



Political Science 521 (Fall 2012/13)

Honours Seminar in Canadian Politics: Political Representation in Canada

Instructor: Prof. Stuart Soroka

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What is the state of political representation in Canada? Are our political preferences well represented, by our electoral system, or by political parties, or by elected officials? How well do our political institutions enhance, rather than detract, from representation? How well do we fulfill our part of the bargain — do we have political preferences that are sufficiently well-informed, and worth representing? This course is intended to address these issues, among others, focusing on a combination of classic and more recent work on Canadian politics.

Grades are based on the following:

Seminar Presentation (15%): Students will be assigned to present weekly readings in pairs. A pair will make a presentation of no more than 15 minutes. They will also present some key questions to guide the group discussion. The use of Powerpoint slides is allowed, indeed, encouraged. The presenting pair will also provide a one-page handout for the class, at the beginning of the class, indicating the main points of the presentation.

Seminar Discussant (10%): Each student will also be a seminar discussant at least twice during the term. The role of a discussant is to speak immediately following the presentation - to make comments or criticisms of what has come before. A discussant should come with a few points ready to go. They need not take very much time, but should anticipate five minutes or so of comments after the presentation has finished.

Seminar Participation (10%): This grade is for participation in seminar when you are neither presenter nor discussant. All students are expected to do the reading, and to be ready to discuss them.

Short Papers (2, at 15% each): Each student will submit two short papers that critically evaluate a week's readings. These will be no more than 5 pages long; they will be due before the beginning of the class in which the readings are to be discussed. No late papers will be accepted, at all, without a doctor's note. They can be submitted through WebCT only.

Term Paper (35%): The term paper is due on December 15th, again submitted digitally through WebCT only. Papers will be roughly 20 pages long, focusing on any topic of interest to the student, so long as they deal in some way with political representation in Canada. No late papers will be accepted without a doctor's note. The complete assignment will be handed out and discussed in detail in Week 3 of the course.

All course readings are available electronically through WebCT, and are listed in the Course Schedule that follows. Eleven weeks of readings are scheduled in advance – the others over the term are either guest seminars, or seminars on topics selected by the class.

The university guidelines on plagiarism will be strictly enforced. The [Student Guide to Avoid Plagiarism](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/studentguide/) is available online at <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/studentguide/>. Also, in accordance with the University's email policy - see <http://www.mcgill.ca/email-policy/> - course-related email should be sent using McGill email addresses. Emails from mysterious sources are likely to be deleted.

Course Schedule

Section I. Background

Seminar 1: Introduction to the Course

Seminar 2: Representation and Representative Democracy

Pitkin, Hannah Fenichel. 1967. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (selections)
[Chapters available through WebCT]

Manin, Bernard. 1997. *The Principles of Representative Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (selections)
[Chapters available through WebCT]

Warren, Mark. 2004. "What Can Democratic Participation Mean Today?" in David Laycock, ed. *Representation and Democratic Theory*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
[Chapter available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Section II. Representative Institutions: Parties and Electoral Systems

Seminar 3: Political Parties

Carty, R, Kenneth and William Cross. 2010. "Political Parties and the Practice of Brokerage Politics." Pp. 191-207 in John Courtney and David Smith, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Politics*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.
[Chapters available through WebCT]

Carty, R. Kenneth. "The Shifting Place of Political Parties in Canadian Public Life." *Choices* 12(4).
[Article available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Cross, William. 2004. *Political Parties*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. (selections)
[Chapters available through WebCT]

Seminar 4: The Electoral System

John C. Courtney. 2004. *Elections* Vancouver: UBC Press. (selections)
[Chapters available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Cairns, Alan, "The Electoral System and the Party System in Canada, 1921-1965"
Canadian Journal of Political Science, 1(1) March 1968, pp. 55-80.
[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Johnston, Richard C.G. 2010. "Political Parties and the Electoral System." Pp.
208-225 in John Courtney and David Smith, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of
Canadian Politics*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press.
[Chapters available through WebCT]

Seminar 5: Electoral Reform

Milner, Henry, ed. 1999. *Making Every Vote Count*. Peterborough: Broadview
Press. (selections)
[Chapters available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Howe, Paul, Richard Johnston and Andre Blais, eds. *Strengthening Canadian
Democracy*. IRPP. Part B: Electoral Reform.
[Chapters available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Seminar 6: Representation of non-Territorial Groups

Michael Pal and Sujit Choudhry. 2007. "Is Every Ballot Equal? Visible Minority
Vote Dilution in Canada" *Choices* 13(1).
[Article available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Jerome Black and Bruce Hicks. 2006. "Visible Minority Candidates in the 2004
Election." *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 29(2): 26-31.
[Article available [HERE](#)]

Tim Schouls. 1996. "Aboriginal Peoples and Electoral Reform in Canada."
Canadian Journal of Political Science 29:4: 729-749.
[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Chartrand, Paul L.A.H. 2003. "Canada and the Aboriginal Peoples: From
Dominion to Condominium." in Leslie Seidle and David Docherty, eds., *Reforming
Parliamentary Democracy*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
[Chapter available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Lisa Young, "Representation of Women in the New Canadian Party System" in
William Cross (ed.) *Political Parties, Representation, and Electoral Democracy in
Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2002) pp. 181-200.
[Chapter available through WebCT]

Tremblay, Manon. 1998. *Women and Political Representation in Canada*.
Ottawa: The University of Ottawa Press. (selections)
[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Section III. Representatives: Members of Parliament

Seminar 7: Prime Ministers & Cabinet

C.E.S. Franks. 1987. *The Parliament of Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (selections)

[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Donald Savoie. 1999. *Governing from the Centre: the Concentration of Power in Canadian Politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (selections)

[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Herman Bakvis and Steven B. Wolinetz. 2005. "Canada: Executive Dominance and Presidentialization" in Poguntke and Webb (eds) *The Presidentialization of Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[Chapter available through Oxford Scholarship Online [HERE](#)]

Seminar 8: Members of Parliament

David C. Docherty. 2005. *Legislatures Vancouver*: UBC Press. (selections)

[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

David C. Docherty. 1997. *Mr. Smith Goes to Ottawa*. Vancouver: UBC Press. (selections)

[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Blidook, Kelly. 2010. "Exploring the role of 'legislators' in Canada: Do Members of Parliament influence policy?" *Journal of Legislative Studies* 16(1): 32-56.

[Article available through InformaWorld [HERE](#)]

Soroka, Stuart, Erin Penner and Kelly Blidook. 2009. "Constituency Influence in Parliament." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 42(3): 563-591.

[Article available through Cambridge Journals [HERE](#)]

Penner, Erin, Stuart Soroka and Kelly Blidook. 2006. "Legislative Priorities and Public Opinion: The Representation of Partisan Agendas in the Canadian House of Commons." *Journal of European Public Policy* 13(7).

[Article available through InformaWorld [HERE](#)]

Tremblay, "Do Female MPs Substantively Represent Women?" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 31 (3), 1998, 435-65.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Section IV. Representing What?: Public Preferences in Representative Democracy

Seminar 9: What Role for the Public?

Easton, David. 1965. *A Framework for Political Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall. (selections)

[Book available through WebCT]

Cutler, Fred. 1999. "Jeremy Bentham and the Public Opinion Tribunal" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 63.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Soroka, Stuart and Christopher Wlezien. 2004. "Opinion Representation and Policy Feedback: Canada in Comparative Perspective", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 37(3):531-559.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Petry, Francois and Matthew Mendensohn. 2004. "Public Opinion and Policy Making in Canada 1994-2001." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 37(3): 540-550.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Belanger, Eric and Francois Petry. 2005. "The Rational Public? A Canadian Test of the Page and Shapiro Argument." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 17(2): 190-212.

[Article available through Oxford Journals [HERE](#)]

Seminar 10: Do Citizens Know Enough?

Lippmann, Walter. 1925. *The Phantom Public*. New York: Harcourt. (selections)

[Chapters available through WebCT]

Bartels, L. 1996. "Uninformed votes: Information effects in presidential elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 194-230.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Gidengil, Elisabeth et al. 2004. *Citizens*. Vancouver: UBC Press. (selections)

[Chapters available through WebCT]

Fournier, Patrick. 2002. "The Uninformed Canadian Voter", in *Citizen Politics: Research and Theory in Canadian Political Behaviour*, Joanna Everitt & Brenda O'Neill (eds.), Oxford University Press.

[Chapter available through WebCT]

Blais, Andre, Elisabeth Gidengil, Patrick Fournier and Neil Nevitte. 2009. "Information, visibility and elections: Why electoral outcomes differ when voters are better informed." *European Journal of Political Research* 48: 256-280.

[Article available through Wiley [HERE](#)]

Seminar 11: Referenda & Deliberation

Debate in *Public Perspective*, December/January 1996. Articles by Fishkin, Mitofsky, Newport, Converse, Tindle, and Tringall.

[Chapters available online [HERE](#)]

Johnston, Richard C.G. et al. 1996. *The Challenge of Direct Democracy: The 1992 Canadian Referendum*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

[Book available through ebrary [HERE](#)]

Fournier, Patrick et al. N.d. *When Citizens Decide*. (selections)

[Chapters available through WebCT]

Seminar 12: Federalism: Help or Hindrance?

Weinstock, Daniel. 2001. "Towards a Normative Theory of Federalism." *International Social Science Journal* 53: 75-83.

[Article available through Wiley [HERE](#)]

Trudeau, Pierre. 1968. *Federalism and the French Canadians*. Toronto: MacMillan. (selections)

[Chapters available through WebCT]

Arceneaux, Kevin. 2005. "Does Federalism Weaken Democratic Representation in the United States?" *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 35(2): 297-312.

[Article available through JStor [HERE](#)]

Cutler, Fred. 2004. "Government Responsibility and Electoral Accountability in Federations". *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 34(2).

[Article available through Oxford Journals [HERE](#)]

Cutler, Fred. 2008. "Whodunnit? Canadian Voters, Intergovernmentalism, and Responsibility." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 41:3: 627-654.

[Article available through Cambridge Journals [HERE](#)]

Wlezien, Christopher and Stuart Soroka. N.d. "Federalism and Public Responsiveness." forthcoming in *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*.

[Article available [HERE](#)]