

	<b>School of Arts &amp; Science</b> <b>SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT</b> <b>PSC 106</b> <b>Canadian Politics</b> <b>Winter 2017 Section 002</b>
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## COURSE OUTLINE

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This introductory course examines political parties, elections, the role of the prime minister and cabinet, the public service, the legislature, and the judiciary.

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### **1. Instructor Information**

(a)	Instructor:	Mona Brash
(b)	Office Hours:	Tuesday 10:30 – 12:30, Wednesday 1:30-3:30, Thursday 5:00-5:30, Friday 10:30- 11:30 or by appointment
(c)	Location:	Paul 237
(d)	Phone:	Please use email to communicate
(e)	Email:	Brashm@camosun.bc.ca

### **2. Intended Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to describe and explain (and in some cases critically assess):

1. The nature of politics, government, and the state, with special reference to Canada.
2. The basics of the executive branch of government – the formal, political, and non-political elements, with special reference to the Prime Minister and the cabinet.
3. The basics of Parliament – its elements, functions, procedures, and problems.
4. The basics of the public service – its elements, functions, processes, and problems.
5. The basics of the justice system – types of law, the courts, the administration of justice, and the Charter.
6. The basics of political parties – their roots, ideologies, financing, leadership selection, and campaigning.
7. The basics of the electoral system, and possible alternatives, as well as the role of the press.

### **3. Required Materials**

- (a) Text: Mintz, Eric et al. Canada's Politics: Democracy, Diversity, and Good Government (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Toronto: Pearson, 2017.
- (b) Other  
Some readings will be accessed online. Links are in syllabus (copy will be emailed).

#### **4. Course Content and Schedule**

The topic(s) for each class is noted below, along with the required readings to be done **before** each class

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**January 10**    **Introductory Class**  
**Description of Course**  
**Syllabus**  
**Mock Quiz**

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**January 12**    **Basics of Politics & Government**  
**Media and Politics**

**Reading:**    Mintz, pp. 256-258

*Q. How does government affect your life?*

**Canadian Identity**

**Reading:**    Mintz, pp. 60-64

*Q. What are some different ways of understanding Canadian identity?*

*Who are you?*

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**January 17**    **Political Culture**

**Reading:**    Mintz pp. 1-16, 121-125

**Political Influence**

**Reading:**    Mintz, pp. 175-203

*Q. What is democracy? Is Canada democratic?*

*What influences Canadian political culture?*

*Q. Who has much political influence? Who has little? Why or why not?*

**\*\*\*Constituency Assignment due\*\*\***

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**January 19**    **Parliament & Parliamentary Officers**

**Reading:**    Mintz, pp. 383-387 & 442-446

*Q. What is Parliament? What are its elements, functions, procedures, and problems?*

*What are dissolution, prorogation, and the stages for passing legislation?*

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**January 24**    **Political Parties & their Histories**

**Reading:**    Mintz, pp. 204-238 (not 210-211)

*Q. What is the function of a political party? Who are the different parties? What might they look like in 10 years?*

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**January 26**    **Political Party websites (please bring laptops, iPads, phones if possible)**

**Reading:**    Scan these, Elections Canada, Registered Political Parties at:

<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=pol&dir=par&document=index&lang=e>

*In class analysis of websites*

*Leaders, Membership, focus (platform, party, opposition, issues?)*

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**January 31**    **Question Period**

Watch Question Period from either January 30 or 31.

Live On CPAC: 11:00 a.m. (rebroadcast at 8 p.m. or next day from links)

**\*\*\*Question Period worksheet (handed out previous week) due\*\*\***

**February 2 Members of Parliament – representatives or trained seals?**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 388-408, and Samara, April 18, 2011. *“It’s My Party”*: *Parliamentary Dysfunction Reconsidered*. Go to Samara, <http://www.samaracanada.com/research/mp-exit-interviews/it-s-my-party-report/two-main-trends>

[http://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-source/mp-exit-interviews/welcometoparliament\\_eng25ef579a50cd6a04a19bff0000c565b1.pdf?sfvrsn=2](http://www.samaracanada.com/docs/default-source/mp-exit-interviews/welcometoparliament_eng25ef579a50cd6a04a19bff0000c565b1.pdf?sfvrsn=2) Chapter 1 & 2

*Q. What factors constrain the independence of MPs? What would you change about the role of MPs?*

**February 7 \*\*\*Test # 1\*\*\***

On material covered to date

**February 9 The executive**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 352-mid 358 & mid 245-246

*Q. What is the role of the Crown (GG) in Canadian government?*

*Do we have fixed election dates in Canada and BC?*

**February 13-17 No Class, Family Day & Reading Break**

**February 21 Prime Minister and Cabinet**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 358-381  
Current Ministries and Cabinet Ministries  
Review the Government of Canada website,  
<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/cabinet>

*Q. What power does the PM have in Canadian government? How is that power limited?*

*What are the different ministries? How many cabinet ministers are women?*

**February 23 Senate**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 409-417

*Q: What is a Senator? What should the role of the Senate be? Should the Senate be reformed?*

**\*\*\*Paper Proposal and Preliminary bibliography due\*\*\***

**February 28 The Bureaucracy**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 420-429

*Q. What should the role of the bureaucracy be? In what ways can the bureaucracy influence policy?*

**March 2 The Court System**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 460-467

*Q. Why are the courts separate from the political branch of government?*

**March 7 Charter of Rights and Freedoms**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 288-297, not box 10-3  
 Carter v. Canada (Attorney General), 2015 SCC 5, [2015] 1 S.C.R. 331  
 at <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14637/index.do>  
 Read up to “Cases Cited”

*Q. Who has the final say regarding policy and legislation, Parliament, the Government, or the judiciary? Who should have it? What was the ruling of the SCC in Carter v. Canada? What has happened since the judgment?*

**March 9 \*\*\*Quiz 2\*\*\***

On material covered since Midterm  
**Time for groups to meet re: Presentations**

**March 14 Electoral Organization**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 239-246

*Q. How are elections organized in Canada? What is the role of Elections Canada? How are they organized in BC? What is the role of political parties?*

**March 16 Electoral Systems**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 246-249

*Q. What are the pros and cons of our current electoral system?*

**March 21 Past elections, including Oct. 19, 2015 federal election**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 250-255 & 210-211

*Q. What were the main issues in the last federal election? How have elections changed since the 1990's? What are the issues in the upcoming BC election?*

**\*\*\* Major paper due \*\*\***

**March 23 Voter Turnout**

**3rd Party Advertising**  
**Past election ads (esp. negative ads)**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 152-162

*Q. Should 3<sup>rd</sup> parties (unions, corporations, private individuals) be able to advertise during elections? Why are there ads between elections? Why is voter turnout so low? Why do so few people participate in politics?*

**March 28 \*\*\*Electoral System Presentations (see Assignments, p. 10) \*\*\***

Mandatory voting or not?

Majority systems:

- Alternative Vote/Preferential Vote
- Double Ballot

**March 30 \*\*\*Electoral System Presentations (see Assignments, p. 10) \*\*\***

Proportional Systems:

- Proportional Representation
- Mixed Member Proportional

- Single Transferable Vote

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**April 4**      **TBA**

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**April 6**      **Party financing**

Reading: Mintz, pp. 258-259 Reading: Elections Canada, Limits on Contributions at:

<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=pol&dir=lim&document=index&lang=e>

Elections Canada, Quarterly Allowances at:

<http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=pol&document=qua2015&dir=pol/qua&lang=e>

*Q. Should unions and corporations be allowed to donate to political parties? Should taxpayers fund political parties?*

*How much did the parties and candidates spend in 2015?(Link to be sent later in semester once papers are filed by parties and candidates)*

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**April 11**      **Proposals for Electoral Reform (Liberal Platform)**

**Redo mock quiz from first class (review)**

<https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/electoral-reform/>

*Q. What is the current state of the push for electoral reform?*

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**April 13**      **Last Class**

**\*\*\*Final Question\*\*\***

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**NOTE: NO FINAL EXAM DURING EXAM PERIOD**

### **5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting) Assignments explained below**

(a) Media Assignment	(ongoing)	10%	_____
(b) Constituency Assignment	(Jan. 17)	6%	_____
(c) Question Period Worksheet	(Jan. 31)	4%	_____
(d) Test # 1	(Feb.7)	20%	_____
(e) Proposal and Preliminary bibliography for major assignment	(Feb. 23) (5% + 5%)	10%	_____
(f) Test # 2	(Mar. 9)	5%	_____
(g) Major Paper	(Mar. 21)	25%	_____
(h) Electoral Systems Presentation (Mar. 28 & Mar. 30)	(5% presentation, 5% outline)	10%	_____
(i) Final question	(April 12)	10%	_____
<b>Total:</b>			_____/100
(You can keep track of your grades by entering them here			↑)

## Details for Assignments

### All assignments will be completed using the following:

- 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

## ASSIGNMENTS

### (a) Media Assignment – ongoing

- Follow a reputable news source (print, online, radio, television). Choose a current story about politics in Canada. Introduce the story to the class on your chosen day (sign-up sheet to be circulated in class on Jan. 10 & 12).
- Submit a hard copy for marking **and** email the assignment to me before noon on your date. It is your responsibility to present on the day for which you signed up.
- Complete the following assignment

#### *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. Is the source **publicly** owned or **privately** owned?
4. If privately owned, who owns the source?
5. 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?
6. **Why** did the story catch your attention? Was there a sensational title, an attention getting photo, words in the title that were of interest...

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

7. Does this story and the way in which it is presented enhance citizen participation in politics (ex. Does it adequately inform citizens about the issue or does it erode citizens’ regard for the political process?)?

### (b) Constituency Assignment - Jan. 17

**Part 1.** In outline format (cut and paste with answers below), determine the following for the constituency/riding in which you live:

- Name of riding
  1. Results of last federal election
  2. Who was the incumbent MP
  3. Who ran in that riding
  4. What was the final vote count for **each** candidate

- Name of current MP
  - How long have they been in office in Ottawa
  - What is their past political experience, including elected and unelected
  - What is their contact information
    - Ottawa MP office
    - Local Constituency office

**Part 2.** In a 1-2 page essay, describe a political “issue” of concern to the residents of your riding. Do you think the riding’s MP will be able to resolve it? Why or why not?

### **(c) Question Period Worksheet – Jan. 31**

Watch Question Period from either January 30 or 31

- Live On CPAC (Channel 115): 11:00 a.m. (rebroadcast at 8 p.m. or from links on CPAC)
- Complete the Question Period worksheet (handed out previous week)

### **(d) Test # 1, based on material covered to date –Feb. 7**

Short answer, paragraph, and short essay questions

### **(e) Proposal & preliminary bibliography for major paper – Feb. 23**

Read Assignment (g) on pages 8-10

1) Proposal:

In 1 page:

- Describe what your topic will be.
- Why did you choose this topic?
- What is the objective of the assignment, what do you intend to explore/find out?
- How have you begun your research? What else are you going to do?

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)

### **(f) Test # 2 – material since Test 1– March 9**

### **(g) Major Paper – March 21**

You have a **choice from the 2 options** below for this assignment (an essay or a portfolio

#### **L. Essay 5-7 pages**

Choose **one** of the following topics:

i) Write a paper about **one** aspect of elections, for example:

- **Youth Voter turnout**
  1. What was the 2015 Federal Election youth turnout
  2. How does it compare to past results?
  3. Why youth voter turnout should increase
  4. How youth voter turnout can be increased
  5. Analyze the probability of the change and, if successful, the political implications of the change
- **Voter suppression**
  1. What is it
  2. Provide examples of its occurrence in Canada (excluding robocalls)
  3. How have the USA examples impacted Canadian elections
  4. Analyze how voter suppression impacts politics, especially voter turnout and confidence in politics.
- **Electronic voting in BC Provincial Elections**
  1. Why is there a “push” by some for e-voting provincially in BC
  2. What examples of e-voting are there in Canada
  3. What examples of e-voting are there in other states/countries
  4. Should e-voting be adopted provincially for BC or not, explain why or why not



- **Leadership Selection**
  1. Choose **either** the Conservative Party of Canada or the New Democratic Party to study in terms of leadership selection
  2. Describe the selection leadership selection process for party
  3. Who are the candidates (include brief description of their platforms, if CPC, choose 5 candidates.
  4. What do the polls indicate in terms of likely winner
  5. Is this selection process democratic?
- **Electoral Reform in Canada**
  1. What did the federal Liberals promise in the last election
  2. What have they done since the election
  3. Why is there a push from the Conservative Party for a referendum on electoral reform
    1. Include a discussion of past provincial referenda on electoral reform
  4. What is the current status of electoral reform?
  5. Will we have First Past the Post in the next federal election or not? Why or why not?

ii) Choose a topic of interest to you (**clear it with me first, in person, by January 26**)

iv) Follow the Leader

- Choose a leader of **one** of the 5 sitting parties in the House of Commons
- Provide a **very brief** biography of the leader
- Follow and document the media coverage of that leader in at least **2 different** media sources **for the next 2 months** and analyze the following:
  - Issues that leader raised in those 2 months
  - Coverage that leader received in those 2 months
  - Comparative analysis of coverage of leader
    1. difference/similarity in the three media over the two months in terms of:
      1. tone
      2. amount of coverage
      3. prominence of coverage (photos, headlines, page placement)
- Provide an analysis of the effectiveness of that leader in gaining both media coverage and in raising issues of concern/importance to them

**--OR--**

## 2. Portfolio

**YOU NEED TO DISCUSS THIS TOPIC WITH ME BY January 26th, in person.** You may submit a portfolio based on a **current political issue in which you** are already involved or in which **you** are going to be involved in the next few months.

This portfolio will be a binder with the following:

- An introduction of one to two pages explaining what the issue is, why and how you are involved in it, and how you have addressed or intend to address the issue (lobby for

policy change, lobby for retention of a policy, lobby for a new policy). You must state which political actors are involved in this issue.

- Copies of material related to the issue (legislation, media articles)
- Copies of your letters, speeches, etc. lobbying for your position and
- Copies of responses to your lobbying efforts
- A 3-4 page essay describing:
  - what you wanted to do,
  - what you did,
  - the response of those whom you addressed regarding the issue, and
  - what you learned about the political process, political parties, and decision making.

### **(h) Electoral Systems Presentations (5%) Outline (5%) –Mar 28 & Mar 30**

Groups will be randomly assigned and emailed to you in early February.

Group Presentations: Each group will explain and analyze one of the following, 15 minute presentations, everyone in the group must speak

#### **Mandatory Voting**

1. What is it
2. Where is it used
3. What are the pros and cons
4. Should it be implemented in Canada

OR

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#### ***Voting Systems***

- ***Double Ballot/Two-Round System***
- ***Proportional Representation***
- ***Mixed Member Proportional***
- ***Single Transferable Vote***

#### **For the assigned system**

1. Describe the system,
2. Analyze its pros and cons
3. Discuss other states that use it,
4. Provide a sample ballot,
5. Conclude whether it should or should not replace Single Member Plurality taking into consideration the results of the Oct. 19, 2015 Federal election.

**For each presentation, hand in an Outline on day of your presentation:** summary of points, 1-2 pages, typed, submitted individually based only on **your part** of the presentation, include at least 2 sources, referenced in Chicago Style

A useful link to get you started, which includes other links:

<http://www.sfu.ca/~aheard/elections/reform.html>

### **(i)Final question – April 13**

You will be provided with one question to answer. This question will be given to you 2 weeks in advance and will ask you to critically assess the state of politics in Canada, with a specific focus. You will obtain the question in class and not via email.

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Note that only one of these assignments is group work. The others 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:**

Camlink: Important Dates regarding fees and registration/dropping courses  
<http://camosun.ca/events/important-dates.html>

Elections Canada:  
<http://www.elections.ca/home.aspx>

Eugene Forsey: How Canadians Govern Themselves, "The Institutions of Our Federal Government" at: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Sites/LOP/AboutParliament/Forsey/index-e.asp>

Heard, Andrew. Elections.  
<http://www.sfu.ca/~aheard/elections/>

Link to Parliament of Canada:  
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/>

Links to Parliament of Canada Legislation:  
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/LEGISINFO/index.asp>

This site will give you links to recent Senate and House of Commons legislation  
Guide to using LEGISINFO:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Sites/LOP/LEGISINFO/index.asp?Language=E&list=faq#proc>

## 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

### **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](http://camosun.ca) for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
<b>I</b>	<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.
<b>IP</b>	<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 <sup>rd</sup> course attempt or at the point of course completion.)
<b>CW</b>	<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. 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](http://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.