



## **PSCI 4809A/LAWS 4510A/IPAF 4800A**

### **Honours Seminar on a Selected Topic in Political Science AI in Public Administration**

Day and time: **Thursdays 14:35-17:25**

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

**Prerequisite(s):** Fourth-year Honours standing or permission of the Department.

#### **I General information**

|                                             |                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Professor:</b> Michael M. Khazabi, Ph.D. | <b>Office:</b> TBD                                                                                   |
| <b>Office hours:</b> by appointment         | <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:MichaelKhazabi@cunet.carleton.ca">MichaelKhazabi@cunet.carleton.ca</a> |
| <b>Course delivery:</b> In-person           | <b>Course site:</b> Brightspace                                                                      |

#### **II Course description**

This fourth-year seminar examines how artificial intelligence is changing public administration and the exercise of public authority. It treats AI as an institutional and political issue, not as a technical subject that stands outside law or democratic governance. Canadian institutions provide the main setting. Comparative material from the European Union and the United States broadens the analysis, while the OECD and UNESCO provide international reference points.

The course introduces artificial intelligence as a central issue in contemporary public administration. It examines how public institutions adopt and regulate AI, how automated systems reshape administrative decision-making and what governance arrangements are needed to preserve legality and accountability. Particular attention is given to public trust and institutional capacity, as well as the conditions required for responsible implementation. Students will apply these principles through policy analysis and the development of practical governance recommendations.

The final part of the course focuses on implementation. Procurement and vendor accountability are studied as governance questions, followed by transparency, citizen engagement and recourse. The course concludes with a public-sector framework for responsible AI. Students are expected to analyse how technology changes public decisions, administrative discretion and the relationship between citizens and the state.

### III Course format

The course is designed as a weekly three-hour in-person seminar. Each meeting combines a short lecture with structured discussion and applied case analysis. Several meetings include workshops in which students use the textbook's governance frameworks to assess a real or proposed public-sector AI system. Readings must be completed before class because seminar activities assume familiarity with the assigned material.

Brightspace will be used for announcements, readings and assignment submission. Official documents may be updated during the term when a legal or policy source changes. Any substitution will be announced at least one week in advance and will not increase the assigned workload.

### IV Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the principal forms of AI used in government and distinguish them from ordinary digital automation.
2. Assess public-sector AI strategies, regulatory approaches and institutional capacity from a political science and public administration perspective.
3. Analyse how data governance, privacy, bias, fairness and human oversight affect the legitimacy of automated public decisions.
4. Apply impact-assessment and procurement frameworks to case studies.
5. Develop evidence-based policy recommendations through concise briefs and a detailed case study. Students will also design a collaborative governance playbook for a public-sector AI initiative.

### V Texts

#### Required course text

Khazabi, M. M., & Sackey, D. (2026). *Artificial intelligence and public policy: Public administration, law, and responsible governance* [Unpublished manuscript submitted to Routledge for peer review].

The manuscript will be provided through Brightspace at no cost to students. It is supplied only for use in this course and may not be redistributed. Price: \$0.

#### Additional readings

Required articles and public documents will be available through ARES, the library catalogue or Brightspace. No additional purchase is required.

### VI Evaluation at a glance

| Assessment                                                      | Weight | Due date                                               | Purpose                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Class attendance and participation                              | 15%    | Throughout the semester                                | Assesses consistent preparation, attendance and constructive engagement in seminar discussions, workshops and case analysis. |
| Policy briefs (two)                                             | 20%    | Brief 1: <b>Sept 24</b> ; Brief 2: <b>Oct 8</b>        | Two short policy memos that analyse an AI policy case and propose practical interventions.                                   |
| Midterm case study analysis                                     | 20%    | <b>Oct 29</b>                                          | An individual paper of approximately 1,500 words that evaluates a government AI initiative.                                  |
| Capstone group project: policy framework or governance playbook | 45%    | Final submission: Nov 29<br>Presentation: Dec 3 and 10 | A ten-page group report and a ten-minute presentation on responsible AI adoption in a selected policy field.                 |

**Total: 100%.** There is no final examination.

## **VII Evaluation in detail**

### **1. Class attendance and participation - 15%**

**Objective:** Encourage consistent preparation and meaningful engagement with the course material through seminar discussion, workshops and applied case analysis.

**Evaluation:** Students are expected to attend class regularly, complete the assigned preparation and contribute constructively to seminar activities. Participation will be assessed based on the quality and relevance of contributions, evidence of preparation and engagement with discussions, workshops and case analyses. Constructive participation may include asking questions, responding to the ideas of others and contributing thoughtfully to group activities. Approved accommodations and academic considerations will be taken into account where applicable.

### **1. Policy briefs (two) - 20%**

**Objective:** Develop the ability to synthesise evidence and present an actionable policy recommendation.

**Deliverables:** Two short memos of less than two pages each. Each memo will analyse a real or hypothetical AI policy case. It must identify the central risks and propose practical interventions.

**Due dates:** Policy Brief 1 – **Sept 24**; Policy Brief 2 – **Oct 8**

**Evaluation:** The quality of analysis is worth 40%. Problem framing accounts for 20%. The feasibility and clarity of the recommendation are worth 30%, while writing quality accounts for the remaining 10%.

### **2. Midterm case study analysis - 20%**

**Objective:** Evaluate a government AI initiative through detailed policy analysis.

**Deliverable:** An individual paper of approximately 1,500 words. The paper will assess the initiative's risks and governance mechanisms. It will also examine alignment with relevant frameworks, including Canada's Algorithmic Impact Assessment and the proposed AIDA where appropriate.

**Due date:** **Oct 29**

**Evaluation:** Policy context is worth 15%. The risk and ethics discussion accounts for 25%, while recommendations are worth another 25%. Integration of course frameworks represents 20%. Clarity and structure account for the final 15%.

### **3. Capstone group project: policy framework or governance playbook - 45%**

**Objective:** Develop a policy framework for responsible AI adoption in a selected field such as immigration, health or policing.

**Deliverables:** Each group will submit a report of approximately ten pages. It will include an executive summary and a clear account of the policy context. The report must also present a stakeholder analysis and a structured risk assessment. Its final sections will provide governance recommendations and an implementation roadmap. Each group will give a ten-minute presentation on Dec 3 or 10, followed by questions from peers and the professor.

**Milestones:** Week 4 - topic selection. Week 6 - outline submission. Week 9 - draft report. Week 11 - final submission. Weeks 12 and 13 – presentation.

**Evaluation:** Contextual understanding is worth 15%, as is stakeholder analysis. Risk and governance recommendations account for 30%. The implementation roadmap is worth 15%. Report quality accounts for 10%, while presentation quality is worth 15%.

### **Use of generative AI in this course**

Because this course examines AI directly, some learning activities will require students to test or evaluate generative AI tools. Authorized uses may include brainstorming, comparing outputs, testing prompts, creating non-assessed examples or improving the clarity of a student-written draft. Assignment instructions will identify any additional permitted use.

Generative AI may not replace the reading, research or analysis required for assessed work. Unless an assignment states otherwise, students may not submit text that was generated in whole or substantial part by an AI system. AI tools must not be used to invent sources or evidence. Students remain responsible for every claim and citation in their work.

Every written assignment must include a brief AI Use Statement. The statement should name the tool, explain how it was used and describe how the output was checked or revised. Students who did not use generative AI should state that clearly. The instructor may request prompt records, drafts, research notes or a short oral explanation of the submitted work. Personal, confidential or protected information must never be entered into a public AI tool. Undisclosed or unauthorized use may be referred under Carleton University's Academic Integrity Policy.

### **Collaboration and reuse of prior work**

Seminar discussion and peer feedback are encouraged. The two policy briefs and the midterm case study must be completed individually. The capstone is a group project, so members may divide research and drafting responsibilities within the team. Every member remains responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the final submission. Work submitted for credit in another course may not be reused, in whole or substantial part, without prior written permission. Any earlier work that informs a submission must be disclosed and cited where appropriate.

### **Late submissions and extensions**

The policy briefs, midterm case study and capstone report are subject to a deduction of five percentage points for each calendar day late. Work more than seven days late will not be accepted unless academic consideration has been approved. A missed capstone presentation may be rescheduled only where circumstances warrant academic consideration. Students should contact the professor before a deadline whenever possible. Approved accommodations and academic considerations take precedence over this policy.

### **Submission format**

Written work must be submitted through Brightspace in Microsoft Word format. Files should be named FamilyName\_Assignment\_PSCI4809A.

## **VIII Course schedule**

The schedule is organized by instructional week. Required chapters refer to Khazabi and Sackey, Artificial Intelligence and Public Policy. Full links and library access information for additional readings will be posted on Brightspace. A public document may be replaced if an official source is superseded, but any change will be announced in advance.

| <b>Week / date</b> | <b>Theme</b>                                               | <b>Required preparation</b>                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 1</b>      | <b>Introduction: AI as a public administration problem</b> | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 1.<br>OECD (2024), Explanatory memorandum on the updated OECD definition of an AI system.<br>TBS (2025), Guide on the use of generative artificial intelligence, selected sections. |
| <b>Week 2</b>      | <b>AI strategy, public value and digital government</b>    | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 2.<br>TBS (2026), AI strategy for the Federal Public Service 2025–2027: Overview.<br>OECD (2025), Governing with artificial intelligence, executive summary.                        |
| <b>Week 3</b>      | <b>Algorithmic governance and impact assessment</b>        | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 3.<br>TBS (2025), Directive on Automated Decision-Making, selected sections.<br>TBS (2026), Algorithmic Impact Assessment tool.                                                     |
| <b>Week 4</b>      | <b>AI law, regulation and standards</b>                    | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 4.<br>European Commission, AI Act overview.<br>NIST (2023), AI Risk Management Framework 1.0, selected sections.                                                                    |

| <b>Week / date</b>              | <b>Theme</b>                                         | <b>Required preparation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 5</b>                   | <b>Data governance, privacy and stewardship</b>      | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 5.<br>Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (2025), Principles for responsible, trustworthy and privacy-protective generative AI technologies.<br>Barocas & Selbst (2016), Big data's disparate impact, selected excerpts.    |
| <b>Week 6</b>                   | <b>Risk, ethics, fairness and human oversight</b>    | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 6.<br>Alon-Barkat & Busuioc (2023), Human-AI interactions in public sector decision making.<br>Suresh & Guttag (2021), A framework for understanding sources of harm throughout the machine learning life cycle.                     |
| <b>Week 7</b>                   | <b>Social services, benefits and immigration</b>     | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 7.<br>Alston (2019), Digital welfare states and human rights, selected sections.<br>IRCC (2025), Algorithmic Impact Assessment - Advanced Analytics Triage of Overseas Temporary Resident Visa Applications.                         |
| <b>Fall break</b><br>Oct. 26-30 | <b>Fall break - no class</b>                         | No readings. Fall break runs October 26 to 30.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Week 8</b>                   | <b>Policing, surveillance and facial recognition</b> | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 8.<br>Lum & Isaac (2016), To predict and serve?<br>Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (2021), Police use of facial recognition technology in Canada and the way forward, selected sections.                                |
| <b>Week 9</b>                   | <b>AI in health and public health</b>                | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 9.<br>Obermeyer et al. (2019), Dissecting racial bias in an algorithm used to manage the health of populations.<br>World Health Organization (2021), Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health, selected sections. |
| <b>Week 10</b>                  | <b>Procurement, vendors and implementation</b>       | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 10.<br>World Economic Forum (2020), AI procurement in a box, selected sections.<br>Zick et al. (2024), AI procurement checklists, selected sections.                                                                                 |
| <b>Week 11</b>                  | <b>Transparency, citizen engagement and recourse</b> | Khazabi & Sackey, ch. 11.<br>Ananny & Crawford (2018), Seeing without knowing.<br>OECD (2025), Algorithmic transparency in the public sector, selected sections.                                                                                           |
| <b>Week 12</b>                  | <b>Presentation</b>                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Week 13</b>                  | <b>Presentation</b>                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

Note: Given the evolving nature of artificial intelligence, public policy and the regulatory environment, the course schedule may be adjusted at the professor's discretion to reflect significant new developments, emerging cases or changes in relevant policy and law. Any changes will be communicated to students in advance and will not increase the overall course workload.

### Key academic dates

Fall term begins September 9, 2026. Fall break runs from October 26 to October 30. The last day for academic withdrawal from a full fall course is November 15. The term ends on December 11, and the formal examination period runs from December 12 to December 23. This course has no final examination. Consult <https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/> for the official calendar.

## **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/safety/resources/>

#### **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/>

Good2Talk: 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 Nideyinnà                 |
| Career Services (6611)                     | 401 Tory                      |