

Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

POL 224 Y1Y
Canada in Comparative Perspective

Syllabus
Fall 2019 - Winter 2020

Class Time: Mondays, 6PM–8 PM
Class Location: MS 3154 (Medical Sciences Building 3154)

Instructors:

Fall 2019 Semester

Ludovic Rheault

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Winter 2020 Semester

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Note: An up-to-date version of this syllabus will be maintained on Quercus.

Course description:

This course introduces students to Canadian politics using a comparative approach. It provides essential knowledge about the variety of political regimes around the world, with concrete examples emphasizing the comparison of Canada with other countries. Topics covered include the evolution of democracies, political institutions, electoral systems, voting, ideology, the role of the state in the economy, as well as contemporary issues.

Section 1 begins with an introduction to key concepts in the study of politics, by emphasizing the attributes of democratic regimes and the problems that electoral systems are designed to solve. We then examine the fundamental actors of democracy: political parties, the media and voters. This section will include discussions of topical issues such as the 2019 federal election in Canada, the role of social media in politics and phenomena such as echo chambers and false news.

Section 2 examines key institutions and processes of government in developed liberal democracies, with particular attention to the Canadian case. We start with a study of the fundamental principles governing the state – the constitution – and examine a significant trend in modern democracies: the increasing political influence of the courts. The section continues with an examination of the other branches of government and a discussion of federalism.

This course pays particular attention to the importance of political economy for an understanding of politics, i.e., to the relationship between the production and distribution of wealth on the one hand and the exercise of political power on the other. Sections 3 and 4 address these themes most directly, examining how political life both conditions and is shaped by its economic and societal setting, domestic and international. The focus is again on developed societies, with special attention to the Canadian case.

Required text and readings:

Textbook: Cochrane, Christopher, Kelly Blidook and Rand Dyck. 2016. *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*. 8th Edition. Toronto: Nelson. ISBN-13: 9780176582951.

The textbook for the course is available at the UofT Bookstore. Consultation copies will be placed in the Course Reserve at the Robarts Library and the E.J. Pratt Library (Victoria University). Additional required readings focusing on comparative politics comprise journal articles and book chapters that will be made available online on Quercus, free of charge.

Course format:

The course comprises lectures given in class on Mondays, combined with tutorials supervised by teaching assistants (TAs) roughly every two weeks. Tutorial registration is done at the time of enrollment in the course, using ACORN. The room for each tutorial will appear on students' official schedule. Students can switch to a different tutorial group up to a few weeks into the semester by editing their choice on ACORN.

The allocation of groups to each TA will be announced at the beginning of the semester, and the schedule for tutorial weeks will be posted on Quercus.

Marking scheme:

Short paper (4-5 pages; due on November 11, 2019)	15%
Midterm test (December 5, 2019; Monday makeup class)	25%
Research essay (8-10 pages; due on March 9, 2020)	25%
Final examination (during April exam period)	25%
Tutorial participation	10%

Description of evaluations:

The first assignment (short paper due on November 11) requires students to propose a short analysis (4 to 5 pages) of a topic related to current affairs in Canada. A list of specific research questions will be distributed at the beginning of the term. The short paper will help students develop their writing skills and provide feedback for the full-length research essay during the winter semester.

For the second assignment (due March 9), students will be asked to submit a research essay of 8 to 10 pages, on a list of topics to be distributed in January. The essay will aim to answer a research question on one of the topic studied during the course, and will include an empirical analysis of news articles, governmental sources or similar forms of evidence, in addition to academic literatures.

The late penalty on written assignments is 2% of the value per day, including weekends.

The midterm test and final exam will comprise essay questions about the course materials. Each evaluation lasts two hours. In their answers, students are expected to demonstrate an acquisition of the materials covered in class and in the readings. The final exam is non-cumulative, i.e. it covers only the second half of the course.

Tutorials will involve student participation in debates about current issues in Canadian politics. Attendance and participation during tutorials will count toward 10% of the final grade.

Appealing a mark:

Demands for appeal regarding a mark are to be justified in writing (250 words maximum) and submitted to the TA who marked the work. The policy of the Faculty of Arts and Science reads:

If a TA originally marked the work, the remarking request should go first to the TA and any appeal of that should go to the course instructor.

Such a request entails a remarking of the work. Hence, if a remarking is granted, the student must accept the resulting mark as the new mark, whether it goes up or down or remains the same. Continuing with the remark or the appeal means the student accepts this condition.

Turnitin statement:

Submission of written work to Turnitin can be done using the link provided in the UofT portal (Quercus). The statement of the University regarding the use of Turnitin reads as follows:

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Illnesses and extensions:

Requests about extensions or the writing of a missed test require an accepted form of documentation. The Faculty of Arts and Science recognizes the following four (4) types of documentation:

- *The UofT Verification of Illness or Injury Form.*
- *The Student Health or Disability Related Certificate.*
- *The Letter of Accommodation from Accessibility Services.*
- *A letter from the College Registrar.*

Extensions on essays:

There is no need to contact the teaching staff regarding extensions. If you can provide one of the forms of documentation mentioned in the section above and are requesting an extension on an essay, please staple a visible copy of that documentation along with the essay at the time of submission. The medical documentation from UofT is designed to protect your privacy. The person marking the essay will make the necessary adjustment based on the dates indicated on the

documentation.

Missed midterm test:

Students who do not write the midterm test should provide one of the forms of documentation indicated above to register for a makeup test, and inform the instructor as early as possible after the missed evaluation.

Missed final exam:

A student who cannot write the final exam must contact their College Registrar directly to enlist for a make-up exam. The College will ask for the usual forms of documentation.

Class Schedule

Note: The topics in the class schedule below may be adjusted slightly during the term depending on progress and special events.

Fall 2019 Semester

SECTION 1. POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

September 9. Introduction: Concepts and current issues in Canadian politics.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 2.

September 16. Democracies and electoral systems.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 13

Carter and Farrell 2010 (Quercus)

September 23. Political parties and ideology.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 14

Dalton 2013 (Quercus)

Tutorial #1. September 23.

Discussion question: Should we reform the electoral system in Canada?

Tutorial Reading: Carter and Farrell 2010.

September 30. Media and political communication.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 12

October 7. Electoral campaigns I.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 12;

Bakshy et al 2015 (Quercus)

Tutorial #2. October 7.

Discussion question: Are “echo chambers” a problem for democracy?

Tutorial Reading: Bakshy et al 2015.

[October 14. Statutory holiday (Thanksgiving): No class.]

October 21. Electoral campaigns II.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 15

Allcott and Gentzkow 2017 (Quercus)

October 28. Voters.

Readings:

Bartels 2010 (Quercus)

Tutorial #3. October 28.

Discussion question: Can false news and misinformation influence the outcome of elections?

Tutorial Reading: Allcott and Gentzkow 2017.

[November 4. Reading week: No class.]

SECTION 2. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

November 11. Constitutions and the courts.

Readings: Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 17 and 19; Clark et al. 2013 (Quercus).

Short paper due today in class, November 11.

November 18. The Charter and the evolution of judicial review.

Readings: Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 17 and 19; Clark et al. 2013 (Quercus).

Tutorial #4. November 18.

Discussion question: Who benefits from the Charter in Canada?

Tutorial Reading: Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 19.

November 25. Parliamentary systems and bicameralism.

Readings: Newton and van Deth 2010; Docherty 2002 (Quercus).

December 2. Legislative process & Midterm review.

Readings: Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 23 (Quercus).

Tutorial #5. December 2.

Discussion question: Should we reform (or abolish) the Canadian Senate?

Tutorial Reading: Docherty 2002.

December 5. Midterm Test.

During the Monday makeup class period, Thursday, December 5, 6-8PM.

Winter 2020 Semester

January 6. Executive dominance.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 21, pp. 515-542; Ch. 22, pp. 543-553.

January 13. Federalism in comparative perspective.

Readings:

Reeta Tremblay, et al., *Mapping the Political Landscape*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Thomson Nelson, 2007), 217-239 (Quercus)

Tutorial #6. January 13.

Discussion Question: When, if ever, is federalism an appropriate form of government? Tutorial

Reading: Tremblay (2007)

January 20. The evolution of Canadian federalism.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 18.

SECTION 3. CIVIL SOCIETY

January 27. State, economy and civil society.

Readings:

Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 67-95 (Quercus)

Gianfranco Poggi, "The Nation-State", in D. Caramani, ed., *Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 85-107 (Quercus)

Tutorial #7. January 27.

Discussion Question: Is the modern state a threat to, or a guarantor of, human freedom?

Reading: Poggi (2008)

February 3. Political culture and identity.

Readings:

Ronald Inglehart, "Postmaterialist Politics", in Roy Macridis and Bernard Brown, eds., *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings*, 7th ed. (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1990), 257-266 (Quercus)

Robert Putnam, "The Strange Disappearance of Civic America," *The American Prospect*, December 1995 (Quercus)

February 10. Canadian political culture.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 11.

Mark Charlton and Paul Barker, eds., *Crosscurrents: Contemporary Political Issues*, 7th ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2012), chapter 1 (Quercus)

Tutorial #8. February 10.

Discussion Question: Is Canada's political culture essentially liberal and individualist?

Reading: Charlton and Barker, eds.

[February 17. Reading week: No class.]

February 24. Interest groups and new social movements.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 16.

Charles Lindblom, "The Market as Prison," *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 44, no. 2 (1982), pp. 324-336 (Quercus)

SECTION 4. POLITICAL ECONOMY AND CANADA IN THE WORLD

March 2. Varieties of political economy in liberal democracies.

Readings:

Rodney Haddow, "States and Economies: Studying Political Economy in Political Science", in C. Anderson and R. Dyck, ed. *Studying Politics* (Toronto: Nelson, 2016), chapter 5 (Quercus)

Kees van Kersbergen and Phillip Manow, "The Welfare State," in D. Caramani, ed., *Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 520-544 (Quercus)

Tutorial #9. March 2.

Discussion Question: Do Anglo-Saxon or non-Anglo-Saxon political economies do the best job of balancing economic prosperity and social equity?

Reading: Kersbergen and Manow

March 9. Canada's Political Economy I.

Readings:

Michael Howlett, Alex Netherton and M. Ramesh, *The Political Economy of Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999), chapter 4 (Quercus)

Lars Osberg, *The Age of Increasing Inequality* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 2018), chapter 1 (Quercus)

Research essay due today, March 9.

March 16. Canada's Political Economy II.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 8.

Tutorial #10. March 16.

To what extent has Canada's political economy escaped from the 'staples trap'?

Reading: Howlett et al. (from previous week)

March 23. Globalization and Liberal Democracies.

Readings:

David Held & Anthony McGrew, *Globalization/Anti-Globalization*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Polity, 2007), 1-8, 38-57 (Quercus)

Mark Brawley, "Globalization and Canada", in James Bickerton and Alain Gagnon, eds., *Canadian Politics*, 5th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 323-338 (Quercus)

March 30. Canada and the World.

Readings:

Cochrane et al. 2016, Ch. 10.

April Exam Period. Final examination.

Date and location will be determined by the Faculty of Arts and Science.