

SEP. 19 2002

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3230

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

DETAILED SYLLABUS

Instructor: Dr. Scott A. McAlpine

Fall 2002

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DESCRIPTION:

Local Government has never been more important in the lives of citizens than it is now. Yet, reinventing government at the local level is often seen as necessary to achieve the two goals of efficiency AND democracy. It is these two often contradictory goals of efficiency and democracy in local government which will drive the discussion in this course. Topics covered are the social context, structures, opportunities for public participation, processes and outcomes of local government in Canada, with a special focus on Alberta. Specific issues in local government will also be covered including:

- provincial downloading
- planning and Regional Planning Commissions
- health care reform (regionalization of the health care system)
- education reform (amalgamation of school districts)
- the 'Klein revolution' in Alberta's local government.
- the "hollowing of the nation-state"

COURSE CREDIT:

There is NO pre-requisite for this senior (2nd year) course. Transferable to the University of Alberta and elsewhere for university credit, the course is also transferable to the University of Alberta Extension Certificate Program in Local Government.

DELIVERY MEDIUM:

The course will be delivered as a virtual course in 3 components as follows:

1. Lectures

13 "Lectures" and a series of instructor notes on the world wide web (free access)

2. Discussion and Assignments

3. Texts

The basis of the lectures

THE INSTRUCTOR:

Scott McAlpine (Phd) has been teaching Political Science at Grande Prairie Regional College for 14 years and, among other things,

- is the coordinator of the University of Alberta Extension program in Local Government at the College,
- has instructed 'Alberta's Local Governments' for the University of Alberta Extension Program
- has published in the field of Local Government
- has served as a consultant on Metis Self-Administration/Government
- is the author of the web based materials
- has consulted with local school boards on indicators of student satisfaction and parent opinion on compressed school weeks
- has co-hosted local broadcasts of election coverage
- was co-facilitator for the Mistahua Regional Health Authority public forums on regionalization of health care.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1.knowledge of local government structures and processes in Canada
- 2.ability to critically assess issues and trends in local government

DEFAULT COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS*:

Short Assignment (Individual)	15%	September 27
Midterm Examination	25%	October 25
Individual Report	30%	November 22
Final Examination	30%	exam week

* Dates are approximate and subject to change.

** Students may opt to a group project under special circumstances. Individual and short reports may also be done collaboratively and merged with other components of the course. Exact course weightings can be negotiated with the instructor. Please email your request to do so to Scott.McAlpine@gprc.ab.ca

TEXTS:

J. Masson, Alberta's Local Governments: Politics and Democracy. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1994)

K. Graham and S. Phillips, Urban Governance in Canada. (Toronto: Harcourt-Brace, 1998)..

These are available from the Bookstore of Grande Prairie Regional College.

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DETAILED OUTLINE AND READINGS LIST, 2000

Note: Students are responsible for all required readings (marked with an asterisk (*)) and should complete the readings before (and not after) class time. Recommended reading cover aspects of the course in greater detail and depth than the required readings and should be at least skimmed unless otherwise noted by the instructor. Lecture dates are approximate and **will not be followed** to the letter depending on class interest and diversions due to significant events and discussion. Not all required material will necessarily be covered in a lecture. Given the profound changes occurring in local government in Canada and Alberta, the instructor reserves the right to assign additional an/or replacement readings as necessary. The **order** that readings appear on the readings list is, by and large, important.

1. INTRODUCTION: Local Government and Democracy

- What Is Local Government?
- Democracy and Efficiency
- General Functions of Local Government
- Contemporary Functions and Activities

*Lecture 1 (Web)

*Graham, chapter 1

*Masson, chapter 1

2. CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND PRESSURES

- Ideological Frameworks
- Community Power Research
- Urbanization and Fragmentation
- Contemporary Reform and Re-organization

*Lecture 2 (Web)

*McAlpine, pp. 82-88.

*Graham, chapters 2., 10

*Masson, chapters 5, & 11

3. THE TRADITIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: History and Intergovernmental Relations

- Canadian Historical Overview
- The Constitutional Context
- Intergovernmental Relations

*Graham, chapters 3, 8

*Lecture 3 (Web) (continued > Intergovernmental Relations

*Masson, chapter 5

4. BASIC STRUCTURES AND FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

- Rural and Urban Forms
- Internal Structures

- *Lecture 4 (Web)
- *Masson chapters 3 and 4
- *Graham, chapters 4 and 7

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROCESS: Policy and Budget

- The Traditional Paradigm
- Policy Making Models
- Budgeting Models
- Policy and Budget Linkages

- *Lecture 5 (Web)
- *Graham, chapter 9
- *Masson, chapter 6

6. ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Administrative Roles
- Political Roles
- Roles, Personality, and Structure

- *Lecture 6 (Web)
- *Masson, chapter 8

7. THE PUBLIC ROLE: Participation and Elections

- Participation and Democracy
- Factors Affecting Participation
- Election Machinery
- Participation and Democracy
- Election 1995 and 1998 > a Consideration of Results

- *Lecture 7 (Web)
- *Masson chapter 9
- *Graham, chapter 5

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Interest Groups and Parties

- Old and New Politics
- Theories of Interest Group Politics
- Citizen Contacts with 'City Hall'
- Local Party Politics

- *Lecture 8 (Web)
- *Masson, Appendix
- *Graham, chapter 6

9. RE-INVENTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Osborne and Gaebler's Thesis
- The Post-Modern Organization
- Reinventing Local Government in Canada: An Overview

- *Lecture 9 (Web)
- *Masson, chapter 14

10. URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING: An Introduction

- Schools of Planning Thought
- Planning and the 'New' Agenda
- Planning and Participation
- Reforms to Planning in Alberta

*Masson, chapter 12

*Lecture 10 (Web)

*McAlpine, appendix (continued)

11. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE: Parents and Elected Officials

- Democracy, Autonomy, Equity, and Efficiency
- Provincial or Local Control
- Reforms in Alberta

*Masson, chapter 13

*Lecture 11 (Web)

12. HOSPITAL GOVERNANCE

- Local, Provincial, or National Function?
- Re-organization of the System
- Reforms in Alberta

*Lecture 12 (Web)

13. THE FUTURE????

- Buzzword Fetishism?
- 2 Paths: Democracy or Efficiency versus Democracy and Efficiency
- The Klein Revolution as a Model for Canada?
- The Hollowing of the Nation-State: Think Global, Act Local and so on...

*Masson, ch. 14 (review)

*Graham, chapter 11

*Lecture 13 (Web)