

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – Fall 2026

PO1010 (EC): Introduction to Political Studies, Ideas and Forms of Government
3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. T. Ruth Lambert
OFFICE: Online
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment
(Teams)

PHONE: n/a
E-MAIL: tlambert@nwpolytech.ca

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course is an introduction to key political concepts such as power, authority, order, equality, freedom and justice. These concepts are examined as they are employed by different ideologies including liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, anarchism, feminism, postmodernism and religious fundamentalism. Political ideas and practices are also examined in the context of democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian forms of government. The role of the news media under different kinds of regime may also be considered.

PREREQUISITE(S): None

COREQUISITE(S): Students will not receive credit for both PO1000 and PO1010.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Course uses open access materials or materials available through the NWP Learning Commons. No purchased textbook required.

- Please note tests and exams for this course will NOT be proctored through ProctorU.

DELIVERY MODE: Online, Asynchronous

You will be completing course materials online and at your own pace each week. However, the test and final exam will be scheduled to be completed within a specific timeframe on a specific date.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By completing the required course material and learning activities, at the end of the course you should be able to:

- Understand the different ideological dimensions of politics and be able to explain how ideology can be used to understand different views on political issues.
- Differentiate between democratic and non-democratic rule by identifying regime characteristics and assessing the operation of different institutions within political systems.
- Explain how global politics differs from domestic politics.
- Engage in dialogue about political issues using data and evidence.
- Think critically about political issues and support arguments with evidence.
- Identify and cite information from texts and other sources.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferralberta.alberta.ca>.

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.**

EVALUATIONS:

Activity	Weight	Due date	
Course learning activities (e.g. quizzes, sources and citing, response questions)	10%	Various throughout the term – see course site	
Test (Weeks 1-4)	10%	September 25, 2026	
Test (Weeks 5-8)	10%	October 23, 2026	
Reading assignment (assigned article)	5%	October 30, 2026	Note: these assignments build from the reading to the regime analysis to equip you to complete the regime case analysis.
Brief research assignment	15%	November 6, 2026	
Regime case analysis	25%	November 27, 2026	
Cumulative (Weeks 1-15) final exam	25%	Scheduled by the registrar	

Assignment information:

Plagiarism, or submitting work which is not your own (including AI-generated work) constitutes academic misconduct and will be addressed under the provisions of the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy (linked on page 5 in this outline). In cases where submitted work exhibits concerning patterns or raises questions for the instructor about its creation and the student's intellectual effort involved, students may be required to submit to an oral examination regarding the work at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to participate in the oral examination will result in an assigned grade of 0 for the assessment. If, following the oral examination, the instructor still has concerns about the work, the academic misconduct provisions of the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy (linked on page 5 in this outline) may be applied.

- Detailed instructions for each assignment will be available on the course site.
- There are no extensions or late submissions allowed for quizzes, tests and the final exam.

- The late penalty is 5% a day for the research assignment and case analysis assignment.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Although the course is asynchronous, success in the course will depend on you dedicating time each week to ensure that you have completed required reading and learning activities. Course content is broken down weekly to facilitate course management and planning. Required materials and activities are fully detailed on the course site.

Week 1	Sept. 2-4	Introduction to the field
Week 2	Sept. 7-11	Key concepts and the development of the state
Week 3	Sept. 14-18	Ideologies and worldviews (liberalism and conservatism)
Week 4	Sept. 21-25	Ideologies and worldviews (socialism, communism, fascism)

- Test on materials from weeks 1-4

Week 5	Sept. 28–Oct. 2	Ideologies and worldviews (feminism, environmentalism)
Week 6	Oct. 5–9	Political participation and socialization
Week 7	Oct. 13–16	Elections and electoral systems
Week 8	Oct. 19–23	Elections and electoral systems continued
		• Test on materials from weeks 5–8
Week 9	Oct. 26–30	Introduction to regimes
		• Reading assignment with assigned article
Week 10	Nov. 2–6	Non-democratic regimes
		• Brief research assignment
Week 11	Nov. 9–13	Fall break
Week 12	Nov. 16–20	Analyzing regimes
Week 13	Nov. 23–27	Political change
		• Regime case analysis
Week 14	Nov. 30 – Dec. 4	Global politics
Week 15	Dec. 7–9	Contemporary issues in global politics

Final exam period: Your final exam will be scheduled by the registrar after classes end between December 12th and December 19th.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- With an asynchronous class, students need to manage time and complete coursework as outlined on the course site. I will provide reminders and am available to meet with you by appointment as needed. Success in the course will require you to maintain your coursework schedule.
- Please reach out to me by email if you are struggling with material or learning activities.
- Do your best to engage with the course material and develop your own critical thinking and analytical skills.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

