

Royal Military College of Canada (Kingston)
POE205 – Canadian Politics and Society
Winter 2019
Professor: Stéphanie Chouinard

Department of Political Science
Office hours: Mondays 10:00-12:00 or by
appointment

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Class schedule: Mondays 0800-0850, Sawyer 3103; Thursdays 0800-0950, Massey 19

Course description

This introduction addresses political culture and socialization, federalism and the regions, parties and the electoral system, federal institutions, organization and accountability of the public service and armed forces, equity and diversity, role of the media, and Canada's place in the world.

Course objectives

This course introduces students to the fundamental features of democracy in Canada using the analytical tools of political science. After reviewing the sociological features of Canadian democracy, we will survey its main institutions, including the electoral system, Parliament, federalism and the *Charter*. Finally, we will discuss some of the key challenges facing Canadian democracy today, including the inclusion and recognition of minorities and the impact of globalization. At the end of the semester, students should be able to identify and analyze critically the main features and political dynamics of democracy in Canada.

Course requirements and expectations

Expectations towards officer-cadets are the following. Firstly, you are expected to attend the lectures each week. In order to prepare for the lectures, it is important to read the required texts. The mandatory readings are an integral part of the course for evaluation purposes and will not always be summarized during the lectures.

Secondly, all assignments must be submitted before the end of the term, whether these will be marked or not. If all work has not been submitted, the instructor reserves the right not to grade your final exam. This policy reflects RMC regulations:

Academic Regulations

7.3 Students must normally complete all required course work prior to the last day of the term in which the course is offered.

10.2 The instructor may refuse a student permission to write a final examination in a course if the requirements with regard to course work have not been met.

Thirdly, it is the officer-cadets' responsibility, both as students enrolled in this class and as Canadian citizens, to keep abreast of current issues in Canadian politics. An easy way to do so is

to read online news through the Globe and Mail, the National Post, the Toronto Star, Le Devoir, iPolitics, or the Ottawa Citizen websites. Current affairs shows, like Power and Politics (CBC News Network), also provide various viewpoints on unfolding events. The CBC web archives is an excellent place to start for a basic overview of some of the key historical debates in Canadian politics (<http://archives.cbc.ca>). Podcasts such as CANADALAND (<https://www.canadalandshow.com/shows/canadaland/>) and The Secret Life of Canada (<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/secretlifeofcanada>) can also be useful.

In the course of class discussions, I expect from you that you will express informed opinions and that you will be at all times respectful of your colleagues.

Finally, officer-cadets may expect from your instructor that she will guide you in an engaging and dynamic manner throughout the semester. I will always be ready to meet you to discuss the teaching material or any challenge you may be facing regarding this course. You can also expect from me that I provide useful feedback, in a timely manner, after each evaluation.

Absences

Class attendance is your main job as officer-cadets at RMC. If you need to miss class, I expect from you that it be motivated (chit, absence from class form, etc.). You are expected to be in class not only so that you don't miss material not found in the readings, but also because I expect you to participate significantly to discussions and activities in class.

Academic integrity

Academic misconduct consists of any form of plagiarism, cheating, or violations of academic ethics, essentially seeking to pass someone else's work as your own. Academic misconduct is a grave offence in any university, but even more so at RMC, because it is intrinsically counter to CAF values. Consequences of academic misconduct can range from failing the course to expulsion from RMC.

Academic Regulations

23. Academic integrity

Cheating includes:

- *An act or attempt to give, receive, share, or utilize unauthorized information or unauthorized assistance at any time for assignments, tests or examinations. Students are permitted to mentor or assist other students with assignments and laboratory reports, but, students will not permit other students to copy their work, nor will students copy other students' work, and they must acknowledge when they have received assistance from others;*
- *Failure to follow rules on assignments, presentations, exercises, tests, or examinations as detailed by the respective professor or test/exam invigilator;*
- *Unauthorized co-operation or collaboration;*
- *Tampering with official documents, including electronic records;*
- *Falsifying research, experimental data, or citations;*
- *The inclusion of sources that were not used in the writing of the paper or report; and*

- *The impersonation of a candidate at presentations, exercises, tests or an examination. This includes logging onto any electronic course management tool or program (e.g. Moodle, Black Board, etc.) using someone else's login and password.*

Plagiarism includes:

- *Using the work of others and attempting to present it as original thought, prose or work. This includes failure to appropriately acknowledge a source, misrepresentation of cited work, and misuse of quotation marks or attribution;*
- *Failure to acknowledge adequately collaboration or outside assistance and;*
- *Copying.*

Other violations of academic ethics include:

- *Not following ethical norms or guidelines in research;*
- *Failure to acknowledge that work or any part thereof has been submitted for credit elsewhere;*
- *Misleading or false statements regarding work completed; and*
- *Knowingly aiding or abetting anyone in committing any form of an Academic Integrity violation.*

Required textbooks

The following textbook is available at the RMC bookstore:

Rand Dyck and Christopher Cochrane, *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*, (7th ed.), Thomson/Nelson, 2014.

Other readings not in the textbook will be made available by the professor on Moodle. You may occasionally be sent newspaper articles by the professor through Moodle as well. Please read them before class, as they will be relevant for discussions.

Course evaluations

Your final grade will come from the following evaluations:

Identifying political phenomena (10% - due on January 24):

This assignment is an exercise in semiotics - the study of signs or symbols. In the study of politics, words and images are signs or symbols representing complex concepts, and they often have different meanings for different audiences. This is an important tool for understanding the world around you in general, and the nature of power and politics in particular.

Use a camera, cell phone, or sketch pad to create a document with **10 images** that are examples of political phenomena within the campus and/or the City of Kingston. Images from the web are also admissible. For each image, you must explain of what we are looking at, and, using concepts studied in class, how the phenomenon is political.

Keep a log of when and where each of the examples was located. This information needs to be included in the report, either with each image or as a list. The report will be graded on the relevance of the images (ideas), the clarity and accuracy of the explanation (expression) and the accuracy of record keeping (support). The images should be submitted as a package. **Submit the package as**

a Word document on Moodle.

Politics and Media: Differentiating fact, opinion, and fake (10% - due on March 7):

This assignment consists of an exercise in contents analysis aimed at giving you the tools for a critical analysis of news reported in the media. You will choose one of a series of newspaper articles chosen by the instructor and analyse its contents. You will be expected to identify which parts of the text are factual in nature (by fact-checking these elements) and which parts are the author's own opinion. You will then be expected to find a newspaper article that shows a divergent opinion, fact-check it, and explain which of the two articles you find most convincing and why. **Submit this assignment as a Word document on Moodle.**

Critical essay (40%):

You will write a critical essay (2000 words excluding footnotes and citations, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pts) on a key issue of Canadian politics, based on a choice of topics to be assigned by the instructor.

The final mark is divided between two evaluations:

10% will go to your **essay proposal**, which will include a research question and statement, outline, and annotated bibliography (I expect at least 5 academic sources) -- **to be submitted on paper in class on February 14**

30% will go to the **final essay** -- **to be submitted on paper and in Word format on Moodle during the last class on April 8**

Final examination (30%): During the official examination period

The final exam will consist of both short definition and essay questions, based on the lectures as well as reading material and discussions for the entire course.

Participation in class and online (10%): Throughout the semester

Students will be evaluated based on their participation to in-class and online discussions on Moodle, which will be posted sporadically.

Policy on references/citation style

You may use APA, MLA, or Chicago style in your citations – as long as you are being consistent throughout the assignment. If you need help regarding proper citation, this website is useful: <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/citation-styles>

Policy on late submissions

Work handed in late with no justification will receive a penalty of 10% per day; after 4 days, the professor reserves the right not to grade the assignment. Every assignment must be handed in before the end of the semester, in order for the student to be entitled to writing the final exam. This policy is drastic aims to foster good time management skills; a less punitive policy would be unjust towards officer-cadets who submit their work on time. Acceptable justifications include a chit from the doctor's office or a note from your Squadron / Division commander. If you know ahead of time that you will require an extension, please speak with the instructor as soon as possible, ideally 2 weeks before the deadline.

Annex A – Grading

Excellent:

A+ (94-100): Work of exceptional quality; meets all criteria for an “A”, but the ideas presented are original and add to existing debates in the field. This work could be submitted for publication in an academic journal.

A (87-93): Excellent work that meets all the criteria and exigencies of the exercise. The **argument** is clearly exposed; the **demonstration** is convincing and rests on coherent empirical and/or theoretical analysis; the work demonstrates an excellent capacity to think and write **synthetically** and a good comprehension of **concepts and sources mobilized**. The work **incorporates concepts and ideas learned in class and in readings**. The work is **structured in a coherent manner**. **Language and syntax** are of excellent quality. **References and bibliography** correspond to scientific standards.

A- (80-86): The work is of great quality and generally meets the criteria for an “A” grade, but there is space for minor ameliorations regarding coherence of the argument, concepts, sources, and/or quality of language.

Good:

B+ (76-79): The quality of this work generally meets the requirements for a “B” grade but is outstanding in a particular aspect, be it the quality or the coherence of the argument, the mastery of concepts and/or the structure and language quality.

B (73-75): Good quality work that generally meets the requirements of the exercise, but there is space for amelioration. For example, the argument is clear but could be enounced more explicitly and the demonstration could be more coherent. The text demonstrates a good understanding of the teachings of the course, but some elements are missing. A text that tends to resume the authors’ arguments or the course’s contents rather than to use them to build an original argument usually deserves a “B”. The text is well structure and the quality of language is satisfying but there is space for amelioration.

B- (70-72): Some weaknesses in the criteria mentioned for a “B” grade. No errors or major weaknesses in the content, but certain aspects need work in the coherence and clarity as well as structure. Some elements may be confusing or superfluous.

OK:

C + (66-69) / C (63-65) / C- (60-62): This work meets requirements but has important weaknesses either in the content, the structure, and/or language. For example, the argument is not clearly enunciated, or it is incoherent with the rest of the submission; the demonstration does not rest on factual elements or on a proper theoretical background. It does not incorporate adequately elements learned in class, or simple resumes them. Structurally, the text lacks cohesion, there are no links between the different elements, or there is no logic to the flow of the argument. Language and syntax are poor and make it difficult to read the text.

Pass:

D+ (56-59) / D (53-55) / (D- (50-52): The text meets minimal requirements for passing. Important weaknesses are found in the coherence or structure of the text; the argument is not clearly enounced or is confusing; there are important missing elements either theoretically or factually. Language, syntax, and structure are unsatisfactory and/or the text does not follow the expected guidelines in terms of format, length, references, etc.

Fail:

E (40-49): Unacceptable work. Presentation and contents are weak. The topic is not corresponding to the guidelines, the arguments is incomplete, confusing, demonstrates little or no understanding of elements learned in class; structure and language do not correspond to university standards.

F (0-39): Botched or incomplete work; absolutely does not meet minimal requirements. Insufficient effort or plagiarism.

Marking grid for final essay

Rubric	Explanation for grade	Grade
Ideas and demonstration	- Are your ideas original? - Do you make proper use of facts and concepts studied in class? - Is your argument clear and coherent?	/14
Support	- Do you make reference to existing literature? - Do you reliance on primary sources? - Do you make proper use of citations and footnotes/endnotes?	/8
Structure	- Is your text well organized? - Do you have a proper cover page? - Does your assignment contain references and a bibliography? - Is your paper paginated?	/8
Expression	Clarity of writing, spelling, grammar, etc.	(Up to -15%)
Total		/30

Annex B – Course schedule

**** Note that a few guest speakers will be invited to speak to all the POX205 cohorts over the course of the semester, to be scheduled on Monday evenings. The weekly schedule will be altered accordingly on a case-by-case basis.**

Week	Date	Topic	Objectives / <i>Assignment submissions</i>	Mandatory readings
1	7 Jan 10 Jan	Studying politics	Overview of the syllabus and expectations What is politics, and why is it important?	The syllabus Dyck and Cochrane, chapter 1
2	14 Jan 17 Jan	Canadian Democracy: A Fragmented Society?	The study of democracy: Key concepts and analytical tools Regionalisms in Canada Gender and politics Are social classes a thing of the past?	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 3, 7, 8
3	21 Jan 24 Jan	A Fragmented Society? (Ctd) French and English Canada	Two Solitudes? French and English Canada in context <i>“Identifying political phenomena” assignment due January 24</i>	Dyck and Cochrane, chapter 5
4	28 Jan 31 Jan	A Fragmented Society? (Ctd) Aboriginal Peoples and Immigration	Canada’s colonial legacy Canada’s immigration policy The challenges of multiculturalism and socio-economic integration	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 4, 6
5	4 Feb 7 Feb	Ideologies and Political Representation	The political spectrum The left and the right in Canada: still relevant? Political parties	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 11, 14
6	11 Feb	The Electoral System and Elections	The first-past-the-post electoral system Why the electoral system matters The decline in voter turnout	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 13, 15

	14 Feb		<i>Essay proposals due February 14</i>	
February 18-22: Reading week				
7	25 Feb 28 Feb	Interest Groups, Social Movements and the Media	The process of political socialization The role of media in a democracy How interest groups and movements influence politics	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 12, 16
8	4 Mar 7 Mar	The Constitution and Federalism	The Constitution: building blocks or gridlock? Canada is a federation: So what? <i>Media assignment due March 7</i>	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 17, 18
9	11 Mar 14 Mar	Government: Legislative and Executive	Parliament and the Prime Minister: Power imbalance? Majority vs. minority Parliaments: Does it matter?	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 21, 23
10	18 Mar 21 Mar	Government: The Judiciary and the Charter	The role of the judiciary in a democracy The <i>Charter</i> and its impacts on politics and Canadian society	Dyck and Cochrane, chapter 19
11	25 Mar 28 Mar	Government: Policymaking in Canada	The role of the public service The roles and obligations of a Canadian bureaucrat Meritocracy and Partisanship in the civil service	Dyck and Cochrane, chapters 20, 22 Philippe Lagassé, <i>Accountability for National Defence. Ministerial Responsibility, Military Command, and Parliamentary Oversight</i> , IRPP, 2010 (on Moodle)
12	Apr 1 Apr 4	Canada, the World, and the Role of the Armed Forces	Globalization and the Armed Forces Canada and Peacekeeping Protecting Canada's Arctic Frontier	DND, 2014, <i>The Future Security Environment, 2013-2040</i> , Chapter 1: Geopolitical trends, p. 1-20 (on Moodle) Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2016, <i>North of 60: Toward a Renewed Canadian Arctic Agenda</i> , chapters 1, 2, 6, and 12 or 13 (on Moodle)
13	Apr 8		Final Examination Review <i>Final essay due</i>	