

## PSCI 4204A/5204A

### Fighting for Votes

Time: Wednesday, 11:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.  
Confirm Location on Carleton Central

## I General information

Instructor: Steve White  
Office: B657 LA(Loeb)  
Office Hours: Thursday, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m., or by appointment (in person, or via Zoom)  
Email: [StephenWhite@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:StephenWhite@cunet.carleton.ca)

All email communication is to be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace, not personal emails.

## II Course description

This course examines elections in contemporary states from the vantage point of three key functions: representation, legitimation, and accountability and popular control. In surveying how elections are conducted, and the ways in which voters, parties, and candidates for election think and act, we will seek answers to three broad questions: Do elected officials act on behalf of, or speak for, their constituents? How much control do voters have over elected representatives, and are governments held responsible for their actions? To what extent do elections legitimize the authority of governments? In answering these questions, the course develops several themes: how election rules and political contexts enhance or diminish political equality; how political institutions enable or constrain the actions of candidates, parties, voters; how electoral rules are strategically manipulated and with what effect; and competing conceptions of elections: as mandates for elected representatives or as referendums on incumbent performance.

## III Course format

Weekly seminars will focus on topics and readings identified in the schedule. Assigned readings should be completed in advance of each class, and students are expected to keep up with the weekly readings.

## IV Learning outcomes

By taking this course, students will:

- Understand the core functions of elections, and the extent to which these functions are in tension
- Understand predominant models of elections, including their assumptions about the psychology and behaviour of voters, and the goals and strategies of parties and

- o candidates
- o Develop skills in critiquing and assessing empirical political research

## V Texts

All required course material is available online through the Ares library reserve system on Brightspace. Required readings for each week are listed in the course schedule.

Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.

## VI Evaluation at a glance

Component	Value	Due Date
Seminar attendance	10%	Cumulative
Seminar participation	10%	Cumulative
Post-seminar writing reflections	10%	Each due three days after the seminar
Midterm test	35% (subject to adjustment – see evaluation in detail)	In class on October 15
Final examination	35% (subject to adjustment – see evaluation in detail)	During the official examination period

## VII Evaluation in detail

### *Term Work*

**Seminar Attendance (10%):** Attendance is expected at all seminars. Full marks are awarded for attending **at least 8 of the 10** seminars after the introductory class on **September 3**.

**Seminar Participation (10%):** Come prepared to discuss the assigned readings (methodology, themes, concepts, theories/hypotheses, and quality of evidence), link them to material presented by the instructor, and answer questions if called upon. The September 3 introductory seminar is excluded. Your **best 8** participation grades count; your **lowest 2** (including any zeros for missed seminars) are dropped.

**Post-seminar Writing Reflections (10%):** After each seminar (excluding September 3), submit a brief reflection (max **250 words**, **Microsoft Word (.docx)**) that develops at least one idea from the discussion. Be specific about seminar content and integrate it with broader course learning. Your **best 8** reflections count; your **lowest 2** (including any zeros) are dropped.

**Mid-term test (35%\*):** Students will have up to 2 hours and 50 minutes to respond to three essay questions: 1. one chosen from **two** provided **at least two weeks in advance**; 2. one **student-designed** question prepared in advance; 3. one chosen from **four** *not* provided in advance. one question from a choice of two questions provided two weeks advance of the test; one question developed by the student in advance of the test (i.e. answer your own question); and one question from a choice of four questions that will not be provided in advance of the test.

Students may bring a **typed reference list** for questions 1 and 2 on **one double-sided (or two single-sided) 8.5×11 sheets**. Submit these with the test; **no other writing** is permitted on them. **Final examination** (35%\*): Students will have up to 3 hours. Same format as the midterm test. Respond to three essay questions: 1. one chosen from **two** provided **at least two weeks in advance**; 2. one **student-designed** question prepared in advance; 3. one chosen from **four** *not* provided in advance. one question from a choice of two questions provided at least two weeks advance of the examination; one question developed by the student in advance of the examination (i.e. answer your own question); and one question from a choice of four questions that will not be provided in advance of the examination. Students may bring a **typed reference list** for questions 1 and 2 on **one double-sided (or two single-sided) 8.5×11 sheets**. Submit these with the examination; **no other writing** is permitted on them.

\* **Adaptive (performance-based) weighting**: If there is a **difference of at least 10 percentage points** between your midterm and final exam grades, the **higher** of the two will be weighted **45%** and the **lower 25%** (instead of 35%/35%). This is a **no-harm** policy: I will apply whichever weighting yields the higher overall course grade.

## VIII Policies and procedures

**Late Penalties**: All assignments are due on the dates specified in the course outline. Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 10% for each day beyond the due date.

**Extensions**: No extensions on assignments will be granted after their due dates. Exceptions will be made only in those cases of special circumstances, (e.g. illness, bereavement) and where the student has verifiable documentation.

**Absences**: As student attendance, participation, and reflections are only assessed on 8 of 10 seminars, students are permitted up to two absences with no impact on grades. Beginning with a third absence, each additional missed seminar records a zero for participation and for that week's reflection, and you will no longer receive full marks for attendance (full attendance requires attending at least 8 of 10 seminars). Students who miss more than two seminars are strongly encouraged to speak with the instructor about **withdrawing** from the course.

**Use of Artificial Intelligence**: the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to produce *assessed content* **is not permitted** in this course. It is considered a violation of academic integrity standards. Students may, however, use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools outside of class to explore concepts, locate academic studies or empirical examples related to the course, and otherwise enhance their learning. Please refer to the policy in the Appendix of this document. As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

**E-mail**: Students must use a Carleton e-mail account in all correspondence.

## IX Course schedule and assigned readings

Please note that readings assigned exclusively to PSCI 5204A students are indicated by an asterisk (\*)

### September 3: Introduction: What are Elections For?

Stokes, Susan C. *Mandates and democracy: Neoliberalism by surprise in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. Chapter 6 (pp. 154–184).

Schumpeter, Joseph A. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. Routledge, 1994. Chapter 22 (pp. 269–283).

Powell, G. Bingham Jr. "Conclusion: Why Elections Matter." Chapter 11 in *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2017.

### September 10: Translating Votes into Seats

Benoit, Kenneth. "Duverger's law and the study of electoral systems." *French Politics* 4, no. 1 (2006): 69–83.

Lijphart, Arend. *Patterns of Democracy*. Yale University Press, 2012. (pp. 130–157).

Gallagher, Michael. "Electoral Institutions and Representation." Chapter 2 in *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2017.

\*Kam, Christopher. "Representation, Accountability and Electoral Systems." *Canadian parliamentary review* 39, no. 4 (2016): 17–20.

### September 17: Electoral Rules and their Manipulation

Gandhi, Jennifer. "Authoritarian Elections and Regime Change." Chapter 10 in *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2017.

Van Biezen, Ingrid. "Campaign and party finance." Chapter 4 in *Comparing Democracies 3: Elections and Voting in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2009.

Norris, Pippa. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Chapter 4 (pp. 58–82).

\*Mares, Isabela. *From Open Secrets to Secret Voting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Chapter 2 (pp. 14–39).

## September 24: Are Groups and Group Identities the Bases of Politics?

Achen, Christopher H., and Bartels, Larry M. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. Chapter 9 (pp. 245–276). [Note: Online access to this book is restricted to one library user at a time. Students are advised to download this chapter well in advance of the seminar date]

Lipset, Seymour Martin. "Cleavages, Parties and Democracy. Chapter One in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited*, edited by Lauri Karvonen, and Stein Kuhnle. London: Routledge, 2001.

Blais, André. "Accounting for the electoral success of the Liberal party in Canada presidential address to the Canadian political science association London, Ontario June 3, 2005." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 4 (2005): 821–840.

\*Dassonneville, Ruth. *Voters Under Pressure: Group-Based Cross-Pressure and Electoral Volatility*. Oxford University Press, 2022. Chapter 6 (pp. 99–118).

## October 1: Parties, Ideologies, and Polarization

Green, Donald P., Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. *Partisan hearts and minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. Yale University Press, 2004. Chapter 2 (pp. 24–51)

Grossmann, Matt, and David A. Hopkins. *Polarized by Degrees: How the Diploma Divide and the Culture War Transformed American Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. Chapter 4 (pp. 121–161).

Wu, Cary. "Polarization in the Canadian Public: A Myth?." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 59, no. 1 (2025): 167–178.

\*Noel, Hans. *Political ideologies and political parties in America*. Cambridge University Press, 2014. Chapter 2 (pp. 12–37).

## October 8: Reward and Punishment

Achen, Christopher H., and Bartels, Larry M. *Democracy for Realists : Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. Chapter 5 (pp. 136–164). [Note: Online access to this book is restricted to one library user at a time. Students are advised to download this chapter well in advance of the seminar date]

Kayser, Mark. "The Elusive Economic Vote." Chapter 7 in *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2017.

Duch, Raymond M., and Randolph T. Stevenson. *The Economic Vote: How Political and Economic Institutions Condition Election Results*. of *Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Chapter 11 (pp. 337–358).

\*Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective voting in American National Elections*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 1 (pp. 3–19).

### **October 15: Issues and Leaders**

Clarke, Harold D., David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart, and Paul F. Whiteley. *Performance Politics and the British Voter*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Chapter 2 (pp. 30–52).

Flanagan, Thomas. *Game Theory and Canadian Politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. Chapter 9 (pp. 140–163).

Ohr, Dieter, and Henk Oscarsson. “Leader traits, leader image and vote choice.” Chapter 11 in *Political Leaders and Democratic Elections*, edited by Kees Aarts, André Blais, and Hermann Schmitt, 226–48. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

\*Petrocik, J. R., Benoit, W. L., & Hansen, G. J. (2003). Issue ownership and presidential campaigning, 1952–2000. *Political Science Quarterly*, 118(4), 599–626.

### **October 22 – READING WEEK**

### **October 29 – MIDTERM TEST**

### **November 5 – CLASS CANCELLED**

### **November 12: Campaigns**

Marland, Alex, Anna Lennox Esselment, and Thierry Giasson. “Welcome to Non-Stop Campaigning.” Chapter One in *Permanent Campaigning in Canada*, edited by Anna Lennox Esselment, Alexander J. Marland, and Thierry Giasson. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017. Chapter 1 (pp. 3–27). [Note: Online access to this book is restricted to one library user at a time. Students are advised to download this chapter well in advance of the seminar date]

Jungherr, Andreas, Gonzalo Rivero, Gonzalo Rivero Rodríguez, and Daniel Gayo-Avello. *Retooling Politics: How Digital Media are Shaping Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2020. Chapter 7 (pp. 179–211).

Fowler, Erika Franklin, Michael M. Franz, Gregory J. Martin, Zachary Peskowitz, and Travis N. Ridout. "Political advertising online and offline." *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 1 (2021): 130–149.

\*Broockman, David E., and Joshua L. Kalla. "When and why are campaigns' persuasive effects small? Evidence from the 2020 US presidential election." *American Journal of Political Science* 67, no. 4 (2023): 833–849.

### **November 19: Voter Mobilization and Voter Suppression**

Donald P. Green, and Alan S. Gerber. *Get Out the Vote : How to Increase Voter Turnout*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2019. Part of Chapter 12 (pp. 177–188).

Aytac, S. Erdem, and Susan Carol Stokes. *Why Bother?: Rethinking Participation in Elections and Protests*. Cambridge, United Kingdom ; Cambridge University Press, 2019. Chapter 2 (pp. 13–36).

Lutz, Georg, and Michael Marsh. "Introduction: Consequences of Low Turnout." *Electoral Studies* 26, no. 3 (2007): 539–547.

Rubenson, Daniel, Andre Blais, Patrick Fournier, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte. "Does low turnout matter? Evidence from the 2000 Canadian federal election." *Electoral Studies* 26, no. 3 (2007): 589–597.

\*Rolfe, Meredith. *Voter Turnout : A Social Theory of Political Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Chapter 6 (pp. 98–124).

### **November 26: Elections and Inequality**

Prior, Markus. *Post-Broadcast Democracy: How Media Choice Increases Inequality in Political Involvement and Polarizes Elections*. Cambridge University Press, 2007. Chapter 3 (pp. 55–93).

Huber, John D. *Exclusion by Elections: Inequality, Ethnic Identity, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press, 2017. Chapter 3 (pp. 35–48).

Gilens, Martin. *Affluence and Influence : Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2012. Chapter 6 (pp. 162–192).

\*Jusko, Karen Long. *Who Speaks for the Poor?: Electoral Geography, Party Entry, and Representation*. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Chapter 8 (pp. 154–178).

### **December 3: Why Elections Fail**

Norris, Pippa. "Electoral Integrity and Political Legitimacy." Chapter 8 in *Comparing Democracies 4: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris. London: Sage, 2017.

Anderson, Christopher. *Losers' consent: Elections and democratic legitimacy*. Oxford University Press, 2005. Chapter 2 (pp. 17–32).

González, Ricardo, Bernardo Mackenna, Andrés Scherman, and Alfredo Joignant. "Fairness beyond the ballot: A comparative analysis of failures of electoral integrity, perceptions of electoral fairness, and attitudes towards democracy across 18 countries." *Electoral Studies* 87 (2024): 102740.

\*Vliegthart, Rens, Carolien Van Ham, Sanne Kruikemeier, and Kristof Jacobs. "A matter of misunderstanding? Explaining (mis) perceptions of electoral integrity across 25 different nations." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 88, no. SI (2024): 495–515.

## Political Science Course Outline Appendix

### REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

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

#### Student Mental Health

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

#### **Emergency Resources (on and off campus):**

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

#### **Carleton Resources:**

Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>

Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

Academic Advising Centre (AAC):

<https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS):

<https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

#### **Off Campus Resources:**

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389,

<https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

#### **Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating**

**circumstances:** Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

**Pregnancy:** 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC)

at [equity@carleton.ca](mailto:equity@carleton.ca) or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

**Religious obligation:** 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 [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

**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: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

**Accommodation for 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 will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me 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.

### PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

### 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). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

#### WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

#### OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

**For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).**

#### GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#).

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

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

#### 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 can include:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*"

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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 can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

#### RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640 Loeb
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 <sup>th</sup> floor Library
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501 Nideyinàn
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory