

Political Science 203: U.S. Government and Politics

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19 September 2017

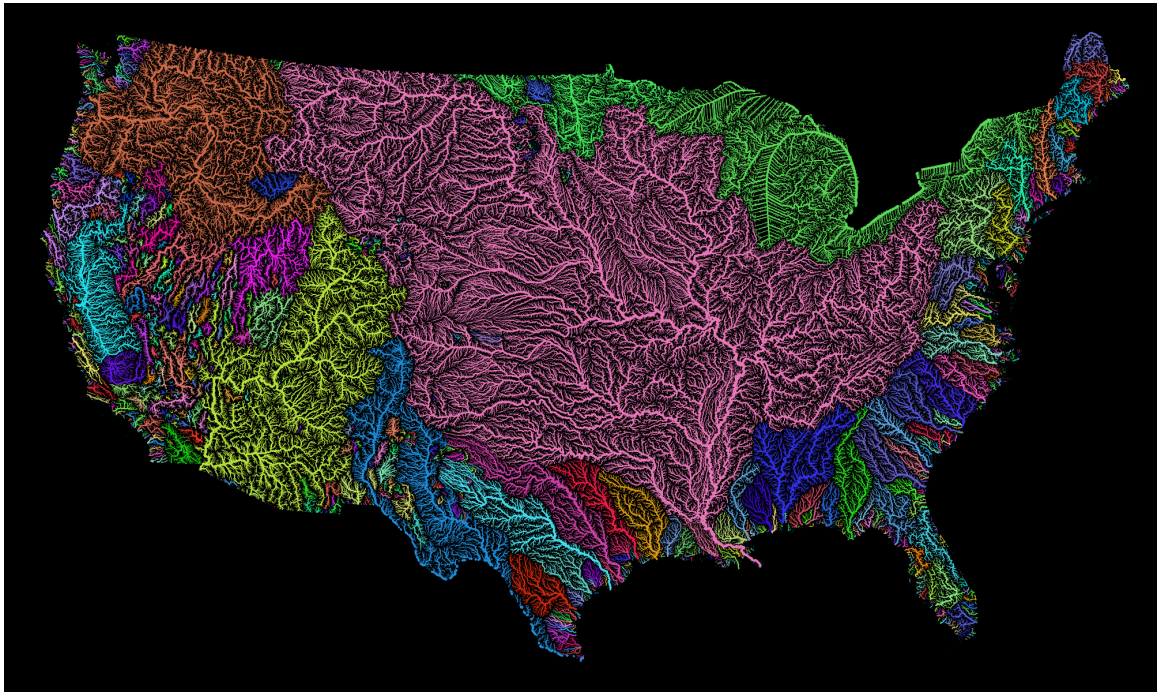


Figure 1: American watersheds

Office hours: Wednesdays between 6pm–9pm (email beforehand to agree on a location)

Email: I check my email once daily, Monday to Friday. Do not expect a response in less than 72 hours. I will not comment on essay drafts sent less than a week before the due date.

If you are contacting me about a new topic, please send me an email with a descriptive subject line like “Requesting comments on my draft”. Don’t just respond to the last email which I sent you. Often, five or six students will respond to one of my messages with questions about unrelated matters, making it very difficult for me to keep track.



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Figure 2: If you have a question, please check whether the answer is in the syllabus or in this document before emailing me or Dr. Hurl.

Read it once, read it twice, it's: [the syllabus](#).

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1 Land recognition

I acknowledge that the University of Toronto is built upon traditional territories. The territories include the Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, and the Métis Nation. I also recognize the enduring presence of Aboriginal peoples on this land.

The treaty that was signed for much of what is now urban Toronto is collectively referred to as the Toronto Purchase and applies to lands east of Brown's Line to Woodbine Avenue and north toward Newmarket.

2 Grading

Students are expected to attend lectures and tutorials, complete all readings and assignments, and be able to participate in tutorials in an intelligent and respectful manner. Your class participation grade will be based on your attendance and the quality of your contributions to classroom debates and discussion.

Tutorials are worth 10% of your final course grade. Students will be graded on the basis of their attendance and participation, as well as on their performance as an official debater in at least one in-class debate.

Grades will be assigned in keeping with the University of Toronto's grade scale:

Grade meaning	Refined letter grade scale	Numerical scale of marks
Excellent	A+	90–100%
	A	85–89%
	A-	80–84%
Good	B+	77–79%
	B	73–76%
	B-	70–72%
Adequate	C+	67–69%
	C	63–66%
	C-	60–62%
	D+	57–59%
Inadequate	D	53–56%
	D-	50–52%
	F	0–49%

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Simple attendance of the tutorials may be sufficient to earn an adequate grade, but will not result in a good or excellent one. Preparation and active participation in the discussion is expected from each of you. Attendance will be recorded using a sign-in sheet each week.

There are several reasons why attendance and active participation in tutorials are in your interest. For 2014, undergraduate tuition fees for Arts & Science at the University of Toronto were \$6,040.² If you take five classes per term, each term has about fourteen weeks of instruction, and you have a two-hour lecture and one-hour tutorial for each course each week, you are paying about \$14.50 an hour for the 420 hours in the fall and winter terms.

It can be demonstrated convincingly with statistical data that attending tutorials and being actively involved is correlated with strong performance in essays and exams.

¹Source: “University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy”, 26-Jan-2012. <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>

²Source: http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/link/students/fees15/dom_as.htm

3 Name cards

At the first tutorial, we will all write our names on paper cards which we will sit behind at all subsequent tutorials. I will collect the cards at the end of each tutorial, and bring them back for the next session.

In part, your tutorial grade will be an assessment of your active participation in the tutorials. I can't guarantee that I will be able to mark you down as an active participant in the discussion if you do not use a name card.

Don't trust your grade to my memory!

4 Computers

Laptops, cellular phones, and tablet computers are not required for these tutorials, and students are encouraged not to bring or use them. Using computers during tutorials distracts both the student with the computer and everyone around them.³ Studies have found that even when used entirely for class-related work, students using laptops in class understand less and earn poorer grades.⁴

If your note-taking system relies on a computer, you are free to use it. It is also OK to bring a computer because you want to be able to refer to electronic readings during the discussion without printing them.

Please do not send text messages during tutorials.

5 Amendment

In the event that anything in this handout needs to be changed, I will email an updated copy to everyone enrolled in my tutorials.

³<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/laptop-use-lowers-student-grades-experiment-shows-1.1401860>

⁴For a detailed discussion, listen to: <http://www.sindark.com/phd/teaching/2015-09-07-laptops-distracting.mp3>

6 Plagiarism

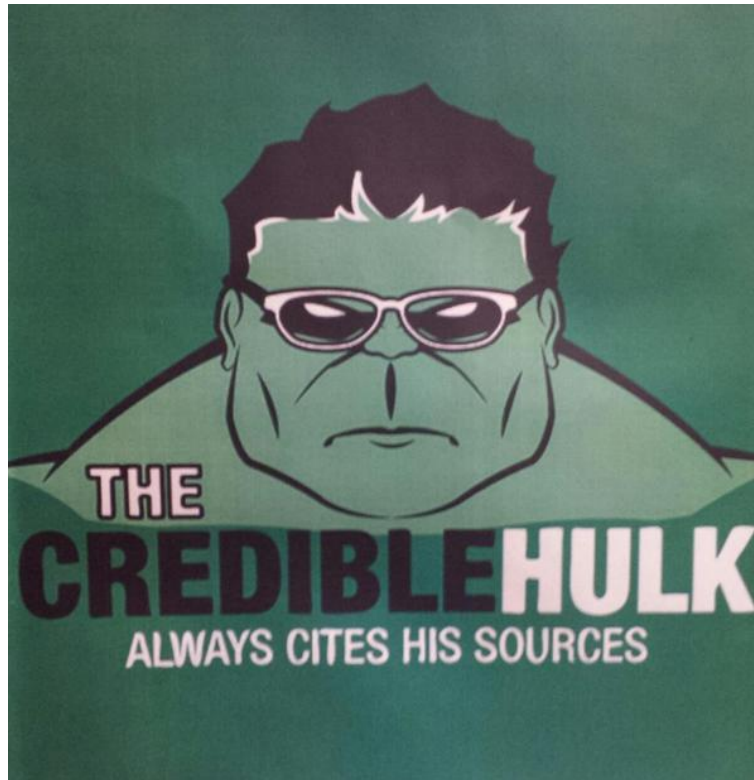


Figure 3: Be like the Credible Hulk.

Papers will be put through the TurnItIn system to detect plagiarism.

I will report all suspected cases of plagiarism to university officials for investigation.

Undergraduate students are sometimes misled into thinking that it is better to present the ideas (or even the exact words) of another scholar as their own original work. This is completely wrong. Citing relevant and convincing academic work is a mark of good scholarship. If something in somebody else's book or article or text seems important for the question you are studying, then you should cite and acknowledge them. Failure to do so will reduce the credibility and quality of your work, and may leave you exposed to penalties for academic misconduct.

Thanks for taking the time to read through this document. I look forward to working with you.

—Milan