutorial

To what extent was Canada founded on the principle of parliamentary supremacy? To what extent on the principle of constitutional supremacy?

4.4.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, Chapter 17.
- Mallory, J.R. 1984. The Structure of Canadian Government, rev. ed. Toronto, ON: Gage, Chapter 1. (Blackboard)

4.5 October 5: The Provinces and the Federal System

4.5.1 Lecture

The Origins, Structure, and Evolution of Canadian Federalism

4.5.2 Tutorial

It is often argued that society shapes political institutions and that political institutions shape society. What insight does the case of Canadian federalism shed on this debate?

4.5.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 455-489.
- Laselva, Samuel. 1996. The Moral Foundations of Canadian Federalism: Paradoxes, Achievements, and Tragedies of Nationhood. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, Chapter 1. (Online via U of T Library)

4.5.4 Assignment

Writing Assignment#1 Ends - Due to Turnitin by the beginning of class

4.6 October 12: The Executive

4.6.1 Lecture

The Formal and Political Executive

4.6.2 Tutorial

What are the formal and informal ways in which power has come to be concentrated in the office of the prime minister? What are the formal and informal limits on this power?

4.6.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 545-582.
- Savoie, Donald J. 1999. Governing from the Center: The Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 71-108. (Blackboard)

4.6.4 Assignment

Writing Assignment#2 Begins (25%)

4.7 October 19: The Legislature

4.7.1 Lecture

The House of Commons and the Senate

4.7.2 Tutorial

Outline some ideas for reforming the Senate and the House of Commons. What goals would you aim to accomplish? What political obstacles might stand in the way of these ideas being implemented?

4.7.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 617-658.
- Docherty, David. 1997. Mr. Smith Goes to Ottawa: Life in the House of Commons. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, Chapter 4. (Online via U of T Library).

4.8 October 26: Midterm Exam

4.9 November 2: The Bureaucracy

4.9.1 Lecture

Responsible Government and Public Administration

4.9.2 Tutorial

In what ways have the lines of power and accountability changed in the Canadian bureaucracy? What are the implications for democracy and public administration in Canada?

4.9.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 583-615.
- Savoie, Donald. 2003. Breaking the Bargain: Public Servants, Ministers, and Parliament. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, Chapter 3, and pp.1-16, in that order. (Blackboard)

4.10 November 9: The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

4.10.1 Lecture

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

4.10.2 Tutorial

No Tutorial this week.

4.10.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 491-524.
- Cairns, Alan. 1992. Charter versus Federalism: The Dilemmas of Constitutional Reform. Montreal, PQ: McGill-Queen's University Press, Chapter 2. (Online via U of T Library)

4.11 November 16: The Courts

4.11.1 Lecture

The Judicial System and the Role of the Courts

4.11.2 Tutorial

Define democracy. In what ways does the Charter enhance democracy? In what ways does it undermine democracy? In what ways is your answer to these questions shaped by your definition of democracy?

4.11.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 659-683.
- Manfredi, Christopher. 2001. Judicial Power and the Charter: Canada and the Paradox of Liberal Constitutionalism. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 169-195. (Blackboard)

4.12 November 23: The Policy Process

4.12.1 Lecture

Policy-Making in Canada

4.12.2 Tutorial

No tutorials this week.

4.12.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 525-544.
- Triadafilopoulos, Triadafilos. 2010. "Global Norms, Domestic Institutions, and the Transformation of Immigration Policy in Canada and the US." Review of International Studies 36(1) 169-194. (Online via U of T Library)

4.12.4 Assignment

Writing Assignment#2 Due to Turnitin by the beginning of class (25%)

4.13 November 30: The International System

4.13.1 Lecture

4.13.2 Tutorial

No tutorial this week.

4.13.3 Readings

- Dyck, Rand. 2011. Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Education, 217-246.