

	<p>School of Arts & Science SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT PSC 290 Special Topics in Political Science Fall 2016</p>
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COURSE OUTLINE

The course description is online @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/psc.html>

1. Instructor Information

(a)	Instructor:	Mona Brash		
(b)	Office Hours:	Monday 11-12 & 2-3:30, Thursday 4:30-5:30, Friday 11-12 or by appointment		
(c)	Location:	Paul 237		
(d)	Phone:	Use email to contact		
(e)	Email:	Brashm@camosun.bc.ca		
(f)	Website:	n/a		

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to describe, explain, and critically assess:

1. Critically analyze and evaluate the complex and competitive array of Political Science sources, both primary and secondary.
2. Identify the central themes, concepts, and issues relating to the course topic with a focus on power, authority, legitimacy, and governance.
3. Critically analyze and apply the tools of Political Science, including case studies and comparative analysis, to issues of the course topic.
4. Synthesize and present varying and often competitive positions concerning the course topic.
5. Demonstrate skills in research, in creating arguments, and in written and oral communication.

3. Required Materials

Textbook:

Schmidt, Steffen W., Mack Shelley and Barbara Bardes. American Government and Politics Today (2016-2017 Edition). Stamford, Ct: Cengage Learning, 2017& 2015.

See Class Schedule for Online readings including:

- Newspaper articles
- Government Documents
- Court Cases

The Special topic for this semester is “American Government and Politics”

4. Course Content and Schedule

Sept. 6 Introduction, Syllabus, Basics

Sept. 8 Structure of US Government, President, Electoral College

Reading: Schmidt pp. 187, 226-235
 Commission on Presidential Debates
<http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=2016debates>

Q. What is the Electoral College?

Sept. 13 Polls, Media

Reading: Schmidt pp. 127-133

Q. How do polls influence elections?

Candidate Report Due

Sept. 15 Democratic Republic

Reading: Chapter 1 (all)

Q. How does a Democratic Republic differ from a Constitutional Monarchy?

Sept. 20 The United States Constitution

Reading: Schmidt, pp. 20-29

Q. Why did the “Founders” decide to have a constitution?

Sept. 22 United States Constitution, Debates

Reading: Schmidt pp. 30-42

Q. How can the US constitution be amended?

Sept. 27 Debate Discussion, US Federalism

Reading: Schmidt pp. 44-53, 60-64

Q. How is the US federation structured?

Debate Worksheet Due*

Sept. 29 Civil Liberties

Reading: Schmidt pp. 66-80

Q.

Oct. 4 Vice President, Civil Liberties

Reading: Schmidt pp. 81-90 & 243-245

Q. What is the role of the Vice President? Should Canada have a vice Prime Minister?

Oct. 6 VP Debate, Civil Rights (Bill of Rights)

Reading: Schmidt 92-108, 357-359

Charter of Rights and Freedoms

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html>

Q. Which of these rights sounds similar to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

****Vice President Debate Worksheet due****

Oct. 11 Presidential Debate #2, Civil Rights

Reading: Schmidt pp. 108-116
Charter of Rights and Freedoms
<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html>

Q. Has the USA overcome sex or gender discrimination?

Oct. 13 *Test 1*****

On material covered thus far

Oct. 18 Public Opinion and Political Socialization

Reading: Schmidt pp. 118-127 (again)
Fivethirtyeight <http://fivethirtyeight.com/politics/> (click on 2016 Election Forecast)

Q. What election outcome is forecast? On what basis?

Oct. 20 Debate, Clips, Coverage

Reading: Look at news coverage of the debate
Watch debate if possible

Q. Did this debate change anything? Were there any “aha” moments?

****Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography due****

Oct. 25 Interest Groups

Reading: Schmidt pp. 146-159

Q. Which interest groups have the most influence? Why? Do we have interest groups in Canada? Do any have influence?

Oct. 27 Campaigns

Reading: Schmidt pp. 173-187
Citizens United v. FEC summary <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2008/08-205>
Interests in case
<https://www.supremecourt.gov/Search.aspx?FileName=/docketfiles/08-205.htm>
Harper v. Elections Canada read up to *Cases Cited*
<http://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/2146/index.do>

Q. Should campaigns have funding limits? Should corporations be able to spend money on campaigns? Should there be third party advertising?

November 1 Voting

Reading: Schmidt pp. 188-196
ACLU & Voting Rights <https://www.aclu.org/feature/voting-rights-2016-whats-stake>
U.S. Supreme Court stance on North Carolina law to send signal on voting limits
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-court-election-idUSKCN10R290>

Q. What is voter suppression? Can a candidate “cheat” to become president?

Nov. 3 Electoral College, Polls**Reading:** Elections in Canada

<http://www.loppar.gc.ca/ParlInfo/Compilations/ProvinceTerritory/ProvincialFixedElections.aspx>

Read a reputable American source for election predictions

Q. Do we have fixed election dates in Canada? Who is predicted to win the presidential race?

Nov. 8 *Test 2******US Election day!**Nov. 10 US Election Results Group discussions*****Media Coverage Assignment due******Nov. 15 Congress****Reading:** Schmidt pp. 198-223

Q. What is Congress? How do the House of Representatives and Senate differ?

Nov. 17 The Presidency**Reading:** Schmidt 225-247

Q. Does it matter who the President is? Why or why not?

****Essay Due******Nov. 22 Foreign Policy****Reading:** Schmidt pp. 319-332

Q. What is terrorism?

Nov. 24 Immigration**Reading:** Schmidt pp. 302-305

PEW Research <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/16/nearly-half-of-refugees-entering-the-u-s-this-year-are-muslim/>

Q. How many immigrants and refugees has the USA taken in recently? What determines the number?

Nov. 29 Foreign Policy: Russia and Putin (cont'd)**Reading:** Schmidt pp. 339-342

Huffington Post http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/donald-trump-advisers-russia-ties_us_57acd474e4b007c36e4db94c

Q. Why does the USA focus so much on Russia? Are the media articles credible?

Dec. 1 *Test 3**********Presentations*******Dec. 6 ***Presentations*******Dec. 8 ***Presentations**********NO FINAL EXAM*****

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

Assignments		
a) Media Assignment	ongoing	__10%
b) Candidate Research	Sept. 13	__ 5%
c) Pres. Debate #1 Assignment	Sept. 27	__ 5%
d) VP Debate Assignment	Oct. 6	__ 5%
e) Test # 1	Oct. 13	__15%
f) Preliminary bibliography/Essay proposal	Oct. 20	__10%
g) Test # 2	Nov. 8	__10%
h) Election Night Worksheet	Nov. 10	__ 5%
i) Essay	Nov. 17	__25%
j) Test #3	Dec. 1	__ 5%
k) Presentation (individual)	Dec. 1, 6, or 8	__ 5%
	Total	_____ (100)

Assignment details:

All assignments will be completed using the following:

- Bibliography and citations are not included in page count
- Use default margins, Type
- Double-space
- Times Roman 12 font
- Include page numbers
- Use Chicago style citations with footnotes or endnotes (your computer is programmed for these – it’s easy –in Word “Help”, just type in “*About Footnotes and Endnotes*”!) <http://camosun.ca.libguides.com/chicago>
- Include a bibliography
- Include a title page with your name, student number, title of assignment, course name, date

a) Media Assignment **ongoing: 10%**

- Choose a story related to American government and/or politics from a reputable source (online or print)
- Introduce the story to the class on your chosen day (sign-up sheet to be circulated in class on Sept. 6 & 8). Explain what the story is about and who the main actors in the story are. This will be a 5 minute presentation (maximum).
- Submit a hard copy for marking **and** email the assignment to me the **morning** (before noon) of your date. It is your responsibility to present on the day for which you signed up.
- Complete the following:
 - A) **Answer in complete sentences (in one to five sentences per question)**
 1. **What** is the story about?
 2. **Source** (name of source including reporter or author if available, date).

3. What **prominence** is the story given (what page number and placement or time in broadcast – ex. Leading headline, buried in back page...). What does the prominence (or not) tell you?
4. **Why** did the story catch your attention? Was there a sensational title, an attention getting photo, words in the title that were of interest...
5. Who are the **political** players noted, if any? From which level of government are they?
6. Who are the **non-political** players noted, if any?

B) Answer in a few properly structured paragraphs (1 to 1 & 1/2 pages):

7. What does this story and the way in which it is presented say about the relationship amongst the American government, non-government organizations, and citizens in the issue presented? Who has the power, authority, and/or legitimacy in this story?

b) Candidate Research Paper 5%

- 2 pages
- Choose one of the current US president or vice president candidates
- Provide a very brief biography (2 paragraphs: 1 re personal life and 1 re political life)
- Explain one unusual or very interesting thing about the candidate
- What are their negatives and positives in terms of potential for winning
- What do the polls say their chances of winning are

c) Presidential Debate Worksheet 5%

- Watch the Presidential debate scheduled for Sept. 26 (live or on a later feed)
- Complete the worksheet

d) Vice Presidential Debate Worksheet 5%

- Watch the Vice-Presidential debate scheduled for Oct. 4 (live or on a later feed)
- Complete the worksheet

e) Test 1 15%

- On material covered to date

f) Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography (2 parts) 10%

- Read Assignment (i) on pages 7-8
 - 1) Proposal:
 - In 1-2 pages:
 - Describe what your topic will be.
 - Why did you choose this topic? Why did you choose this state?
 - What is the objective of the assignment, what do you intend to explore/find out?
 - How will you approach your research, what are the types of sources you intend to use (in general terms)? How will you go about finding your sources?

2) Provide, in full Chicago Manual of Style (how-to at:

<http://camosun.ca.libguides.com/chicago>

○ 3 primary sources

1. **Primary sources** are the basic materials for conducting original research in a given discipline. They include documents such as letters, diaries, autobiographies, newspaper and magazine articles, speeches, eyewitness accounts, photographs and sketches, and census data. Compelling evidence is needed in order to substantiate any claim. Primary sources constitute the best **evidence**. Original research is only made possible by collection, discovery, and recovery of primary documents and materials.

○ 2 secondary sources

1. **Secondary sources** are books and articles and documentaries that draw on primary sources and interpret them. When you are first researching a topic of interest, the fastest way to come to an understanding of your subject is to read secondary sources. Critical reading of these materials will also give you a sense of how other researchers have approached your research topic, which may give direction to your own argument—either toward or away from established perspectives or conclusions. Academic writing will require you to consult secondary sources to support and direct your own analysis. Most important to the student researcher, good secondary sources will **lead you** to the primary documents and resources noted in a bibliography or footnote. (source: RMC POE 206 CD)

g) Test 2 – on material covered since Test 1 **10%**

h) Election Results worksheet **5%**

i) Essay (6-8 pages) **25%**

Choice # 1:

- choose one state to follow during the election
- Provide a brief overview of that state in terms of history, demographics, and previous voting patterns
- Choose one candidate in that state to follow
 - Provide a brief biography of the candidate
 - For what position are they running
 - What is their past political experience

- Who is their opposition
- Identify one or two major issues in the state that is a focus of the campaign
- Are there any “initiatives” on the ballot
- Analyze the election results in terms of whether your candidate won or lost
 - Why was that the result

Choice #2:

Comparative analysis of the role of the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United State

- Explain how the role of the Prime Minister and President are similar and how they differ
- Analyze:
 - Qualifications
 - Legislative power
 - Party discipline
 - Appointive power
 - Influence
 - Military power
- Explain which has more ability to implement their agenda/platform

Choice # 3:

Comparative analysis of the roles of **either** a Senator or Elected Representative (MP & Representative) in the USA and Canada

- Qualifications
- Tenure
- Legislative role
- Influence
- Ability to implement their agenda/platform

Choice #4:

Your own topic choice

- Read the course Learning Outcomes and be sure it fits one of these
- You must discuss with me in person and get an okay from me by Sept. 29th

j) Presentation (individual)**5%**

Everyone will provide a 5 minute presentation to the class about their paper.

- Explain your topic,
- What were you were trying to determine
- How did you approach your research
- What did you conclude
- Explain any points of interest regarding the **process of undertaking research** for the paper

You will have to time your presentation carefully in order that everyone can complete this assignment. You will be graded on content (**all** points above addressed), timing, and speaking (good clarity and volume).

k) Test 3 – on material covered since Test 2**5%**

Note that these assignments are each to be done individually. You are encouraged to ask librarians for help with your research. Be sure to read the College's policy on plagiarism at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.1.pdf>

Late Policy

Assignments are **due in class, at the start of class**, and will be handed to me in person.

(Do not submit papers under my door or show up at the end of class to submit it.)

If you have a serious problem **before the due date**, notify me immediately and we will make alternate arrangements for you to complete your work.

After that, I will only accept your paper if you have a legitimate excuse (*e.g.* medical, family, death of person close to you) and/or bring a Doctor's note or note from Student Services (Counselling).

Useful Links:

CNN <http://www.cnn.com/>

Commission on Presidential Debates <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=2016debates>

Constitution of the USA <https://www.whitehouse.gov/1600/constitution>

C-SPAN (US Public Affairs channel) <https://www.c-span.org/>

Fox <http://www.foxnews.com/>

Government of the USA <https://www.usa.gov/>

MSNBC Government of the USA <https://www.usa.gov/>

SCOTUS <https://www.supremecourt.gov/>

6. Grading System

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
90-100	A+		9
85-89	A		8
80-84	A-		7
77-79	B+		6
73-76	B		5
70-72	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D	Minimum level of achievement for which credit is granted; a course with a "D" grade cannot be used as a prerequisite.	1

0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0
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Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy E-1.5 at camosun.ca for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that, due to design may require a further enrollment in the same course. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course. (For these courses a final grade will be assigned to either the 3 rd course attempt or at the point of course completion.)
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

7. Recommended Materials or Services to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services, or the College web site at camosun.ca.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

There is a Student Conduct Policy **which includes plagiarism**. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services, and the College web site in the Policy Section.