

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO



Sault College

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE TITLE: Introduction to Political Science
CODE NO. : POL105-3 **SEMESTER:** Fall/Winter
PROGRAM: Various Post Secondary
AUTHOR: Social Sciences Department
DATE: Jan. 2008 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** Sept. 2007

APPROVED:

CHAIR, COMMUNITY SERVICES

DATE

TOTAL CREDITS: 3

PREREQUISITE(S): None

HOURS/WEEK: 3

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For additional information, please contact the Chair, Community Services
School of Health and Community Services
(705) 759-2554, Ext. 2603

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The aim of this course is to make Canadian politics a meaningful subject matter for all students. We will discuss the sources of our political system and examine the structure of government at all levels. The students will identify issues and problems in Canada and question how they are dealt with by government. This will lead to an increased awareness of the ever-changing political scene in Canada and to greater participation in the political process.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

A. Learning Outcomes:

1. Recognize the major issues of Canadian politics
2. Identify the origins and shaping of the Canadian political system
3. Explain the party system in Canada and our electoral process
4. Describe the operation of the Canadian parliamentary system
5. Explain the meaning and significance of federalism in Canada and describe the framework of the Constitution
6. Discuss the use and abuse of power in government
7. Evaluate Canada's chances of survival as a nation
8. Identify current issues facing Canadian government/society

B. Learning Outcomes and Elements of the Performance:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Recognize the major issues of Canadian politics.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Describe the concept of representative democracy
- Explain federalism
- Identify the political regions of Canada

2. Identify the origins and shaping of the Canadian political system.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Examine the geography of Canada as it relates to population, resources and economic strength
- Review the relationship between English and French Canada historically and today
- Discuss the historical evolution of Aboriginal-European interaction
- Identify the influence of the United States on Canada's culture and politics

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE
(Continued):**

3. Explain the party system in Canada and our electoral process.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Identify the attributes of various political parties and their ideologies
- Understand the functions and roles of political parties
- Review the Canadian electoral system - current practices and proposed reforms
- Assess various aspects of Canadian voting behaviour

4. Describe the operation of the Canadian parliamentary system.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Discuss the functions of the three branches of government
- Review possible avenues of Senate reform
- Describe how legislation is passed in Parliament
- Identify stages and types of legislation
- Outline the policy making process

5. Explain the meaning and significance of federalism in Canada, and describe the framework of the Constitution.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Relate the origins of the concept of federalism in Canada
- Describe the separation of federal and provincial powers under the Constitution Act
- Review the different sections of the Constitution and evaluate the strengths and weakness of particular areas, particularly the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Outline the attempts at constitutional change since 1980

6. Discuss the use and abuse of power in government.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Explain the powers of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet
- Describe the authority of Parliament and become cognizant of its checks and balances
- Discuss the relationship between the government and the opposition
- Distinguish between a majority and minority government

7. Evaluate Canada's chances of survival as a nation.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Describe regional development and inequalities across Canada
- Discuss programs that have been adopted to reduce inequality
- Explain the question of bilingualism and Quebec's constitutional requirements
- Relate the issues that Native people see as important and need to be resolved

8. Identify current issues facing Canadian government/society.

Potential elements of the performance:

- Present and discuss current happenings in Canadian society
- Identify the many ways in which government action affects your life
- Recognize how world issues impact government actions
- Reflect on how a citizen's actions can affect government decisions

III. TOPICS:

1. Societal Influences in Canadian Politics
2. Elections and the Electoral System
3. Political Parties
4. The Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
5. The Provinces and the Federal System
6. The Executive
7. Parliament
8. Current Issues

IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES / TEXTS / MATERIALS:

1. Canadian Politics (Concise 3rd ed.) and Study Guide, by Rand Dyck, Nelson Canada.

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM:
MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTING**

Students will be responsible for regular attendance and class participation in all areas of the course, as well as all readings and tests as requested. The course content and evaluation can be modified at the discretion of the professor.

Tests	75%
Assignment(s)	15%
Oral Presentation(s)	5%
Attendance & Participation	5%
Total	100%

TIME FRAME

Introduction to Political Science (POL 105-3) involves three periods per week for the semester. Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class activities.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (GRADING METHOD):

The following semester grades will be assigned to students in post-secondary courses:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	
A	80 – 89%	4.00
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
D	50 – 59%	1.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	0.00

CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.

Note: For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade.

It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

- VI. If a student misses a test due to a verifiable illness or incident, the professor will determine if the student is eligible for an extension for an assignment or re-scheduling of a test. The student is ultimately responsible and obligated to contact the professor by phone, in person, or in writing **prior** to the assigned due date or test time. The College touch-tone/24-hour voice mail number allows you to immediately notify the professor with your name, message, and phone number.

Upon returning to college (your first day back), the student will **immediately** contact the professor to make arrangements for the assignment or test. Phone, or come by the professor's office, or leave a note under his/her office door with a telephone number where you can be reached. **Failure to do so will result in a zero grade.**

Notification policy in brief: **Mutual respect, courtesy, and accountability.** Students are responsible for obtaining any materials missed due to absenteeism.

VII. SPECIAL NOTES:

Special Needs:

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your professor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit Room E1101 or call Extension 2703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of Course Outlines:

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

Communication: ***Sault College has implemented WebCT/LMS as a tool of communication. The professor will inform students as to how this tool will be used in this course, and students are responsible for using this tool as directed.***

Plagiarism:

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course Outline Amendments:

The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

VIII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

IX. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.