

**Carleton University**

**Summer 2026**

**Department of Political Science**

**Carleton.ca/polisci**

**PSCI 4607A/5607A**

**Politics of North America**

**Wednesday and Friday, 2:35-5:35 pm**

**Online**

Instructor: Professor Emerita Melissa Haussman

Email: [Melissa.haussman@carleton.ca](mailto:Melissa.haussman@carleton.ca)

Office hours: by appointment (613-796-7729)

**Course Description:**

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in the North American Politics seminar at such an interesting time in the evolution of the North American trade and security framework. As most will know, the USMCA is open for re-negotiation formally starting July 1, 2026, although the three national governments have been putting forth signals about their intents and negotiating among each other and with other countries for many months. Most doubt that a concrete agreement will emerge in July, and that more months or years of negotiations across the countries and trade sectors will continue, or as is also possible, what was a trilateral country framework will be split into bilateral ones. This seminar takes for granted and as a central theme the fact that domestic and international politics are intertwined with the economics of liberalizing or protecting certain trade sectors, based on the lobbying efforts of various groups and their deemed

importance to economic health and electoral outcomes. We have seen and will continue to see populist support among sectors opened up by trade agreements. The regional and international trade regimes of North America are extremely wide-ranging and complex and we will work towards gaining an overview of the most important changes, rules and sectors at play.

### Course Requirements at a Glance:

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Due date(s)</u>
Three short group papers (5 pages each)	45% (= 3 x 15%)	May 18, June 1, June 12 (11:59 pm)
Class participation (group work and class)	25%	Ongoing
Take-home exam (UG) (3000 words)/ Research paper (GRAD) (4500 words)	30%	June 27

### Course Requirements in Detail:

This course will take place on zoom, and the grading will mainly be done concerning the quality of group participation-people will be divided into 5 equivalent groups, with three (3) short papers due (five pages each), including group member participation in the writing process identified by sub-section. The group topics will be assigned in advance. Each paper will be 15% (45% total) and 25% is based on the quality of participation both within groups and the general class.

There will also be a take-home exam, written individually, due by June 27, comprising 3,000 words, concerning either the interplay of Mexican or Chinese security issues with the future of the USMCA or whether it is likely that the USMCA will survive as a North American entity, given the different preferences of current national leaders. The take home exam is worth 30% of your grade. It will be written in the form of a “policy brief,” with instructions to be provided.

**Note: Grading expectations for 5607**

I will ask that the grad students in each of the groups take the lead on making sure the short collaborative papers include the written work of each group member and making sure they are uploaded to the website. Second, instead of the shorter paper for the take home, grad students will write a more research-oriented paper of 4,000 words.

Since this is a fourth and fifth-year seminar, it is vital for students to have completed reading before class and be able to participate on an informed basis both in groups and in general class. The papers should be 5 pages in length (single spaced) and are due each assigned Monday (or Tuesday, June 9) by 11:59 pm. They should be written in 12-point font, Times New Roman preferred. Outside references are fine, but not necessary. The quality of each student's research, organization of thoughts and succinct, clear analysis of the main issues presented in the assigned reading (s) will contribute significantly to the grade received. While the papers are graded on a group basis, the quality of each individual's contribution will also be taken into account across the course so that there are no "free riders" within the groups. Group presentations will also take place throughout the term and form part of the participation grade.

The instructor will be away for four of the classes, requiring students to meet for part of the course time during those days in their groups to discuss the paper assignment for the week.

**Goals of the course:**

-Chiefly, to enable a thoughtful, multi-dimensional analysis of the history, current events and likely future surrounding the North American countries' participation in regional and free trade agreements, as well as how they have become affected by Chinese and Taiwanese dominance in various aspects of global and regional affairs (such as shipping and AI)

-to enable students to present thoughtful, concise, clear arguments in both written and verbal form on the issues related to the community of North America, largely formed on the basis of NAFTA

-to enable students to understand the historically asymmetric nature of social, military and economic integration between the US-Canadian and US-Mexican dyads

**Readings:**

Two books, on order from the bookstore, are required for the course:

1. Kent Jones, *Populism and Trade* (Oxford University Press, 2021) (\$78.77)
2. Strom Thacker, *Big Business, the State, and Free Trade* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) (\$51.95)

Other relevant articles will be posted and assigned throughout the term on Brightspace.

**AI Policy:****Moderate Use – Content Generation with Attribution**

**AI use in this course: Students may use AI tools for ideas, clarifying challenging concepts or getting started on projects. Some acceptable uses include:**

- **Sounding board (e.g. generating essay topics with ChatGPT, using Microsoft Word’s Smart Lookup or Copilot to find inspiration and related topics)**
- **Creating outlines (e.g. using AI to structure an essay or presentation flow, using Microsoft Word’s Outline View with AI suggestions)**
- **Providing definitions or explanations of complex concepts (e.g. using AI to explain a difficult theory or to find relevant information)**

**Documenting use of AI: It is necessary to document your use of AI in this course, using the following guidelines:**

- **Clearly identify and cite AI-generated text (e.g. “The following paragraph was generated by ChatGPT/Microsoft Word’s Researcher tool/Copilot”)**

- **Review, edit and ensure accuracy and originality of final submissions**
- **AI-generated content should not exceed 10 per cent (instructor to modify –**

### **Class Schedule:**

May 6 First meeting, outline of expectations and workings of the course

May 8 Coverage of the History of the GATT and US legislative roles in supporting/opposing free trade

May 13 Mexican and Canadian domestic legislative coalitions

May 15-instructor away, please read Chs. 1-4 of Thacker for discussion in-class  
Wednesday, May 20.

**First paper due Monday evening May 18** assessing legislative opposition in all three countries. As for all three response papers, see “Assignment Descriptions” document/module on Brightspace home page.

It is strongly suggested that students attend the Brookings Webinar on the implications for US-Mexico relations under current President Sheinbaum (link to webinar is in the course assignments) on May 26, 10-11:15 am.

Instructor away May 22-29. Groups will meet via zoom on the 27 or -29 to discuss arguments in the rest of Thacker’s book.

**Second paper due June 1** on Thacker book. See “assignment descriptions module” for specific group instructions.

June 3 In class Comparisons of NAFTA vs USMCA and likely trajectory of USMCA post-2026 (readings assigned).

June 5 Jones chs. 1-5 need to be prepared by this day re: tying trade to populism-specific assignments in “Assignment Descriptions module.”

June 10 Jones Chs. 7-9.

**Third paper due June 12**(Jones book). See Assignment Descriptions module.

June 12 Issues of Mexican security and threats to trade

June 17 Issues of Chinese threats to Taiwanese, US security through trade and burning issues for future trade relationships.

**Take home exam) due by June 27.**

### **History of North American Trade and Security Interactions**

While globalization became a buzzword in the 1980s and 1990s, in truth globalization started in 1947/48 with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, of which the US and Canada were founding members; Mexico, the third party in NAFTA, did not take the domestic decision to become a global economic player until it joined the GATT in 1986. A much more sweeping set of changes was proposed prior to the GATT, in the form of the International Trade Organization under the *Havana Charter* of 1947/8, which would have enabled the ITO to become a third UN economic body, along with the IMF and World Bank. The ITO tried to deal with problems which have become endemic to trade negotiations and deals since the 1940s; the emergence of the Cold War in 1947, pulling off President Truman's attention; fights between the US and the UK to become the global "trade giants," and disagreement on how much to allow the "less developed" countries, which were either non-industrialized or used state-owned enterprises, to evade the rules laid down in the ITO. Instead the GATT became an "interim" framework, without a robust international administrative body, until the WTO was created in 1995. The GATT dealt mainly with the "first generation" of free trade, mainly in goods, while the WTO (and NAFTA) expanded the framework to include services and intellectual property. Again, it is crucial to understand that many problems faced during the ITO's discussions in the 1940s remain, such that they promote populist politics in different countries, as we will examine. For example, Canadian Prime Ministerial candidate Brian Mulroney decried free trade in his 1983 campaign in 1983 while facilitating the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement in 1988,

which included services trade but did not discuss autos, intellectual property or cultural industries-it did remove restrictions on “Buy American” or “Buy Canadian” laws (Sanford, 1989). Ronald Reagan imposed “voluntary export restrictions” on Japanese automakers in the early 1980s, which had the unintended effect of making most cars purchased in the US more expensive. The optics of “protecting the American auto industry” were helpful to Reagan such that he was re-elected by a huge margin in 1984; he then abolished the restrictions in 1985. When Bill Clinton was running for the Presidency in 1992, he made ambiguous statements about the NAFTA agreement negotiated by his Republican predecessor, George HW Bush, but ultimately supported it after Congressional passage in 1993.

The US became Canada’s top trading partner by the mid-1930s, and the US and Canadian militaries increased their formal interactions in the 1940s and 1950s. By contrast, Mexico has reasonably been suspicious of the US since the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo when Mexico was forced to cede over half its territory to the US after the Mexican-American war. The Mexican military was the last in Latin America to start substantive cooperation with the US military in the 1990s, although some cooperation did exist during World War II.

In the North American trade framework, cars and their associated components still form the highest-value sector, while others have become increasingly important, such as computers, cell phones, and semiconductor chips, along with the ever-present agricultural trade. Canada and the US ratified the Auto Pact in 1965, which dealt with a Canadian trade deficit in cars imported from the US and established a threshold of 50% Canadian or US content to have duty-free access. In 1994, NAFTA increased the threshold of “North American” to 62.5% (raised to 75% under the USMCA, ratified as amended in 2020. As a trade agreement (not a customs union with common external tariffs), NAFTA phased out most goods tariffs and further opened up service sectors while also including dispute-resolution mechanisms, foreign investment protections and intellectual property provisions. President Trump’s other changes to NAFTA under the USMCA included a provision that up to 45% of auto content must be made by workers earning at least \$16 per hour, increased US producers’ access to Canadian dairy, and had a digital trade chapter which excluded duties on software and e-books, supporting free data transfer and covering more intellectual property protections.



## 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