

PSCI 4204A  
**ELECTIONS**

Tuesday 11:35-14:25

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Mariam Mufti  
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**Course description**

This seminar aims to provide a comparative overview of the electoral process and will allow participants to identify key themes in the study of elections. During the course of the seminar we will attempt to answer the following broad questions and will acquaint ourselves with the debates that they generate: Who votes and why? Who conducts an election and how? What are the political consequences of electoral systems? What is the role played by political parties in the electoral process? What explains voting behaviour and how are voters mobilized? These discussions will culminate into addressing the feasibility of carrying out electoral reform and the effect it is likely to have on the nature of democracy.

**Grading:**

This class will be conducted as a seminar, which means that students are expected to actively participate in class discussion. The readings are extensive and in order to have a more fruitful discussion it is essential that students complete the assigned reading before they come to class.

Participation	20%
Presentation	20%
Country Paper	20%
Final Exam	40% (due on December 6)

Participation: 9% of the grade will be evaluated based on high quality contributions to the seminar discussion. The remaining 11% is based on class attendance, 1 point each for the 11 sessions attended beginning September 21, 2010. If you plan on missing a session please make sure that you inform the instructor beforehand.

Country Paper: You will be required to write a short paper (1000 to 2000 words) on how elections in a particular country illustrate the topic under discussion. Guiding questions and suggestions for which countries might be appropriate are given for every topic in the outline. **The paper will be due in the class from which you selected the country.** Based on when students present and submit their country paper, students will have access to their grades the following week. And for students who submit their paper on November 30<sup>th</sup> by the end of the day.

Presentation: During the course of this session, 12 core issues pertaining to the electoral process will be debated. Two students will be assigned to each issue and will have to debate the issue in class, one arguing for and the other against the topic. The presentation in class will be 15% of the grade. In addition you will be required to submit a summary of your arguments (not more than a 1000 words) and will be 5% of the grade. Students will access to their grades in the following week and for those who present on November 30<sup>th</sup>, by the end of the day.

\* Graduate Students have the option of not doing the presentation or country paper and instead write a research paper worth 40% of the grade. The topic of the research paper needs to be discussed and approved by the instructor.

Final Exam: The final exam will be take home assignment worth 40 % of the grade. The exam will be due on December 6, 2010

\*\* All written assignments must be typed and formatted accordingly: double-spaced, font size 12", Times New Roman, 1" margin on all sides

### **Texts**

There are two required textbooks for this course and will be available at the bookstore for purchase:

1) Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010

2) Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: Elections and Voting in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. London: Sage Publications, 2010

There are two recommended texts for this course :

1) David M. Farrell. *Electoral Systems: a comparative introduction* England: Palgrave, 2001

2) Louis Massicotte, Andre Blais and Antoine Yoshinaka. *Establishing the Rules of the Game*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003

Articles in journals that are available online are available on the library reserves website. Some readings will be available at the Library Reserve Desk and in the Department of Political Science, Reading Room C666 Loeb. This room is open from 8:45 am – 4:15 pm, Monday to Friday.

You will be notified in advance if any changes are made to the syllabus.

### Note on the readings:

Use the following guidelines to do the readings so that you are able to logically think through the arguments being made.

- 1) What is the author's explanatory objective?
- 2) What is the author's argument?
- 3) What are the intellectual roots of the argument?
- 4) Does the author exhibit an implicit or explicit normative agenda? Or is the argument relatively objective in the explanatory social scientific sense?
- 5) Is the research design and methodology appropriate for the questions being asked?
- 6) What type of evidence if any, is provided for the argument? What type of evidence would strengthen or weaken the argument?
- 7) Are the authors in direct dialogue with one another? If not, how do you imagine they would respond to each other?
- 8) What is the intellectual contribution of the literature to our understanding of political development and democracy?
- 9) What is the value of this research agenda?

## **Course Outline**

### **Session 1 (Sept 14): Introduction to the course**

Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 1-21

Richard Katz. *Democracy and Elections*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997: 100-107 (reserve)

**Session 2 (Sept 21): Who has the right to participate, as voter or as a candidate?**

Louis Massicotte, Andre Blais and Antoine Yoshinaka. *Establishing the Rules of the Game*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003: 15-39; 40-65 (reserve)

Colomer, Joseph M. *Political Institutions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001: 14-66 (reserve)

Debate Topic 1: Should convicted felons be allowed to vote?

Debate topic 2: Should the voting age be lowered to 16 years?

Questions:

What is the significance of universal suffrage and what are the major types of restrictions on the right to vote?

What are the types of restrictions placed on the right to be a candidate?

What factors in the political system explain these restrictions?

Country suggestions: Pakistan, Canada, Sweden, South Korea

**Session 3 (Sept 28): Elections and Political Parties**

Susan Scarrow. "Political Parties and Party Systems" In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 45-64

Peter Mair. "Comparing Party Systems" In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2002: 88-107 (reserve)

Steve Patten. "Democracy and the Candidate Selection Process in Canadian Elections" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 135-54

R Alan Ware. *Political Parties and Party Systems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996: 147-212 (reserve, reading is optional)

Debate Topic 3: Does a closed party system allow for more democratic outcomes than an open party system?

Questions:

What is the party system like? What is the nature of the political parties (elite, mass-based, catch-all)?

How many significant parties exist and what are they?

What functions do political parties serve? Are they ideological, advocates for groups, or power brokers?

What linkages do they maintain with the voters?

What is the purpose of elections for the political parties?

How do political parties recruit and select candidates for elections?

Country suggestions: Mexico, Japan, Britain, France, Italy, Pakistan

**Session 4 (Oct 5): Explaining Voting Behaviour and Partisanship**

Blais, Andre. "Political Participation" in Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 165-184

Mark N. Franklin. "The dynamics of electoral participation" In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2002: 148-168 (reserve)

Richard Niemi and William Miller. "Voting Choice, Conditioning and Constraint." In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2002: 169-188 (reserve)

Andre Blais. *To Vote or Not to Vote: The Merits and Limits of Rational Choice Theory*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000: 1-17; 82-93

Andrea Perella. "Overview of Voting Behavior Theories" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 221-50 (Chapters 12, 13, 14 are optional)

Debate topic 4: Instrumental motivation of an individual voter explains electoral behaviour above all other theories. Agree or disagree.

Questions:

What are the trends of voting turnout in the country and the reasons which explain this turnout?

What do we know about the cleavages in the society which are important at election time?

What kinds of issues do political parties emphasize at election time?

How much party-identification exists and what is the

Country suggestions: Scandinavia, Austria, Germany, Israel, Britain

**Session 5 (Oct 12): Electoral Systems**

Elizabeth Carter and David Farrell. "Electoral Systems and Electoral Management" In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 25-44

Denis Pilon. "Understanding Electoral Systems" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 35-56

Farrell, David M. *Electoral Systems: a Comparative introduction*: Palgrave, 2001: Chapter 2, 19-48; Chapter 3, 49-67; Chapter 4, 68-96; Chapter 5, 97-120; Chapter 6, 121-152 (reserve, highly recommended)

Questions:

What kind of electoral system is used?

Why was this particular electoral system chosen and how does it operate?

Has this electoral system been effective?

Country suggestions: Germany, France, India, Australia, Ireland, Israel, United States

**Session 6 (Oct 19): Political Consequences of Electoral Systems and Laws**

Pippa Norris, "Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian, and Mixed Systems," *International Political Science Review*, 18:3 July, 1997: 297-312. (online reserve)

Lijphart, Arend. "The political consequences of electoral laws, 1945-1985" *American Political Science Review*, Vol 84, 1990: 481-495 (online reserve)

Andre Blais, "The Debate over Electoral Systems," *International Political Science Review*, 12:3, July, 1991: pp 239-260 (online reserve)

Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart, eds., *Electoral Laws and Their Political Consequences*. New York: Agathon Press, 1986. 43-68 (reserve)

Charles Boix, "Setting the Rules of the Game: The Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies," *APSR*, 93:3 (September, 1999), pp 609-624. (online reserve, optional)

Debate Topic 5: Is PR the way to go in a democracy?

Questions:

What are the consequences of the particular electoral system on the results of the elections?  
Is there an incentive to reform the electoral system among the various stake-holders?

Country suggestions: Germany, France, India, Australia, Ireland, Israel, United States

**Session 7 (Oct 26): Conducting an Election**

Louis Massicotte, Andre Blais and Antoine Yoshinaka. *Establishing the Rules of the Game*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003: 66-82; 83-101; 102-41; 142-157 (reserve)

Heather MacIvor. "Canada's Election Law: Less than Meets the Eye" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 57-86

Lisa Handley and Bernard Groffman (Eds). *Redistricting in Comparative Perspective*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2008: 3-10; 265-284 (reserve)

Butler and Cain, "Reapportionment: A Study in Comparative Government," *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 4 no. 3, 1985: 197-213 9 (online reserve)

Michael Pal and Sujit Chaudhry. "Constituency Boundaries in Canada" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 87-108

Debate Topic 6: Should political parties be involved in the registration of voters?

Debate Topic 7: Courts should play a significant role in the process of redistricting. Agree or disagree

Questions:

Who conducts and election?  
How should votes be counted?  
How does voter registration take place?  
Are the electoral rules unusual?  
What are the various mechanisms for redistricting?

Country suggestions: Canada, USA, India, Germany, Australia

**Session 8 (Nov 2): The Electoral Campaign- Party strategy and marketing**

Christopher Wlezian. "Election Campaigns:" Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 98-117

Claes h. De Vreeze. "Campaign Communication and the Media" in Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 118-140

Thomas Flanagan. "Campaign Strategy: Triage and the Concentration of Resources" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 155-172 (Chapter 9 is optional)

David Farrell & Rudiger Schmitt-Beck (Eds.), *Do Political Campaigns Matter? Campaign Effects in Elections and Referendums*. New York, Routledge, 2002: 1-21; 183-193 (reserve)

David Swanson and Paolo Mancini (eds) *Politics, Media and Modern Democracy: An International Study of Innovations in Election Campaigning and their Consequences*. London: Praeger: 1-28 (reserve)

Ingrid Van Biezen. "Party and Campaign Finance" Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 65-97

Debate topic 8: Modern campaign styles entail a growing influence of politicians over the voters, an oversimplification of the political debate and an increase in party propaganda. Is this a fair charge?

Questions:

What is the mechanism for campaign finance? Is this mechanism effective; if not, are there any possibilities to reform it?

Describe one or more recent election campaign(s) in the country and what results it had

How much emphasis is placed by the different political parties on different campaign methods?

What are the main campaign messages?

How sophisticated is political marketing?

Are electoral abuses and corruption widespread?

Country suggestions: USA, Canada, Britain, India, Brazil, Japan

**Session 9 (Nov 9): Referendums, Recall and Initiative**

LeDuc, Lawrence. "Referendums and Initiatives: The politics of Direct Democracy" In Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2002: 70-87

Hug, Simon, and Pascal Sciarini. 2000. "Referendums on European Integration: Do Institutions Matter in the Voter's Decision?" *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 33(1): 3-36. (online reserve)

LeDuc Lawrence. *The Politics of Direct Democracy: Referendums in a Global Perspective*. Canada: Broadview Press, 2003: 13-50; 185-192 (reserve)

Debate topic 9: Should voters be empowered to recall elected officials?

Questions:

What is the potential of the referendums a device for improving the quality of democracy?

How does the behaviour of voters differ in a referendum as compared to in a regular election?

Country suggestions: Switzerland, USA, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Australia, Denmark, Pakistan

**Session 10 (Nov 16): Explaining and Interpreting an Election**

Stanley Kelley, *Interpreting Elections*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983: 3-71 (reserve)

Ian Budge & Dennis Farlie, *Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983, 146-162 (reserve)

David Butler. "Polls and Elections" in Lawrence LeDuc, Pippa Norris and Richard Niemi (eds.) *Comparing Democracies I: Elections and Voting in Global Perspective*. London: Sage Publications, 1996: 236-254 (reserve)

Andre Turcotte. "Polling as Modern Alchemy: Measuring Public Opinion in Canadian Elections" in Heather MacIvor (ed). *Election*. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications, 2010: 199-220

Debate Topic 11: Do elections carry an obvious message?

Questions:

How does one election differ from another?

How have opinion polls changed the nature of elections, party strategy, voter behaviour?

Country suggestions: United States, Britain

**Session 11 (Nov 23): Elections and Democracy**

Richard Katz. *Democracy and Elections*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997: 278-310 (reserve)

Andreas Schedler (Ed.) *Electoral Authoritarianism: the Dynamics of Unfair Competition*. UK: Lynne Reiner, 2006: 1-23; 219-31 (reserve) 41-54; 95-122 (optional) (reserve)

Christopher J. Anderson, and Andres Blais et al (Eds.), *Loser's Consent: Elections and Democratic Legitimacy*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2005: 1-16; 182-94 (reserve)

Marian Sawer. "Women and Elections" in Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds). *Comparing Democracies 3: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage, 2010: 202-222

Debate Topic 10: What do we mean by a free and fair election?

Questions:

How do democratic values get translated into the electoral arena?

How do elections get used to extend authoritarianism?

How do the different aspects of either winning or losing an election affect the legitimacy and viability of democratic institutions?

Country suggestions: Algeria, Russia, Egypt, Singapore, Malaysia

**Session 12 (Nov 30): Electoral Reform**

Farrell, David M. *Electoral Systems: A Comparative Introduction*. Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001: 175-191

Katz, Richard S. "Why are there are so many (or so few) electoral reforms" in Michael Gallagher and Paul Mitchell (eds.) *The Politics of Electoral Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005: 57-76 (reserve)

Pippa Norris. *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004: 249-264 (reserve)

Reuven Hazan and Monique Leyenaar (ed.). *Why Electoral Reform? Advancing the Study of Electoral System Change*, a special issue of *West European Politics* (forthcoming, copies will be provided)

*International Political Science Review*, (Special Issue on Electoral Reform) Vol. 16, 1995: 3-119 (optional)

Debate Topic 12: The effectiveness of electoral reform is determined by how well strategic incentives faced by political actors are altered.

Questions:

Why are electoral reforms sometimes necessary?

What form do electoral reforms take that is which aspects of the electoral system are reformed and in which direction?

Country suggestions: Italy, Japan, New Zealand

### Academic Accommodations

**For students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. 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 assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 15 2010 for December examinations and March 11 2011 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](http://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 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:

- 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;
- 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 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 include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**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.

**Grading:** Assignments and exams will be graded with a percentage grade. To convert this to a letter grade or to the university 12-point system, please refer to the following table.

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

**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:** 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:** All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

**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. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life 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 numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email [carletonpss@gmail.com](mailto:carletonpss@gmail.com), visit our website at [poliscisociety.com](http://poliscisociety.com), or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.