

SEP 25 2000

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

Political Science 1000
INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

September 2000 - April 2001

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Time: Mon. 11:30-12:50
Fri. 10:00-11:20

Course description:

How beneficial are free trade agreements? Is there a right to employment - in an increasingly technological world? Have government debt loads forced governments to reduce social program spending significantly? Should the private sector play a major role in the delivery of health care services? Who has a right to national self-determination? Have we gone too far, or not far enough in embracing multiculturalism? Should the international community intervene to protect citizens from human rights abuses of national governments?

This course will examine major political issues such as these, as well as fundamental political concepts and ideas which can help us to make sense of them. We will also study institutions and processes of government which are used to address such matters, and to address the wants, needs and aspirations of rulers and ruled more generally.

We will give special attention to democratic countries, and to Canada and the United States in particular.

Course objectives:

This course is designed to introduce you to the discipline of Political Science and some of its subfields or areas of specialization. It is intended to provide you with a basic knowledge of key ideas and concepts, and familiarize you with institutions and political processes. It should encourage you to think about a number of issues clearly and reflectively. It should also encourage you to appreciate the value of a spirit of inquiry into the political world around us.

Course requirements:

Attendance and participation	10%
Article review (first term)	5%
Four exams (2 midterm, 2 end of term)...	60% (4 X 15%)
Short essay	10%
Second essay	15%

Required texts:

James John Guy, People, Politics and Government: A Canadian Perspective, 5th edition. Toronto, Prentice Hall, 2001.

Don Carmichael, Tom Pocklington & Greg Pyrcz, Democracy, Rights, and Well-Being in Canada, 2nd edition. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada, 2000.

Kevin Taft, Shredding the Public Interest. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1997

Topics

I. Introduction.

1. What is politics?
2. What is Political Science?

II. Political Culture and Ideologies

1. Political socialization and political culture
2. Ideologies. What is an ideology? Liberalism, conservatism, socialism, etc.

III. Partial or quasi-ideologies

1. Feminism
2. Nationalism

IV. Accommodating national aspirations

1. Is there a right to national self-determination? Who has it, if there is one? Quebecois? Aboriginal peoples? Others. International Law.
2. Sovereignty and sovereignty options - Unitary, Federal and Confederal arrangements.

V. Economic and social issues and ideology

1. Free trade and markets
2. Is there a right to work?
3. How generous should welfare be?
4. Debt reduction and social programs.
5. Private vs. public health care.

VI. Democratic and other forms of government

1. Classifications of government
2. Democratic constitutions
3. The case of multiculturalism

VII. Assessing and applying requirements of democracy

1. Democratic values.
2. Direct or deliberative vs. representative democracy.
3. Is there an obligation to participate in politics?
4. Democracy and freedom of the press.
5. Rule of law, and obligation to obey the law.
6. Aims and justifications of punishment.

7. Democracy and ideology.

VIII. Institutions of government

1. Parliamentary vs. presidential systems
2. Executives and bureaucracies
3. Legislatures
4. The judiciary
5. Political parties
6. Interest or Pressure groups
7. Elections and Electoral systems
8. Local governments

IX. Future international political challenges

1. Peacekeeping
2. Humanitarian Intervention
3. The environment

X. Politics and moral issues

1. Euthanasia and Assisted-Suicide
2. Abortion
3. Pornography

READINGS

I. Introduction.

1. What is politics?
Guy, chapter 1, pp. 2-20, 24-8
2. What is Political Science?
Guy, chapter 2

II. Political Culture and Ideologies

1. Political socialization and political culture
Guy, Chapter 1, pp. 28-34 ("Learning About Politics" and "Agents of Political Learning") and TBA
2. Ideologies. What is an ideology? Liberalism, conservatism, socialism, etc.
Guy, chapter 3, pp. 76-96; 99-106
TBA re: populism

III. Partial or quasi-ideologies

1. Feminism
Guy, chapter 3, pp. 106-8
DC et al., chapter 4, "Gender, Justice & Democracy"
2. Nationalism
Guy, chapter 3, pp. 96-99 and TBA

IV. Accommodating national aspirations

1. Is there a right to national self-determination? Who has it, if there is one? Quebecois? Aboriginal peoples? Others.
International Law.

Guy, chapter 4, pp. 115-24, 134-7
DC et al., chapter 6, "Aboriginal Canadians..."
TBA re: Quebec and re: right to national self-determination
Guy, chapter 14

2. Sovereignty and sovereignty options - Unitary, Federal and
Confederal arrangements.

Guy, chapter 4, pp. 124-31; 156-62; chapter 13, pp. 383-97

V. Economic and social issues and ideology

1. Free trade and markets

Guy, chapter 13, pp. 397-8 ("Multinational corporations"); pp.
404-5 ("Economic Integration"); 409-11... and

Tindal, chapter 10, pp. 323-30, 334-39

2. Is there a right to work?

DC et al., chapter 1 "Thinking about Democracy, Rights, & Well-
being" pp. 1-11

DC et al., chapter 13, "The Right to Work"

3. How generous should welfare be?

DC et al., chapter 11, "Justice, Rights and the Welfare State"

4. Debt reduction and social programs.

Taft, chapter 1-11, 13

Tindal, chapter 10, pp. 309-23, 330-4

5. Private vs. public health care.

Taft, chapter 12 and TBA

VI. Democratic and other forms of government

1. Classifications of government

Guy, chapter 5, 142-9; 162-8

2. Democratic constitutions

Guy, chapter 10

3. The case of multiculturalism

DC et al., chapter 5 "Multiculturalism & the Right to Recognition"

VII. Assessing and applying requirements of democracy

1. Democratic values.

DC et al., chapter 1, "Thinking about Democracy..." pp. 13-19

2. Direct or deliberative vs. representative democracy.

DC et al., chapter 3, "Populist Democracy"

3. Is there an obligation to participate in politics?

DC et al., chapter 2, "Democracy & Political Participation"

4. Democracy and freedom of the press.

DC et al., chapter 8, "Democracy & the Freedom of the Press"

5. Rule of law, and obligation to obey the law.

DC et al., chapter 15, "Democracy & the Obligation to Obey the Law"

6. Aims and justifications of punishment.
DC et al., chapter 14, "Democratic Punishment"

7. Democracy and ideology.
Jean Bethke Elshtain, Democracy on Trial, chapter 4, "Democracy's Shady Past"

VIII. Institutions of government

1. Parliamentary vs. presidential systems

Guy, chapter 5, pp. 149-56

2. Executives and bureaucracies

Guy, chapter 6 ("Executives") and chapter 8 ("The Administration of Government")

3. Legislatures

Guy, chapter 7

4. The judiciary

Guy, chapter 9

5. Political parties

Guy, chapter 11, pp. 311-38

6. Interest or Pressure groups

Guy, chapter 11, pp. 338-47

7. Elections and Electoral systems

Guy, chapter 12

8. Local governments

Guy, chapter 1, pp. 20-1 and TBA

IX. Future international political challenges

1. Peacekeeping

Guy, chapter 16, pp. 464-6 and TBA

2. Humanitarian Intervention

TBA

3. The environment

Guy, chapter 16, pp. 489-93 and TBA

X. Politics and moral issues

1. Euthanasia

DC et al., chapter 10, "Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide"

2. Abortion

DC et al., chapter 9, "Abortion and the Right to Life"

3. Pornography

DC et al., chapter 7, "Pornography & the Problem of Rights"