This course examines issues of legislative representation in Canada at both the national and sub-national level. We examine the evolution of the Westminster parliamentary system in Canada and the role of legislatures and legislators in the modern Canadian political system.

The course is organized in a seminar format. In addition to discussing the assigned readings in every class, students will be asked at least once to make a presentation based on the issues raised in that day’s readings. They will also be asked to present brief outlines of their research papers to the class.

Grading:

- Discussion paper: 20% (due October 18, 2007)
- Research paper: 50% (due November 22, 2007)
- Participation: 15%
- Presentation: 15%

Paper topics and details are given below, as are presentation guidelines.

Text:


All readings are on reserve at the MacOdrum Library and also in a binder in Political Science Resource Room, C666 Loeb (open from 8:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.). **Important:** those readings which are available on-line and those available electronically through the Carleton library (indicated by *) will not be placed on reserve or in the Political Science Reading Room. A copy of the textbook has been placed on reserve at the library. Note: the readings are listed in the library catalog under the heading ‘PSCI 4006.’
Weekly Seminar Topics:

Sept. 6: Introduction to the course

Sept. 13: The Westminster Parliamentary Model

Docherty, Chapter 1.


Sept. 20: Members of Parliament

Docherty, Chapter 2 and 3


Sept. 27: Parties and the Legislative Process

Docherty, Chapter 7


*C. Kam. “Do Ideological Preferences Explain Parliamentary Behaviour? Evidence from Great Britain and Canada” Journal of Legislative Studies,
Oct. 4: MPs in Action

Docherty, Chapter 4 and 5


Oct. 11: The Senate and Senate Reform


Oct. 25: Accountability


Nov. 1: Topic T.B.A.

Nov. 8: Representation and Diversity


Nov. 15: Territorial and Provincial Legislatures

Docherty, Chapter 6.


Docherty, Chapter 8


Nov. 29: Research Paper Presentations (these count only toward your participation mark)

Guidelines for Class Presentations

Each student in the class will participate in one presentation based on assigned readings. Normally, there will be two or three presenters each class. However, arrangements can be made for individual presentation.

Between the two or three of you, prepare a presentation of at least 30 minutes. It should not be shorter, but it can be as long as you want. All presenting students must speak.

Presentations should include the following: (1) your own discussion of the readings and (2) questions for further class discussion. Presenters will be expected to lead discussions after the presentation and should prepare some good discussion questions in advance. You may (and are encouraged to) present additional material that complements the assigned readings and is relevant to the topic. You may also raise
topics that are related, but not explicitly discussed, by the readings. A handout should be distributed outlining your presentation.

Presentations may be staggered. For example, you may speak for a few minutes on one article, engage in class discussion and then resume with the second article.

**Do not just summarize the readings.** While it is important to **briefly** review what the readings say in your own words, the goal is to discuss the issues in and stemming from them. Your comments should demonstrate a good command of the articles and how they relate to each other.

In addition to reviewing the specific issues raised in the articles (the most important part of the presentation), presentations should discuss questions about the articles themselves.

- What is the author’s thesis and how effectively do they argue it? Did you find it convincing?
- How do the different readings fit together? Do they compliment or counter each other? How do they fit with earlier readings in the course?
- What type of methodology and research are used in each article? Were the author’s choices appropriate?
- Which reading did you prefer and why?

Innovative presentations are encouraged. In the past, students have shown videos, done skits, put on game shows, engaged the class in role playing, even filmed their own videos. All different forms of media have been used. Feel free to push the envelope as long as the content is relevant to the topic and will enhance everyone’s learning experience.

No matter what style of presentation you use, a few rehearsals before hand make for significantly better presentations.

**Discussion Paper**

For this assignment, you will write a short paper of 1000-1500 words answering one of the following questions. Your answers should rely significantly on the course readings and explicitly incorporate readings from two or more weeks (up to and including Oct. 18), in your answer. Later readings may be used, but no outside research is required. I am more interested in your own arguments (backed up by readings) than research.

Papers are due in class Oct. 18. Papers submitted after Oct. 18 but on or before Oct. 25 will be penalized 5 percent. Papers submitted after Nov. 1 will be penalized 5 percent
per day (weekends count as one day in total). Discussion papers will not be accepted after Nov. 8.

1. To what extent is the ‘decline’ of Parliament a product of the media?
2. Assess the role of the Backbench MP in Parliamentary life. Can ordinary MPs be given a greater role without dramatically altering the current parliamentary dynamic?
3. Legislative research in Canada tends to be more qualitative than quantitative, and normative more than positive. Reviewing the course readings, what are the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches?
4. In terms of operation and procedure, which is more democratic, the current House of Commons or the current Senate?
5. What impact do opposition parties actually have in Parliament and, as a corollary, federal politics?

Answers will be evaluated on their ability to go beyond simple arguments to explain and analyze problems of legislative representation and/or research in Canada. The papers must demonstrate a strong command of the readings as they relate to each other, and not just summarize the author’s argument.

Any standard citation format may be used.

**The Research Paper**

For this assignment you will write a research paper exploring an aspect of Canadian legislatures and representation. Undergraduate papers must be 12-15 pages in length. Graduate papers must be 20-25 pages. Do not tinker with fonts or margins in order to meet the required length. **Topics are open.** However, there are some guidelines.

Research papers are due in class on Nov. 22. Late papers that are submitted by the end of class on Nov. 29 will be penalized 5 percent. After Nov 29, late papers will be penalized 5 percent per day. Weekends count as 1 day in total. Research papers will not be accepted after Dec. 6. Extensions will not be given except in the case of illness (with medical documentation) or other exceptional reasons.

You will be asked to briefly discuss your paper with the class during the last seminar.

- The paper must present a clear thesis; it cannot simply describe some aspect of legislatures, but must present a clear argument.
Comparisons with other legislatures outside Canada are welcome as long as there is significant Canadian content.

The paper must be primarily about legislative themes – not political activities separate from legislatures themselves. For example, a discussion of Liberal leadership politics is only germane if it is primarily about the implications for Parliament.

The paper must feature some primary research – that is, use of first hand documents. Hansard, party documents and parliamentary websites all normally count as primary sources.

Possible Topics:

1. Compare one or more significant features (such as party discipline, number of women members, members’ pay and services, etc.) among different Canadian legislatures. Apart from obvious factors, such as size, what explains the differences and similarities between legislatures?

2. Review, using primary sources and news accounts, the passage of a particularly contentious legislative item or debate in a Canadian legislature(s). Using secondary academic studies, demonstrate how the contentious process illustrates particular tensions and problems in Canadian legislatures.

3. Discuss and compare current problems or perceived problems regarding Canadian legislatures. Is Canada better or worse off than other countries?

Other potential themes:

- Gender and/or ethnic representation in legislatures and the difference between symbolic and substantive representation.
- Parliament’s role in foreign affairs, trade, diplomacy and/or war.
- Assessing the current party system and the impact it will have on legislative politics.
- Compare the legislative agenda of minority and majority Parliaments and/or provincial legislatures.

Any standard citation format may be used.
Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs at least two weeks before the first in-class test or CUTV midterm exam. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadlines for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: November 9th, 2007 for December examinations, and March 14th, 2008 for April examinations.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the
final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

**Connect Email Accounts:** The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See [http://connect.carleton.ca](http://connect.carleton.ca) for instructions on how to set up your account.