

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE**  
POLITICAL STUDIES 2210 (3 credits)

**ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**  
POLITICAL SCIENCE 320 (first 3 of 6 credits)

**INTRODUCTION TO THE CANADIAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**  
**September - December 2008**

University Transfer\*\*  
(AU, UA, UC, UL, CUC, KUC)

Instructor: Tom Enders, PhD  
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Room: B201  
Time: M 1-2:20/F 11:30-12:50

Office hours (fall term): Wed. 1–2 p.m.,  
Fri. 2:15-3:15, and by appointment

**College Calendar Course Description:**

This course examines the cultural, social and economic context in which political actors in Canada seek to protect and advance their interests and power. Attention is given to divisions or cleavages as well as unifying elements.

Topics will include language, culture, political culture, economic class cleavages, gender, ethnic diversity, political socialization and social movements, interest groups and Canada's external political environment provided by the United States and the rest of the world.

This course along with PO2210, Introduction to Canadian Political Institutions, Federalism and the Constitution, constitutes a full year introduction to Canadian politics. The two courses provide preparation (and serve as a prerequisite) for further studies in Canadian Politics at the postsecondary level.\*\*

**Prerequisite:** There is no prerequisite for taking this course.

**Course requirements:**

Attendance and participation .....	10%
Short test on part I.....	15%
Midterm exam .....	25%
Term Paper.....	25%
Final exam .....	25%

\*\* Athabasca University students need to take both semesters of POLS320 to obtain credit for POLS320, the full-year course. PO2210 transfers to AU as 2xx (3credits).

Successful completion of both PO2210 and PO2220 is needed to obtain credit for having taken the equivalent of POLS220 at the U. of A.

You are expected to reference sources fully and properly for your term paper. An instructor's handout will provide assistance. See College Calendar, pp. 48-50, for information on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Students who miss an excessive number of classes may be denied the opportunity to write the final exam, as stated in the Calendar on p. 44.

For information on key dates and other important matters, see the Calendar as well.

Note that you are required to write the final exam on the date scheduled by the College. Take this into account when making any December travel plans.

Marks will be given in percentage figures before conversion to a letter grade.

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

### **Required texts:**

1. Rand Dyck, Canadian Politics: Critical Approaches, 5th edition. Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson, 2008.
2. Course Package to be purchased from the book store.
3. Course Blackboard postings.
4. Readings from the internet and databases.

## **Topics**

### **I. Introduction.**

- A. Government, Politics and Political Science. Related employment opportunities.
- B. Overview of Canadian Political System. How governments are formed. Amounts and distribution of government revenues, spending.

### **II. Canada and Afghanistan – and the United States and NATO.**

Why are Canadian troops in Afghanistan? How long should they stay? What are the roles of Canadian interests and values in choosing what to do? The roles of Canadian peacekeeping ideals, Quebec pacifism, Canadian-American relations and military alliances.

### **III. The Canadian Political Landscape.**

- A. Canadian political culture. Which political values do Canadians share? Is Canada a real nation or country? How distinct and separate from the U.S. is it, and should it be? Distinctive Canadian values. Canadian identity. Democracy.
- B. Class cleavages and social programs. How significant are poverty and income inequality in Canada?

- C. Regional cleavages. The West and western alienation. Ontario. Atlantic Canada. How justifiable are claims of Central Canadian domination? Should the federal government continue to support regional economic development and equalization?
- D. Aboriginal peoples. Identity and relationship with Canada. Demographics. Social and cultural conditions. Land claims. Self-government. How we got to where we are. Where to from here?
- E. French Canada and Quebec. Demographics. Language and culture. Historical grievances. Quebec nationalism. What can and should be done to keep Quebec in Canada?
- F. Ethnic groups, multiculturalism, immigration and religion. What is reasonable accommodation?
- G. Women and politics in Canada. How much is yet to be done? What is to be done?
- H. Political participation and socialization. What should we teach and promote? How much participation of what kind is desirable?
- I. The news media, diversity and unity, class and democracy. Do Canadian news media do good work in holding private and public power to account?

[Note: Topics in Part IV will be dealt with on a time-permitting basis.]

#### **IV. Canada and the World.**

- A. Culture and politics. Broadcasting policy. Film. Magazine publishing. Should government do more to promote a distinctive Canadian culture?
- B. Foreign ownership and trade agreements. Economic Integration. So far so good? How far should we go?

#### **Readings List follows...**

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