



GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
Political Studies 1010
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL STUDIES:
Ideas and Forms of Government
Fall 2012
3 (3-0-0) UT 45 Hours

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Office Hours: Thursdays 3-4:30 p.m.; Fridays 1:30-3 p.m. and by appointment

Prerequisite: There is no prerequisite for taking this course.

Required Readings:

1. Mark Dickerson, Thomas Flanagan & Brenda O'Neill, An Introduction to Government and Politics: A Conceptual Approach, 8th edition. Toronto: Nelson, 2010.
2. Readings posted on Moodle.
3. Class handouts, internet and database readings.

Note: You may use the 7th edition of Dickerson and Flanagan, but you will have to follow different pagination, and may need to obtain and read some material added to the 8th edition.

College Calendar course description:

This course is an introduction to key political concepts such as power, authority, order, equality, freedom and justice. These concepts are examined as they are used by different ideologies including liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, anarchism, feminism, postmodernism, and religious fundamentalism.

Political ideas and practices are also examined in the context of democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian forms of government. The role of the news media under different kinds of regime may also be considered.

Contact Hours:

This is a three credit course with three hours of instructional time a week.

Delivery Mode:

Classroom time will be used for lectures and discussions.

Course objectives:

This course, along with Political Studies 1020, is designed to introduce you to the political world and the academic study of it. PO1010 is intended to:

1. encourage you to think about the rights and obligations of citizens, the roles of law and government, the requirements of democracy, and the nature of different forms of government; and
2. provide you with a basic knowledge of key political ideas and concepts, and of the main political ideologies;
3. also encourage you to appreciate the value of thinking clearly and systematically about the political world around us; and
4. prepare you for further studies in politics at the postsecondary level.

Transferability: AU, UA, UC, UL, KUC, AF

* The grade of D or D+ may not be accepted for transfer to other postsecondary institutions. You are cautioned that it is your responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.

Course requirements:

First test.....	15%
First assignment.....	15%
Midterm exam.....	25%
Term paper	20%
Final exam	25%

Please be informed that it is not the instructor’s policy to allow exams or assignments to be rewritten, or extra work done to increase marks. You are welcome, however, to consult with the instructor prior to exams and assignment due dates.

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

For conversion of letter grades to the four-point scale, see the GPRC calendar.

Student Responsibilities:

* You are expected to devote time in the classroom to the class itself. Use of cell phones and use of laptops for non-class purposes is unacceptable. It is also not acceptable to socialize or do work on other courses during the class.

* You are strongly advised to keep a copy of your own of any work you submit for grading at least until you have your work returned to you.

** Students who miss an excessive number of classes (i.e. more than six, without

reasonable justification such as illness) may be denied the opportunity to write the final exam, as stated in the Calendar.

****You are expected to write the final exam in December when scheduled by the Registrar's Office - with possible exceptions in the case of compelling and urgent circumstances beyond your control. Take this into account when making any travel plans. Also note and observe other key dates during the term as provided in the Calendar.**

Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating:

* You are required to reference sources fully and properly for written assignments. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with College Calendar information (on pages 48-49 and on-line) pertaining to cheating and plagiarism, for which there are various penalties depending on the severity of the offense. (An instructor's handout will provide assistance with referencing.)

Please note: Details of this course outline are subject to change. Any changes will be discussed in class.

Provisional Topic Schedule

Sept. 12, 17, 19 **I. Introduction.**

- A. An introduction to politics and government. Political power, resources and methods. Making a difference.
- B. What is Political Science? Selecting and evaluating internet sources. Related employment opportunities.

First Exam Monday Sept. 24

II. The basis for political rule.

- Sept. 24, 26 A. Legitimacy and authority.
- Oct. 1, 3 B. Law, rule of law and constitutionalism. Obligation to obey the law.

III. Democratic and other forms of Government

- Oct. 10 A. Classifications of government.
- Oct. 10, 15 B. Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism.
- Oct. 17, 22 C. Democracy. Liberal Democracy. Representative and Direct Democracy.
- Oct. 24 D. Transitions to Democracy. Prerequisites of democracy. Exporting democracy. The Arab Spring.
- Oct. 29 E. Democracy in Alberta. Democracy in Canada. The Occupy Movement. Quebec student protests.

Wed. Oct. 31 **Midterm exam.**

IV. Political Ideologies

- Nov. 1 A. Political Ideologies. Components. Key concepts such as order, equality, freedom and justice.
- Nov. 5, 7 B. Liberalism. Classical liberalism. Reform liberalism.
- Nov. 7, 15 C. Conservatism and neo-conservatism.
- Nov. 19 D. Populism.
- Nov. 21, 26, 28 E. Socialism and Communism. F. Anarchism.
- Dec. 3 G. Feminism.
- Dec. 5 H. Postmodernism.
- Dec. 10 I. The Environment and political ideologies.