

PSCI 2003 B
Canadian Political Institutions
Tuesdays, 11:35 a.m. – 1:25 p.m.
This course will be held remotely online

Please open the bookmark menu to the left for easy navigation.

I General Information

Instructor: Elsa Piersig
Online Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Live Question and Answer Sessions: Tuesdays, 1 p.m.
Email: elsapiersig@cunet.carleton.ca
Phone number: 647.515.6080

II Course Description

This course examines the evolution, structure, functions, and critiques of Canada's major political, constitutional, judicial, and bureaucratic institutions and processes. In Canada, these institutions are linked by two themes: the central role of the Crown in organizing the Canadian state, which Canada inherited from its Westminster parliamentary roots, and the relationship between the Crown (state) and Indigenous peoples. These two themes tie the course together and feature throughout the discussion of Canadian political institutions and processes. Importantly, these themes illustrate how institutions evolve and adapt to changing circumstances and the connections that exist between institutions.

III Course Format

The course is asynchronous, and content is delivered through pre-recorded modules and weekly discussion forums. The instructor will hold additional (optional) live sessions to discuss course assignments. Students are encouraged to attend and bring questions regarding coursework.

NOTE: The pre-recorded modules are interactive – emphasis on the active – slides rather than passive videos. Please do not expect to let the modules run unaided as they feature various exercises and navigation buttons to explore different content (i.e., an interactive timeline).

IV Learning Outcomes

By taking this course, students will:

- Develop a strong knowledge base about Canada's political institutions, their historical development, and contemporary debates
- Apply knowledge of political institutions to systematically evaluate the Canadian regime

- Develop critical thinking skills through the iterative nature of course assignments
- Improve written and oral communication skills through course assignments
- Practice responding to feedback in a professional environment.

V Texts

- Christopher Cochrane, Kelly Blidook and Rand Dyck. 2020. *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*. 9th Edition. Toronto: Tophat. (Visit the Carleton Bookstore or the [publisher](#).)
 - The 8th Edition of the textbook will also work.
- Additional readings posted on the course page through ARES.

VI Course Evaluation: Overview

<i>Assignment/Course Component</i>	<i>Assignment Due Date</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Running Total</i>
Course Engagement	Throughout the semester	25%	25%
Syllabus Quiz	Friday, Jan. 28, 2022	1%	26%
Draft Briefing Note 1 ¹	Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022	10%	36%
Reflection 1 ²	Friday, Feb. 18, 2022	3%	39%
Briefing Note 1	Tuesday, Mar. 1, 2022	10% or 20% ³	49%
Reflection 2	Friday, Mar. 18, 2022	3%	52%
Briefing Note 2	Tuesday, Mar. 29, 2022	25%	77%
Reflection 3	Friday, April 8, 2022	3%	80%
Final Evaluation	Scheduled during the formal exam period	20%	100%

This course is designed to foster engagement and dialogue between students and the course instruction team (instructor and teaching assistants) in three ways:

1. Students connect with each other and their teaching assistants through the Course Engagement component, including weekly discussion forums and meeting with their teaching assistant. Students are expected to meet twice with their teaching assistant twice during the semester.
2. The Briefing Note assignments build off each other, providing students with constructive feedback that they can implement on the next iteration of the assignment.
3. Students can critically review their work and how it addressed feedback from earlier iterations of the Briefing Note in the three Reflection assignments.

Additionally, the Briefing Note assignments allows some flexibility. Students can decide whether to submit a draft version of Briefing Note 1 on February 1st or wait to submit the final draft on March 1st. There is no penalty on Briefing Note 1 for choosing to only submit the final version on March 1st, however, doing so forgoes the first reflection opportunity (worth 3%). Students can also opt to change topics for Briefing Note 2.

¹ Submission of the Draft Briefing Note 1 is optional. Choosing to submit gets early feedback on the assignment before the final draft of Briefing Note 1 is submitted.

² Reflection 1 will only be accepted once the student has turned in the Draft Briefing Note.

³ If the student submits the Draft Briefing Note 1, the final Briefing Note 1 is worth 10%. The assignment is worth 20% when only the latter is submitted. It is to the student's benefit to take advantage of submitting the Draft Briefing Note 1 because there is a) more opportunity for feedback and b) the option of submission Reflection 1.

VII Course Evaluation in Detail

Course Engagement – 34% of Final Grade – Ongoing (Weeks 1-13)

There are three avenues of course engagement: weekly discussion forums (20%), bilateral meetings (5%), and reflections on the briefing note assignments (9%).

1. Weekly Discussion Forums

Students earn participation through **weekly discussion forums** within their tutorial groups (20% of the final grade). The first discussion forum will open the week of January 10, 2022, for personal introductions and questions on course components and material. Discussion forums accept submissions from Mondays at midnight to Sundays at 11:59 p.m. EST. There will be new discussion forums for each substantive (weekly) topic. Students are expected to contribute original and follow-up posts to the discussion forums. Please consult the Discussion Forum Information and Rubric page for more information.

2. Bilateral Meetings

Students are required to schedule and attend **two bilateral meetings** (2.5% each) with their teaching assistant. The first should be before Winter Reading Week and the second after. Students should use these meetings to introduce themselves and discuss *upcoming* course assignments. *Meetings to review an assignment grade do not count* towards these two bilateral meetings. Students are expected to lead the bilateral meeting by a) drawing up an agenda for the meeting and submitting it to their teaching assistant prior to the meeting and b) ensuring all agenda items are covered in a timely fashion.

3. Reflection Assignments

There are **three Reflection assignments** following the Draft Briefing Note 1, Briefing Note 1, and Briefing Note 2 submissions (3% each). These are informal journal entries for personal reflection, approximately 300-500 words in length. 3-4 questions will be provided to guide the responses and students are expected to critically review their work and thought processes/preconceptions in their most recent Briefing Note submission. The related Briefing Note assignment must have been completed before the Reflection can be uploaded.

- **Reflection 1**⁴ is due Friday, February 18, 2022, and explains Draft Briefing Note 1
- **Reflection 2** is due Friday, March 18, and responds to Briefing Note 1
- **Reflection 3** is due Friday, April 8, following Briefing Note 2

Syllabus Quiz – 1% of Final Grade – Due Friday, January 28, 2022 (Week 3)

The Syllabus Quiz is a quick review of the course components and communication with the course instruction team. The quiz must be completed to unlock the modules for Weeks 4 and up. Failure to complete the Syllabus Quiz by the due date will result in a grade of 0.⁵

Briefing Note 1 – 20% of Final Grade

- First Draft due Tuesday, February 1, 2022 (Week 4),
- Final Draft due Tuesday, March 1, 2022 (Week 7)

Briefing Note 1 introduces students to a style of concise and precise writing associated with briefing notes. It is a short assignment of 2 pages (maximum). Students are expected to draft a

⁴ Failure to submit the Draft Briefing Note 1 relinquishes the chance to hand in Reflection 1.

⁵ The last day to register in a Winter course or switch between courses is January 24, 2022. All students, regardless of registration date, will have until the end of the week to complete the Syllabus Quiz.

Briefing Note to the newly appointed Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations on why the *Royal Proclamation of 1763* remains relevant today for Indigenous peoples and the Crown. The document should be single-spaced and can involve a combination of short paragraphs and bullet notes. Students can find subject resources and more details on briefing notes and the assignment on the course site. Research beyond the course material is not expected but encouraged if a student feels it necessary.

- Students are invited to submit a **draft of Briefing Note 1 for feedback on February 1st, 2022**. The focus for the draft is on writing style, grammar, and format. Students will receive feedback or pointers on content. The Draft Briefing Note 1 is worth 10% of the final grade.
- **Briefing Note 1 is due March 1st, 2022**. It prioritizes content/subject matter comprehension and analysis as well as format and writing style. The assignment should have an argument regarding the continued relevance of the *Royal Proclamation of 1763*. Briefing Note 1 is worth 20% of the final grade if completed on its own or 10% if submitted following the Draft Briefing Note 1.

Briefing Note 2 – 25% of the Final Grade – Friday, March 29, 2022 (Week 12)

The assignment is the final iteration of the Briefing Note. Students will be graded on argument, use of course content, critical thinking skills, assignment structure and writing and grammar. As with Briefing Note 1, it is imperative to include a thesis statement that ties the entire paper together. The assignment must demonstrate a strong understanding of the chosen topic. Briefing Note 2 must include *3 relevant academic sources* beyond the textbook and materials provided on the course Brightspace page. There are two options for Briefing Note 2:

- Expand upon and update Briefing Note 1 with an additional two pages, providing new evidence, explanation, analysis, and edits to improve the earlier document.
- Develop a new 3-page note to brief the textbook authors and publishers on changes for the 2023 edition of *Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches*. This consists of recommendations to a) cut a certain section of the textbook and b) incorporate specific new material.

Final Evaluation – 20% of Final Grade – Formal Exam Period (April 2022)

The Final Evaluation is a take-home test made up of 10 multiple choice questions and an essay question of 1200-1500 words. There will be a set time assigned to write the essay. Students should complete the essay in a separate document before opening the test on Brightspace because, once the test is started, students will have 18 minutes to complete 10 multiple choice questions and upload the essay file.

The essay must feature a formal structure, including an introduction, body paragraphs (one for each supporting argument), and a conclusion. Students will be graded on argument/thesis construction, use of course content, and structure. The introduction and conclusions should be streamlined and leave most of the essay for the supporting body paragraphs. A good introduction avoids general statements about the world and lays out the essay's main question or issue followed by a thesis that answers the problem. The thesis statement must feature the main justifications for the argument and may list some possible consequences flowing from the thesis.

*** Remember, the course instructor and teaching assistants are here to help! Please reach out to us through email, course instructor office hours, or the Course Questions discussion forum.

VIII Course Procedures and Policies

Online Meetings

- Online meetings are your opportunity to ask questions and discuss course material. When joining a meeting, please ensure that you mute yourself.
- Please be considerate of others' internet capabilities and avoid sharing the video feed.

Assignment Submission

- All assignments are due on Brightspace. Students are responsible for ensuring that the correct file has been uploaded. Assignments should be uploaded as Microsoft Word documents (not PDFs) to the appropriate online dropbox by 11:59 p.m. on the due date.
- Assignment length should follow the guidelines provided. Assignments over or under the expected length by 10% will receive a reduction in the assigned grade.
 - The recommended length for an assignment indicates the amount of effort required. Moreover, staying within the guidelines respects the course instruction team's time.
- Carleton offers MS Office (including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, etc.) for free from ITS: <https://carleton.ca/its/help-centre/get-microsoft-office-for-students/>.

Citation is Required!

- Students must use proper citation for all evidence and arguments derived from sources other than themselves. Citation is required for all sources beyond the course material.
- Doing so is important for a) giving credit where credit is due (recognizing intellectual property), b) justifying evidence, and c) avoiding plagiarism. The preferred style and citation format is to use an in-text option such as MLA, Chicago Author-Date system, or the [Canadian Journal of Political Science](#) guide.

Late Penalties

- Late papers will lose 3% per day, inclusive of weekends and holidays. If there is a valid reason for submitting an assignment late, please contact your teaching assistant or the course instructor as soon as possible. See [Sections X](#) and [XI](#) below for accommodations.

Extensions

- Extensions will only be granted in cases of special circumstances (i.e., illness and bereavement) provided that the student has provided verifiable documentation.

Communication

- The preferred methods of communication are through email, discussion forums, and online office hours. All email communication must be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace, not personal emails.
- Students should use Carleton University email for technical concerns and questions about course procedures. More substantive questions on course content are best dealt with in office hours or scheduling a separate meeting. General questions about course material and assignments can be submitted to the online discussion forums.

IX Course Schedule and Topics

Week	Topic	Description	Readings	Instructor Sessions	Assignments
Week 1 Jan. 11	Course Overview and Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce course outline, learning objectives and core skills What are institutions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus Critical Thinking Skills Rubric 	1-1:25 p.m.	
Week 2 Jan. 18	Canada's Institutional Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada's regime principles What is the Crown and why does it matter: The Crown and nation-to-nation relationship? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous-Crown relations European Settlements 	<p><i>Week 2 readings are <u>all</u> on ARES!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malcolmson and Myers, Chapter 1: pp. 3-10 (See ARES for link) Cochrane et al., Chapter 2: especially pp.19-25 Cochrane et al. Chapter 4: especially pp. 67-76 Borrows (1997) 	1-1:25 p.m.	
Week 3 Jan. 25	The Crown and Responsible Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the Crown and why does it matter: The Crown in Canadian society and government today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why responsible Government? Responsible Government vs. Separation of Powers What are the advantages/disadvantages of recognizing the Queen of Canada as the country's head of state? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cochrane et al., Chapter 19: pp. 507-517 Malcolmson and Myers, Chapter 3 	1-1:25 p.m.	Syllabus Quiz (Friday, January 28, 2022)
Week 4 Feb. 1	The Executive: The Prime Minister and Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of Cabinet and the Prime Minister Development of cabinet government Is the Prime Minister too powerful? Is cabinet government now prime ministerial government? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cochrane et al., Chapter 19: pp. 517-537 Lagassé (2016) 	1-1:25 p.m.	Draft Briefing Note 1 (Tuesday, February 1, 2022)

Week 5 Feb. 8	The Crown and the Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the public service do? How is it structured? • The relationship between the political executive and public administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 20 • MacDonald (1980) • Biggs (2020) 	1-1:25 p.m.	
Week 6 Feb. 15	Parliament I: Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do legislatures do? Introduction to the Canadian parliament • Why is Canada bicameral? The Senate and representation • What does the Senate do? • Recent changes in the Senate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 21: pp. 569-570; 596-606 • Independent Senate Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About the Senate • Mandate • Criteria • Thomas (2018) • Marsland and Thomas (2019) 	1-1:25 p.m.	Reflection 1 (Friday, February 18, 2022)
Week 7	READING WEEK				
Week 8 Mar. 1	Parliament II: House of Commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legislative process • Representation in the House of Commons • Parliament and accountability: Parliament as the backbone of responsible government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority vs. minority parliaments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 21: pp. 570-596 • Rae (2019) 	1-1:25 p.m.	Briefing Note 1 (Tuesday, March 1, 2022)
Week 9 Mar. 8	Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the electoral system works and its development • Seat distribution • Consequences of FPTP in Canada • The debate about electoral reform and what are the different options? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 12 	1-1:25 p.m.	
Week 10 Mar. 15	Political Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why have political parties? Where do parties come from? • What do parties do? The role of political parties in Canadian government • Party organization: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 13 • Cochrane et al., Chapter 14: pp. 337-349 • Carty and Cross in Russell et al. (2016) 	1-1:25 p.m.	Reflection 2 (Friday, March 18, 2022)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal party organization • The Canadian party system 			
Week 11 Mar. 22	The Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the Constitution and what are its main components? • Why have a written constitution? • Significant Constitutional developments • What does the Constitution omit, and does it matter? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 16 • Cochrane et al., Chapter 4: pp. 76-83 	1-1:25 p.m.	
Week 12 Mar. 29	Federalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is federalism? • Federalism in the Constitution and the compound monarchy • The evolution of Canadian federalism • Treaty federalism? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 17 • Henderson (1994): 325-329 	1-1:25 p.m.	Briefing Note 2 (Tuesday, March 29, 2022)
Week 13 April 5	The Judiciary and the <i>Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The judiciary and the courts: legal access, structure, and independence • <i>The Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> • Has the Charter politicized the judiciary or legalized democratic and parliamentary politics? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cochrane et al., Chapter 24 • Cochrane et al., Chapter 18: especially pp. 453-458 and 471-478 	1-1:25 p.m.	Reflection 3 (Friday, April 8, 2022)
Week 14 April 12	The Crown in Canada Today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What use is the Crown in Canada today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crown and Reconciliation • Is Canadian government still responsible? Is there still a role for the Crown in ensuring responsibility? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lagassé (2013) • Review Cochrane et al., Chapter 4: especially pp. 67-76 	1-1:25 p.m.	

X COVID-19 Information

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) When accessing campus you must fill in the [COVID-19 Screening Self-Assessment in cuScreen](#) each day before coming to campus. You must also check-in to your final destination (where you plan on being longer than 15 minutes) within a building using the [QR location code](#).

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

XI Academic Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the [Equity Services website](#).

Religious Obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first

two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the [Equity Services website](#).

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support.

Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. Visit [here](#) for more.

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

XII Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;

- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Please follow the link for more information on the University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

XIII APPENDIX

Intellectual Property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Submission and Return of Term Work

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

Grading

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

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.

Carleton E-mail Accounts

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

Carleton Political Science Society

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

Official Course Outline

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.