

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

SEP. 07 2001

Political Science 1030  
Modern Political Issues  
University Transfer  
Fall 2001

Instructor: Tom Enders, PhD  
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Office hours: Mon./Th. 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Room: E306A  
Time: Wed. 6-8:50 p.m.

College Calendar course description:

This is an introduction to contemporary political issues and events. Topics vary but include matters of contemporary national and international concern such as the Quebec Question, Rights and Environmentalism. It is not intended for students majoring in political science. Not open to students who have or are taking PO 1000.

Course description fall 2001:

This course is an introduction to a selection of contemporary political issues (many if not all of which are also moral issues as well.) These issues include abortion, capital punishment, aboriginal self-government, affirmative action, global warming, the future of the health care system, public service strikes, obligation to obey the law, and others.

In order to better understand these issues and how they are and should be dealt with in political life, we will consider key political concepts. Among these are law, democracy, individual rights, liberty, group entitlements, equality and justice.

A key question that will arise is this: When should the interests and wishes or choices of the individual prevail, and when should the concerns of others, the group or the community as a whole receive equal or greater consideration?

Course objectives:

1. to introduce you to some key concepts, institutional arrangements and political processes
2. to carefully examine different political issues - by looking at the nature of the issues and opposing points of view

Course requirements:

First exam ..... 35%  
Essay ..... 30%  
Final exam ..... 35%

NOTE: The details of this outline are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

Required texts:

1. Wesley Cragg & Christine Koggel, editors. Contemporary Moral Issues, 4th edition. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1997.
2. Political Science 1030 course package.

Topics

**I. Introduction.**

- A. What is politics? The nature of law.
- B. Democracy and institutions.

**II. Individual Liberty and Moral Issues**

- A. Liberal individualism and moral theories.
- B. Voluntary euthanasia.
- C. Abortion and stem cell research and public funding.
- D. Punishment and capital punishment.
- E. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**III. Group Claims**

- A. Aboriginal peoples and Quebeckers
- B. Politics of Difference: Discrimination. Multiculturalism. Affirmative Action.

**IV. Health and Welfare Issues**

- A. The Natural Environment and Global Warming.
- B. Poverty and Welfare.
- C. The Health Care System.

**V. Collective Bargaining and Legal Obligation**

- A. Public Service strikes.
- B. Obligation to obey the law.