

IPAF 4900: Research Experience Opportunity

Project Title: “Committees in the House of Commons”

Term: Winter 2017

Supervisor: Jonathan Malloy, Political Science

Description of project:

This project involves compiling available research and data on House of Commons committees since 2004, as part of a book being written on the Canadian Parliament. The end product of this IPAF 4900 research project will be a formal report that synthesizes and analyzes the major facts and significant trends of House of Commons committees.

Number of students required: 1

Research duties:

The workload is generally flexible but corresponds to 5 hours per week for 13 weeks. The student will set their own hours and work primarily on their own, with regular meetings and email contact with the supervisor.

A previous report on this topic will be made available to the student and can serve as a guiding template for the project, in close consultation with the supervisor.

Duties will include:

- reviewing the academic literature on House of Commons committees
- reviewing reports, analyses and similar literature on House of Commons committees from the Library of Parliament, think tanks and similar bodies
- synthesizing the above literature to identify key issues and themes relevant to House of Commons committees since 2004
- performing media scans to identify cases and examples of these key issues and themes in the day-to-day life of the House of Commons
- compiling general statistics on the number of House of Commons committees over time and their size
- compiling and tracking the chairships and memberships of committees
 - alternatively, finding sources that already contain the above data
- writing a report of 40-75 pages that summarizes the above information, using the previous report as a guiding template

Learning and reflection activities:

The supervisor will work closely with the student to guide the research, identifying key literature, themes, etc. However, it will ultimately be up to the student to interpret, synthesize and analyze the information and data, and to design and write the report presenting this analysis. This represents an exciting and substantive learning and reflection activity.

Learning outcomes:

The student will:

- Gain a deep and substantive knowledge of the House of Commons committee system and a broad knowledge of Canada's parliamentary and political system.
- Develop substantive skills in synthesizing a mix of academic and policy literature and applying this to day-to-day politics
- Gain experience in the organization, writing and presentation of research through a formal report

Evaluation Criteria:

Evaluations will be based on written work.

25% x 2	Two interim reports, one on issues and trends and one on statistical data on committees
50%	Quality and depth of analysis in the final written report

Skills or knowledge required:

Some prior knowledge and general familiarity with the Canadian parliamentary system is required to succeed in this project. However, extensive knowledge or direct parliamentary experience is not necessary.

Familiarity with general research tools for scholarly literature and media databases, and a basic facility in Microsoft Excel for the statistical compilation, will be assets.

Any required health and safety training:

None.

Other considerations:**Application instructions:**

Participants are selected on the basis of merit and fit with the research project. Please submit a CV, transcript, and cover letter indicating why you are interested in and qualified for this research experience to the undergraduate administrator of the unit listed above. The application deadline is normally April 30th (for IPAF 4900 opportunities in the summer or fall term), August 15th (for fall and winter term opportunities) and November 15th (to take IPAF 4900 in the winter or summer term). Only students with a GPA of 9.5 or higher and at least third year honours standing will be considered.

Application deadline for this project is: November 15

To find out more about IPAF 4900, please visit: <http://carleton.ca/fpa/ipaf-main/>
