Political Science 224: Canada in Comparative Perspective
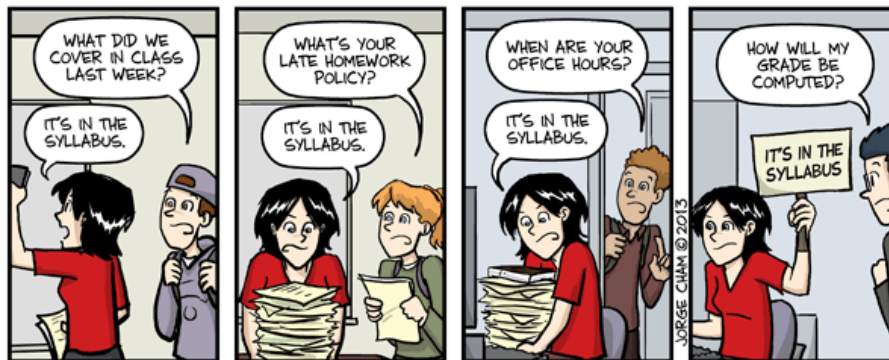
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Office hours: Wednesdays 10am–11am (location to be agreed upon in advance by email). My email is checked once daily, Monday to Friday

Abstract

This document explains how my tutorials will operate and how students will be graded for tutorial participation

Figure 1: If you have a question, please check whether it is in the syllabus or in this document before emailing me or the professor.

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

1   Grading

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 the basis of randomly-assigned presentations. Grades will be assigned in keeping with the University of Toronto's grade scale:[1]

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

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 are expected. 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

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

for Arts & Science at the University of Toronto are \$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. There is also a strong correlation between tutorial attendance and participation and results for both essays and exams.

2 Presentations

2.1 Notes on assigned readings

For **each** assigned reading, students are expected to prepare brief notes which answer three questions:

1. What was the main argument made in the reading?

2. What logic or evidence is used to support the argument? Is the article convincing?

3. What questions does the reading raise for the group discussion?

About one 3" by 5" index card worth of notes is expected for each reading. Notes can be handwritten or electronic. In addition to serving as preparation for presentations, these notes will be useful as study materials for exams.

If your notes could not fit on an index card, you are probably **summarizing and not analyzing** the material you have been given. One of the key skills this class will help you practice — and which is essential for success in university — is to commit the ideas from an academic source to memory and to be able to think about their conclusions critically.

2.2 Random oral presentations

For each reading, a random student will be called upon to give a short oral presentation during the tutorial, not to exceed one or two minutes in length. Overly long presentations are another sign that you are summarizing rather than analyzing. Answer the questions as concisely as you can. A shorter presentation that covers the main

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

facts is preferable to a longer one which covers a lot of detail without highlighting what is most important. The presentation should be based upon the written notes and cover the questions listed above. The purpose of the presentation system is to encourage all students to be familiar with all readings, which will in turn allow for an informed and useful conversation. The presentations will provide an introduction to the group discussion and give students experience with providing oral summaries of scholarly work.

In each case, the student who will provide the presentation will be selected using a random number generator. Those who have already presented may still be called upon to present. People who have not yet presented are fives times as likely to be called as those who have already done so in a term. Basically, there is a 'lottery' to determine who will present on each reading, and those who have not yet presented get five tickets instead of one.

If a student who is called upon to present is uncomfortable with making a short oral presentation, they may submit their notes at the end of the tutorial instead. Most notes will not be collected — only those of students who are called upon but who feel uncomfortable with presenting them orally. Submitting notes after a tutorial is not a substitute for being present. It is always better to be present and unprepared than to be absent.

3   Computers

Laptops 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 who is doing so and the people around them.[3] If, however, your whole note-taking system relies on a computer, you are free to use it. It is also acceptable 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.

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[3]See: http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/laptop-use-lowers-student-grades-experiment-shows-1.1401860
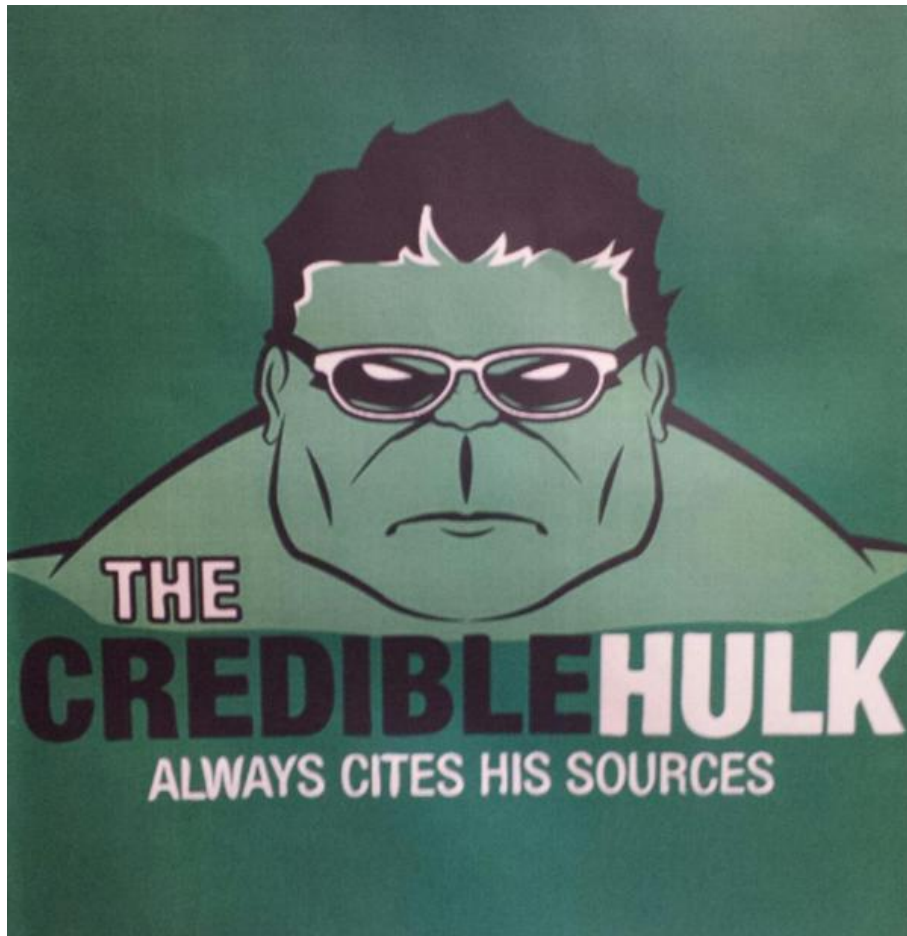
4 Plagiarism

Figure 2: Be like the Credible Hulk.

Papers will be put through the TurnItIn system to detect plagiarism. All suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to university officials for investigation.