

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
POLITICAL STUDIES 2220/320
INTRODUCTION TO CANADIAN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, FEDERALISM & THE
CONSTITUTION
University Transfer*
January - April 2008

Instructor: Tom Enders, PhD

Room: B302

Office: C303

Time: Mon. 1 - 2:20; Fri. 11:30 - 12:20

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Office hours: Wed. 4:15-5:45/Fri. 1:30-3 p.m. and by appointment

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College Calendar Course Description:

This course examines the workings of the four branches of government at the national level, as well as Canadian federalism and the Constitution. The course also explores efforts to change institutional arrangements to make them more democratic and more responsive to Western Canadians, people in Quebec and aboriginal peoples.

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course you should be able to understand better how the Canadian political system works (and fails to work), and how it might be improved. You should also have greater insights into some significant political issues.

This course and PO2210 (The Canadian Political Environment) provide a full year introduction to the study of Canadian Politics. The two courses together provide preparation for further studies in Canadian politics at the postsecondary level and serve as a prerequisite. (Note that credit for both PO2210 and 2220 is needed to receive credit for the core Canadian Politics course at the U of A, POLS 220.)

Course requirements:

Attendance and participation	10%
Midterm exam	25%
Report	10%
Essay	25%
Final exam	30%

Required texts:

1. Rand Dyck, Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 5th edition. Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson, 2008.
2. Course Package for Political Studies 2220/320.
3. Website and database material.

PLEASE NOTE: 1. Transfer arrangements vary by institution. 2. You are expected to write the final exam when scheduled by the Registrar's Office - with possible exceptions in the case of compelling and urgent circumstances beyond your control.

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 used in grade-point averages, see the College calendar, p. 37.

Topics

I. Introduction.

The Canadian political system. Branches of government. How governments are formed - how executives and legislatures are chosen.

II. Institutions.

- A. Formal or Symbolic Executive. The Queen and Governor General.
- B. Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- C. Ministerial Responsibility.
- D. Budget Process. Auditor General. Deficits and Debts.
- E. Parliament. "Responsible government" and party discipline. Functions of Parliament and the Legislative Branch. Question Period. Role of MPs.
- F. Senate.
- G. Politicians' pay and perks.
- H. The Courts.
- I. The Charter of Rights.

III. Influencing and Forming governments..

- A. Interest groups.
- B. Political parties.
- C. Elections. Financing parties and elections. Electoral Systems. Proportional Representation. Explaining voting behaviour. Polling.

IV. Federalism, the Constitution and related issues.

- A. Federalism and the division of powers. Shared-cost programs and block funding.
- B. Health care and federalism. Public vs. private.
- C. Energy policy and Canadian federalism (and more)
- D. Major developments since Confederation: 1982, Meech Lake, Charlottetown Accord.