

PSCI 6407A
Public Policy: Theory and Analysis
Fridays 11:35 am – 2:25 pm
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Important Note: Although this course is nominally labelled as indicated above, it will actually focus on material normally associated with PSCI 6408: Public Affairs Management and Analysis. This change in focus was necessitated by some scheduling changes that were prematurely finalized in dealing with faculty availability

Instructor: Scott Edward Bennett
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(Use the above email address. Do not search for the correct email in the University search system as it is unreliable.
You may also use sebcarletonmail@magma.ca)

Class Times: 11:35 am to 2:25 pm Fridays starting September 5, 2025
and ending on November 28, 2025. No class on October 24
(Reading Week). The location will probably be Loeb 602,
but check this once the term starts.

Office Hours: There are no fixed office hours, but you can communicate
with the instructor by email at any time. He will usually get
back to you within a day.

Read this syllabus carefully. This syllabus stipulates class and university policies. Exemptions from these policies are almost never granted.

Note: In so far as possible, you should try to communicate with the instructor in or just after class or through electronic mail. There are no in-person office hours or one-on-one Zoom meetings. There are very few matters that cannot be dealt with in class or by email.

Course Description

This is a seminar in public affairs management and analysis. It will provide you with appropriate background to pursue scholarship in that area of inquiry. It may also provide some practical insights

but not the kind you would get in a standard public administration course. Students should keep in mind that seminars are conducted differently than lecture courses, and most of the work in presenting material is done by the students. For doctoral students, this will also be an important part of their preparation for comprehensive examinations.

The seminar should be attractive to several levels of students, graduate and undergraduate. Such mixed seminars have been proven to be successful in the past. However, this year it is only being offered for doctoral students.

It will be evident that the field of public affairs management and analysis contains and goes beyond some traditional academic rubrics such as public administration and public policy. At its essence, the field is about the expertise used to manage public activities, broadly defined. Although some may think of this in idealized terms, more often than not it is about methods for the organized control of human communities. Yet, there are still many potential theoretical dimensions to this topic.

Class Format

This is a seminar in which, by definition, the students must have the primary responsibility for using course time effectively. You must be prepared to do your part in covering course material and participating. Also note that the way students are evaluated in a seminar is different from evaluation in large lecture classes. The seminar experience requires a greater degree of maturity than that, but it is also more forgiving in terms of typical grade distributions.

Main Text

The Public Administration Theory Primer (3rd Edition), Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari
Westview Press, 2016

You may want to purchase some of the books mentioned under topic 3 below, but it is not absolutely necessary.

Other sources are optional, readily available or on reserve at MacOdrum Library. This will be explained further in class.

This year, the instructor may introduce a small number of additional readings if relevant to the trajectory of the course.

A New and Pointless Administrative Burden

In their infinite wisdom and their never-ending quest to solve the problems of the world through performative policy making, check box bureaucracy and pandering to the most uninformed desires of the legislature, the great minds in the Ministry of Colleges and Universities have decreed that

every course outline in an Ontario post-secondary institution must contain the costs of the text books and related material required for a course.

So, here are some prices for the required books which, of course, may be inaccurate because there is a range of prices for almost any book depending on the supplier. Yet, we must not question the guidance and profoundly helpful wisdom of Ontario's guardians of higher education:

The Public Administration Theory Primer (3rd ed.) \$49.99 Amazon

The Origins of Political Order, Fukuyama \$29.00 Amazon

Political Order and Political Decay, Fukuyama \$27.00 Amazon

Governing the Commons: The Evolution of
Institutions for Collective Action, Ostrom \$28.95 Amazon

As will be explained in mind numbing detail in class, not every student need buy each and every one of these books.

Grade Components

Paper at End of Course (due November 28) 65%

Participation 35%

Details relating to the paper due at the end of the course will be provided in class. You will be given some choice as to the topic of the paper, but it should serve your future examination or research interests. There are no specific penalties for lateness pertaining to turning in the paper. However, there are practical limits on what the university finds acceptable. This will be explained further in class.

Details on participation will be provided after class begins. It will involve students accepting scheduled responsibility for presenting the course material. There will also be an attendance component and a discussion participation component. However, it would be inappropriate to decide on details of participation until we know the number of people enrolled in the course. If a student is scheduled to present a particular reading, they should prepare a WORD document summary of that reading and/or a slide file to be distributed to the other students. You must be prepared to present when scheduled.

In general, it is expected that graduate students will pay some attention to the importance of theory and exploring aspects of the course in terms of additional literature.

This term we are also requiring that you must attend at least one of the first two meetings of the course if you wish to remain in the course. This is essential for the continuity of the course.

Course Topics & Readings

Note that the instructor considers it to be bad pedagogy and probably bad administration to assign in advance specific dates to the coverage of specific topics. In general, we hope to reach topic 4.b no later than week 7 of the course. However, this is an expectation that can be altered in light of student background, interests and progress. We will cover as many of the topics as is appropriate and possible in the order listed below.

1. Introduction to the Course

This is just a description and discussion of the mechanics of the course.

2. A Preliminary Discussion of Legacies and Biases to Determine the Perspectives of the Students

Here, we will have a fairly free discussion of a number of orienting questions that are foundational in the course. No readings are necessary at this point. Some of the questions of interest are:

- a. Is the legacy of traditional public administration and public policy overly idealized for the modern study of public affairs management?
- b. Is the legacy of traditional public administration and public policy well placed in an overall understanding of all types of institutions used in managing human communities?
- c. What are the practical dimensions of managing human communities? For example, elite negotiations, managing public opinion, organizations and policies.

3. The Historical Context of Managing States and Alternatives to Hierarchical States

This is to provide a very broad overview of the governance aspect of public affairs management and to indicate how limited or how varied approaches to managing human communities have been in various contexts and periods. The readings will be divided up among the seminar participants.

The Origins of Political Order (primarily chapters 1, 29 and 30), Francis Fukuyama

Political Order and Political Decay (primarily chapters 1,2,3,35 and 36), Francis Fukuyama

Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action (primarily chapters 1 and 6), Elinor Ostrom

We also wish to raise the question of how public and private organizations tend to vary in the same contexts, but the answers here are not as obvious as some might think. We may suggest some background readings here.

4. Contemporary Theory and Its Immediate Predecessors

In some of the following, for those who are keen on Canadian content, we may wish to consider whether or not civil services in Canada have assumed the status of institutions similar to those institutions that have explicit constitutional status. Topics b. to e. are of most interest in this regard. Also keep in mind the focusing question for the course relating to whether change in government really responds to public preferences.

a. The Possibilities of Theory

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 1

b. Theories of Political Control of Bureaucracy

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 2

Savoie, Some selections from, What is Government Good At?: A Canadian Answer

c. Theories of Bureaucratic Politics

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 3

d. Public Institutional Theory

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 4

e. Theories of Public Management

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 5

We may consider a Canadian treatment of this and related theories as in:

Johnson, Chapter 5 of Thinking Government: Public Administration and Politics in Canada (4th or 5th ed.)

f. Post Modern Theory

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 6

- g. Decision Theory

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 7

- h. Rational Choice Theory and Irrational Behavior

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 8

And possibly:

“Are Bureaucrats Budget Maximizers?” Blais and Dion (1991)

- i. Theories of Governance

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 9

- j. Summary of Theories

Frederickson, Smith, Larimer & Licari – Chapter 10

5. Future Direction of Theory

If time permits, and it may not, I would like to have a concluding discussion of the probable future directions of theory, productive and unproductive. Many of the problems of theory arise from a lack of distinction between normative and empirical theory. This often leads to unproductive moving cycles in the emergence of theories of public affairs management and analysis and related fields.

Instructor's Other Important Guidelines and Rules

Without going into great detail, various other course, departmental and university rules apply to the conduct of any course. You are expected to know them. From, my point of view, the important rules are:

1. Do your work on time as described in this outline and in class. There is some flexibility in handing in the final paper.
2. Do not engage in plagiarism.
3. Do not disrupt the class.

4. Keep an open mind with respect to value systems and approaches to inquiry.

With respect to point one above, the final copy of the course paper should be submitted by the end of November 28, 2025. There may be a few days of grace beyond that. The paper must be in electronic form as a WORD attachment to an email. Be sure you keep copies of what you submit, and wait for the instructor's return message that he has received and can open the attachment. If you do not turn in the paper on time, you will initially get an F in the course. However, a failing grade can be changed without penalty at some later date if the paper is finally submitted. Nevertheless, the student should keep in mind that there are elements of grade change policy not within the instructor's control, and authorities in the university hierarchy may not accept a submitted grade change. In addition, experience shows that when a paper is not handed in within two weeks of the nominal due date, it is rarely handed in. This is more a matter of the realities of student life. Finally, the Department has decided that late papers in core seminars must be submitted within a fairly short time period if students want to take the comprehensive examination on schedule, as detailed below.

As to the use of artificial intelligence in course work, my expectation is that you should not use it to write up your final papers or prepare final versions of presentations, but it is acceptable to use it in doing underlying research that will lead to the final paper or a presentation.

Departmental Rules for PhD Core Courses

All PhD students registered in a core course should be aware of the following guidelines:

A PhD student must complete both halves of the core course, with a B+ standing or higher, to be eligible to write the scheduled August 2026 comprehensive examination.

Eligibility to write the comprehensive examination will be determined by the Graduate Administrator and Graduate Supervisor by the end of May 2026.

PhD students must complete the Fall core course and submit all outstanding work by the end of the Fall term. In the case of extenuating circumstances, an extension may be granted by the course instructor, but all outstanding work must be completed by January 15, 2026. In these instances, a student will be awarded an "F" until a change of grade is submitted. Students may be deregistered from the second half of the core course if this condition is not met.

Students seeking accommodations for the final comprehensive exam in August 2026 must inform the Graduate Administrator and seek formal accommodation for the exam through the Paul Menton Centre by end of May 2026.

Other rules of general interest from a departmental or university perspective are contained in an insertion that follows. The instructor only takes responsibility for the essence of the material above. The additional material and its manner of presentation also indicate the growing influence of bureaucratic overreach in the contemporary university. The following material should not have to be added to a course outline. It should be referenced as an external URL to which people can refer without it being a distraction from specific course structure.

Standard Departmental Attachment Follows

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 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 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 th floor
Library	
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501
Nideyinàn	
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory