



**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE**  
POLITICAL STUDIES 2210

**ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**  
POLITICAL SCIENCE 320A

**INTRODUCTION TO THE CANADIAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**  
**September - December 2011**  
3 (3-0-0) UT 45 Hours

**Instructor:** Tom Enders, PhD

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**Office hours:** Wed. 1 – 2:20 p.m., Fri. 1:30 – 3 p.m. and by appointment

**Prerequisite:** There is no prerequisite for taking this course.

**Required Readings:**

1. Rand Dyck, Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Toronto: Nelson Education, 2011.
2. Course Package to be purchased from the book store.
3. Readings from the internet and databases listed below.

**GPRC Calendar Course Description:**

This course examines the cultural, social and economic context in which political actors in Canada seek to protect and advance their interests and power. Attention is given to divisions or cleavages as well as unifying elements.

Topics will include language, culture, political culture, economic class cleavages, gender, ethnic diversity, political socialization and social movements, interest groups and Canada's external political environment provided by the United States and the rest of the world.

This course along with PO2210, Introduction to Canadian Political Institutions, Federalism and the Constitution, constitutes a full year introduction to Canadian politics. The two courses provide preparation (and serve as a prerequisite) for further studies in Canadian Politics at the postsecondary level.

**Contact Hours:**

This is a three credit course with three hours of instructional time a week.

**Delivery Mode:**

Classroom time will be used for lectures and discussions.

**Course Objectives:**

This course is intended to familiarize you with the varied context in which Canadian political debates occur and decisions are made.

Upon completion of this course you should be much better prepared to take part in Canadian political activity as a citizen, and to pursue further studies in Canadian politics at the post-secondary level. (PO2220 and POLI320B continue the process.)

**Notes on Transferability:** AU, UA, UC, UL, CUC, KUC, GMU

Successful completion of both PO2210 and PO2220 is needed to obtain credit for having taken the equivalent of POLS220 at the U of A.

Athabasca students in POLI320 must register in both Part A and Part B. P2210 transfers to AU as 2XX (3 credits).

Students should check with other institutions concerning transfer of credits as all arrangements are subject to change. Note that a grade of D or D+ may not be accepted at other post-secondary institutions.

**Course requirements:**

- Attendance and participation ..... 10%
- Short test on part I..... 15%
- Midterm exam ..... 25%
- Term Paper..... 25% (5% + 20%)
- Final exam ..... 25%

Please be informed that it is not the instructor’s policy to allow exams or assignments to be rewritten, or extra work done to increase marks. You are welcome, however, to consult with the instructor prior to exams and assignment due dates.

Marks will be given in percentage figures before conversion to a letter grade.

**Conversion table:**

A+ 90-100	B+ 76-79	C+ 67-69	D+ 55-59
A 85- 89	B 73-75	C 64-66	D 50-54
A- 80- 84	B- 70-72	C- 60-63	F 0-49

For conversion of letter grades to the four-point scale, see the GPRC calendar.

**Student Responsibilities:**

\* You are expected to devote time in the classroom to the class itself. Use of cell phones and use of laptops for non-class purposes is unacceptable. It is also not acceptable to socialize or do work on other courses during the class.

\* You are strongly advised to keep a copy of your own of any work you submit for grading at least until you have your work returned to you.

\*\* Students who miss an excessive number of classes may be denied the opportunity to write the final exam, as stated in the Calendar.

**\*\*You are expected to write the final exam in December when scheduled by the Registrar's Office - with possible exceptions in the case of compelling and urgent circumstances beyond your control. Take this into account when making any travel plans. Also note and observe other key dates during the term as provided in the Calendar.**

**Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating:**

\* You are required to reference sources fully and properly for written assignments. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with College Calendar information pertaining to cheating and plagiarism, for which there are various penalties depending on the severity of the offense. The Calendar information on student misconduct can be accessed at:

<http://www.gprc.ab.ca/downloads/documents/Student%20Misconduct%20Plagiarism%20and%20Cheating.pdf>

(An instructor's handout will provide assistance with referencing.)

## **Topics**

### **I. Introduction.**

- A. Government, Politics and Political Science. Related employment opportunities.
- B. Overview of Canadian Political System. How governments are formed. Amounts and distribution of government revenues, spending.

### **II. The Canadian Political Landscape.**

- A. Canadian political culture. Which political values do Canadians share? How distinct and separate from the U.S. is it, and should it be? Distinctive Canadian values. Canadian identity. Key components of democracy.
- B. Class cleavages and social programs. How significant are poverty and income inequality in Canada?
- C. Regional cleavages. The West and western alienation. Ontario. Atlantic Canada. How justifiable are claims of Central Canadian domination? Should the federal government continue to support regional economic development and equalization?
- D. Aboriginal peoples. Identity and relationship with Canada. Demographics. Social and cultural conditions. Land claims. Self-government. How we got to where we are. Where to from here?
- E. French Canada and Quebec. Demographics. Language and culture. Historical grievances. Quebec nationalism. What can and should be done to keep Quebec in Canada? Federal election 2011.
- F. Ethnic groups, multiculturalism, immigration and religion. What is reasonable accommodation? The refugee question.
- G. Women and politics in Canada. How much is yet to be done? What is to be done?
- H. Political participation and socialization. What should we teach and promote? How much participation of what kind is desirable?

I. The news media, diversity and unity, class and democracy. Do Canadian news media do good work in holding private and public power to account?

[Note: Topics in Part III will be dealt with on a time-permitting basis.]

**III. Canada and the World.**

A. Culture and politics. Broadcasting policy. Film. Magazine publishing. Should government do more to promote a distinctive Canadian culture?

B. Foreign ownership and trade agreements. Economic Integration. So far so good? How far should we go?

C. Canadian Foreign Policy. Recent changes. New directions?

