

PSCI 3004A
Political Parties and Elections in Canada
Thursdays 11.35-2.25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Laura Way
Office: B645 Loeb
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Office Hours: Thursdays 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Parties are so central to our democratic life that if they are not participatory our politics cannot be participatory, if they are not inclusive our politics cannot be inclusive, and if they are not responsive then our politics cannot be responsive.

--William Cross¹

Political parties are an essential component of Canadian democracy. By focusing on Canadian political parties at the national level, this course explores the strengths and weaknesses of parties as agents of democracy. In exploring this question, students will gain an understanding of the core functions and activities of Canadian political parties, the nature and evolution of the Canadian party system, and the impact of federalism on the development of political parties. In addition, students will explore recent elections and “hot topics”: *Should the left unite? What is the future of the Liberal party? Does the Harper government represent a break with Canadian conservatism?* The aim is to have students root their opinions of these contemporary issues in knowledge of the discipline, its history, and current debates.

Class Format

An important component of this class will be **student-centred discussions**. Although the class is too large to adopt a seminar format, a variety of in-class activities will be used to provide an opportunity to discuss your ideas and to learn from each other. Approximately one-third of the class time will be used in this manner; as such it is essential that students complete the assigned readings before the class. Also students are encouraged to help make the lectures “interactive” by asking questions and making comments.

Required Texts

Books are available at the Carleton University Bookstore.

Gagnon, Alain and A. Brian Tanguay (ed.) 2007. *Canadian Parties in Transition*. Third Edition.

¹ Cross, William (2004). *Political Parties*. Vancouver: UBC Press, p. 3.

Peterborough: University of Toronto Press.

Pammett, Jon and Christopher Dornan (2006). *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*. Toronto: Dundurn Press.

Reserve Readings

Readings, not contained in course texts or listed with a web link, are available in the library's electronic reserve room.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

All course requirements are listed below. All course requirements must be completed to pass the course.

Assignment	% of Course Grade	Due Date
Class and Web CT Discussion	10%	Ongoing
Briefing Note	15%	February 5
Research Paper		
Outline	5%	February 26
Paper	30%	March 26
Final Exam	40%	The final exam will be scheduled during the formal exam period. April 8-27, excluding April 11 th .

Class and WebCT discussion

As noted above, an important part of this class is student-centered discussion. Participation will be assessed on the following basis: (1) attendance, (2) preparedness, (3) the regularity and extent of participation, and (4) the constructiveness of comments. Discussions will take in place in class and on WebCT. Students are expected to contribute to the discussion boards on WebCT in at least *7 of the 12 weeks*. Students can select which weeks they wish to participate in. At the end of the term, students will have an opportunity to self-evaluate their participation. However, final determination of their mark remains with the instructor.

Parties in the News

At the start of each class (approximately 15 minutes), we will talk about how the parties have been portrayed in the media during the past week. For the first couple of weeks, I will bring stories to share. Afterwards, students are encouraged to bring and share their own media clippings.

Briefing Note to a Party Leader

Length: 2 pages, typed, single spaced

Due Date: At the start of class on February 5, 2009 – will be returned on February 12, 2009

Students will select a Canadian federal political party: the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the New Democratic Party, the Green Party or the Bloc Québécois. For the party leader, you

must prepare a briefing note on a policy issue that you think will be a “hot topic” for the next federal election. Be sure to pick a party and topic that interests you as your briefing note will be judged based on how well it “sells” your policy stance as well as on its comprehensiveness. One of the objectives of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to write succinctly. One way to achieve this is to write a longer piece then purposely cut it down to fit the required length.

The briefing note must include:

Issue/Purpose: One to two sentences outlining the nature of issue and your proposed strategy.

Background:

This section describes the following (one or two paragraphs for each section)

- current state of the policy issue
- the past policy stance of your party on the issue
- other parties’ positions (It is not necessary to cover all other parties – just the party’s main competitor on this policy issue).

Considerations (one to two paragraphs):

This section should provide an analysis of the important factors which party should consider when selling your proposed policy stance to the public (or a least your party’s voting block).

Recommendations (one paragraph or could be a bulleted list)

This section should include your policy recommendations (e.g., what the position your party should take on this issue)

Research Paper

The topics of this paper must be chosen from a specified list of themes/questions. This list will be discussed in class and will be available on WebCT by January 29, 2009.

Outline:

Length: 1 page (double space), plus an attached single spaced bibliography

Due Date: February 26, 2009 – will be returned on March 5, 2009

This one page outline should give me a good understanding of your topic, including your proposed thesis statement and organizational structure. You must also attach a bibliography (e.g., the works you plan to consult in order to write your research paper). Good sources are timely and from a credible source (e.g., academic journals, edited books or direct source material - party documents, newspapers). The purpose of this assignment is to identify any potential trouble spots before writing your final paper (e.g., too ambitious, not enough sources).

Final paper:

Length: 10-12, typed, double space pages (not including bibliography)

Due Date: At the start of class on March 26, 2009 – will be returned on April 2, 2009

The paper will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Argument: Does the paper make a convincing argument? Is there a clear thesis statement? Is the pattern of argumentation logical? How original is the argument? Is the argument supported by enough evidence?

Communication: Is the writing style clear and effective? Is the paper free of spelling and grammatically errors? Does it use a consistent citation style?

Final Exam

This exam will test all aspects of the course including lecture materials and required readings. The format will be a combination of short and long-answer questions. The final exam will be scheduled during the formal exam period (April 8 - 27 / including Saturdays except April 11).

How to hand in your written assignment?

Written assignments are due by start of class on the date which they are assigned unless prior arrangements have been made. Do not slide papers under the office door or send by email. Papers handed after the start of class (even if it is on the due date) will receive a mandatory late penalty of **the equivalent of 2% per day**. Extensions will be only given under extenuating circumstances (see academic accommodations below) and must be sought prior to the due date unless the reason for being late does not also explain this lack of communication. Political Science drop box is intended to collect late assignments only or if a student has extenuating circumstances and is unable to submit the paper at the start of class. The drop box is emptied **every weekday at 4 p.m.** and all items collected at that time are date-stamped with that day's date. Any assignments submitted after 4pm will be date stamped for the following weekday.

SCHEDULE

- January 8** **Introduction to the Course**
PSCI 3004A outline | The 2008 election | The need for political parties
- January 15** **Political parties in Canada**
The party system | National vs. Regional Dynamics
- Brodie, Janine and Jane Jenson. 2007 "Piercing the Smokescreen: Stability and Change in Brokerage Politics," in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).
- Bickerton, James. 2007. "Between Integration and Fragmentation: Political parties and the Representation of Regions," in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).
- Patten, Steve. 2007. "The Evolution of the Canadian Party System" in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).
- January 22** **The Conservative Party**
Uniting the Right | Is the new Conservative Party a break with the past?
- Ellis, Farro and Peter Woolstencroft. 2006. "A Change in Government, Not a

Change of Country: The Conservatives and the 2006 election” in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Patten, Steve. 2008. “Understanding Stephen Harper” in *The Harper Legacy*.
Ottawa: Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives.
http://www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/National_Office_Pubs/2008/HarperRecord/Understanding_Stephen_Harper.pdf

Check out the Conservative Party’s web site: www.conservative.ca

January 29 The Liberal Party:

What happened to Canada’s “natural” governing party? | Legacy of Trudeau
| Chrétien Era | Future?

MacDonald, L. Ian. 2008. “The Troubles of an Accidental Leader.” *Policy Options*.
May 2008.

Mackinnon, Steven. 2008. “Recentring the Liberal Party.” *Policy Options*. May 2008.

Clarkson, Stephen. 2006. “How the Big Red Machine Became the Little Red
Machine” in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Check out the Liberal Party’s web site: www.liberal.ca

February 5 Third Party Challengers

Does the NDP have a ceiling of support? | Are the Greens a “real” political party or
an activist group? | Should the left unite?

Harada (2006) “Great Expectations: The Green Party of Canada’s 2006 Campaign,”
in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*

Whitehorn, Alan. 2007. “Social Democracy and the New Democratic Party” in
Canadian Parties in Transition (3rd edition).

Check out the NDP website: www.ndp.ca and the Green Party website:
www.greenparty.ca

Briefing note due at start of class – will be returned on February 12

February 12 Quebec

The Bloc | Liberals in Quebec | Conservatives in Quebec

Belanger and Nadeau (2006) “The Bloc Québécois: A Sour-Tasting Victory” in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Gagnon, Alain G. and Jacques Hérivault. 2007. "The Bloc Québécois: Charting New Territories?" in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).

Check out the Bloc website: www.blocquebecois.org/fr/publications-english.asp

February 19: No Classes, Winter Break

February 26 Internal Party Politics

Selecting the leader | Policy Conventions | Who belongs?

Cross, William. 2006. "Candidate Nomination in Canada's Political Parties" in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Cross, William and Lisa Young. 2006. "Are Canadian Political Parties Empty Vessels? Membership, Engagement, and Policy Capacity." IRPP Choices (4) <http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol12no4.pdf>

Geoff Norquay. 2008. "From Tory to Liberal Syndrome: The Most Difficult Job in the Country." *Policy Options*. May 2008.

Noel, Sid, 2007, "Leader's Entourages, Parties, and Patronage" in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).

Outline due at start of class – will be returned on March 5

March 5 Political Parties and Gender

Women Candidates | Leadership roles in the party | Gender Gap in Voting

Trimble, Linda. 2007. "Gender, Political Leadership and Media Visibility: Globe and Mail Coverage of Conservative Party of Canada Leadership Contests." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 40:4.

Tremblay, Manon and Linda Trimble. 2004. "Still Different After All These Years: A Comparison of Female and Male MPs in the 20th Century," *Journal of Legislative Studies* 10:1.

Check out Equal Voice: www.equalvoice.ca

March 12 Election Campaigns: Media, Polling and Web 2.0

The Horse Race | Polls | Internet

Barney, Darin. 2007. "The Internet and Political Communications in Canadian Party Politics: The View from 2004" in *Canadian Parties in Transition*.

Brooks, Stephen. 2007. "Television advertising by Political Parties: Can Democracy Survive it?" in *Canadian Parties in Transition*.

Marzolini, Michael. 2006. "Public Opinion and the 2006 election" in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Waddell, Christopher and Christopher Doran. "The Media and the Campaign" in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

March 19 Election Campaigns

Financing | National vs. local campaigns

Cross, William, 2006, "Candidate Nomination in Canada's Political Parties" in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*.

Young, Lisa, Anthony Sayers and Harold Jansen. 2007. "Altering the Political Landscape: State Funding and Party Finance," in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).

March 26 Disengaging from the Political Parties

Political Parties: Are they still relevant?

Amyot, Grant. 2007. "The Waning of Political Parties" in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition)

Milner, Henry. 2007. "The Problem of Political Drop-outs: Canada in a Comparative Perspective" in *Canadian Parties in Transition* (3rd edition).

Research paper due at start of class – will be returned on April 2

April 2 Review

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 letter of 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 7, 2008 for December examinations**, and **March 6, 2009 for April examinations**.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for

accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

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

Plagiarism: The 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. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

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

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

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

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

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science only communicates with students via Connect accounts. 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, visit our website at 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.