POL 2100: Issues and Foundations in Canadian Government
PhD Core Course

Syllabus

Class Time:
Mondays, 9am–12pm
Class Location:
Online-Synchronous (Zoom links available on Quercus).

Instructors: Alison Smith and Ludovic Rheault
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Office Hours: See Quercus page.

Course Description

This course relies on close readings of leading scholarship to prepare students to assess and carry out research in Canadian political science. By the end of the semester, students are expected to understand the leading debates and approaches in the field, and be able to rigorously evaluate their own and other scholars' research. As such, the core course serves an essential preparation to the major field examination (MFE) in Canadian politics. The course is divided into two sections: 1) Identity and Politics, and 2) Governance and Institutions.

Format

The format of core courses consists of three-hour seminars inviting a continued involvement of PhD students in a critical discussion of weekly readings. At the beginning of the semester, students will be assigned the task of leading the discussion for two specific weeks. The course also features two workshops on reading and writing academic research, one scheduled early in the semester on reading, and a second in the middle of the semester on writing.
Readings

Core courses feature a heavy load in terms of reading requirements, and students will need to plan sufficient time outside of class for preparing adequately. To facilitate organization, each week is associated with required readings that students are expected to have done before the seminar. The workload for a typical week consists of one book plus two articles or chapters. The recommended (MFE) readings represent seminal books or articles on the same topic that students are expected to gain familiarity with at the time of writing the MFE in Canadian politics.

Assessment

The quality of seminars depends on contributions from everybody. The seminar lead for each week will open the class with a 15-minute presentation. All students are expected to have made the designated required readings carefully, and to be able to provide insightful comments during class discussion.

Students will also produce a term paper, and will present their papers to the class.

The final exam will be a timed, take-home exam designed to serve as a useful practice for the MFE.

- Participation 10%
- Seminar Leads 20%
- Paper (15 pages) 30% (due end of semester)
- Paper Presentation 10%
- Home-Exam 30% (December exam period)

Abbreviations

UTP: University of Toronto Press
MQUP: McGill-Queen’s University Press
CUP: Cambridge University Press
OUP: Oxford University Press
CJPS: Canadian Journal of Political Science
Schedule

Week 1. Studying Canadian Politics
September 14

Reading Workshop

Required readings:

- Tolley, Erin. 2017. “Into the Mainstream or Still at the Margins? 50 Years of Gender Research in the CPSA” CJPS 50(1)

PART A: IDENTITY AND POLITICS

Week 2. Identity and Canadian Politics
September 21

Required readings:


MFE readings:

Week 3. Federalism and the Provinces
September 28

Required readings:


MFE readings:

- Paquet, Mireille. 2014. “The Federalization of Immigration and Integration in Canada” *CJPS* 47(3)
• Broschek, Jorg. 2010. “Federalism and Political Change: Canada and Germany in Historical-Institutionalist Perspective” CJPS 43(1)


**Week 4. Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Recognition**

October 5

**Required readings:**


**MFE readings:**


• Alcantara, Chris and Jennifer Nelles. 2016. A Quiet Evolution. Toronto: UTP.

Week 5. Statutory Holiday: Thanksgiving  
October 12  
Make up class on December 10

Week 6. Cities and Urban Politics  
October 19

Required:


MFE readings:


Week 7. Gender, Race, and Intersectionality  
October 26

Required readings:


MFE readings:

- Shachar, A. *Multicultural Jurisdictions: Cultural Differences and Women’s Rights* (New York: CUP) (Ch. 2).


**PART B: GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS**

**Week 8. Responsible Government**

November 2

**Writing Workshop**

**Required readings:**


• Savoie, Donald. 1999. *Governing From the Centre: The Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics*. Toronto: UTP. (Introduction and Ch. 3)

**MFE readings:**


**Reading Week**

November 9
Week 9. Parliament
November 16

Required readings:


MFE readings:


Week 10. The Welfare State and Social Policy
November 23

Required readings:


MFE readings:
• Banting and Myles. Inequality and the Fading of Redistributive Politics. Vancouver: UBC Press.
• Rodney Haddow. 2015. Comparing Ontario and Quebec: Political Economy and Public Policy at the Turn of the Millennium. Toronto: UTP.

**Week 11. Courts, Judicial Review, and the Charter**

November 30

**Term Paper Due**

**Required readings:**


**MFE readings:**

• Voth, Daniel. 2016. “Her Majesty's Justice Be Done” CJPS. 49(2).
- Radmilovic, V. 2010. “Strategic Legitimacy Cultivation at the Supreme Court of Canada: Quebec Secession Reference and Beyond” *CJPS* 43(4)

**Week 12. Elections and Party Systems**

December 7

**Required readings:**


**MFE readings:**


**Makeup Monday Class**
December 10 – paper presentations

**Paper Presentations**