

POLS*3210 The Constitution and Canadian Federalism

CALENDAR INFORMATION

Canada's constitution and its federal system lie at the heart of the ongoing crisis facing the Canadian Confederation. This course examines the major features of our constitutional development, how the current system of intergovernmental relations has evolved, and the challenges posed by Canada's cultural diversity, pressures for decentralisation, and the maintenance of national sovereignty.

Credit Weighting: [0.50]**Pre-/Co-Requisites:** POLS*2300**Restrictions:****INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION****Name:** Prof. Mark Harding**Email:** mark.harding@uoguelph.ca**Office Location:** MCKN 546**GENERAL DETAILS**

The Constitution and its federal character are central to understanding Canadian political life. This course examines the history, evolution, and continuing relevance of federalism in Canada. It will introduce students to the origins of the federal idea, and how the Fathers of Confederation sought to create a uniquely Canadian form of federalism. It will then move to a history of the development of federalism in Canada, with emphasis on early judicial decisions by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the "mega-constitutional politics" from the 1970s-1990s, and Quebec's place in Canada. Finally, it will explore the how Canada's federal framework and system of intergovernmental relations affects public policy in areas such as related to the welfare state, criminal justice, and the climate policy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to identify and critically evaluate the relevant political and scholarly debates, past and present, that surround the importance of Canadian federalism and its influence on political and social life. Students should be familiar with the historical development of Canadian federalism and the way in which the judiciary, intergovernmental relations, and individual political personalities have shaped (and been shaped by) federalism. Finally, students should be able to effectively communicate, in both oral and written form, how federalism structures how Canadians govern and are governed in the twenty-first century.

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be delivered face-to-face. Lectures will not be live-streamed or recorded.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Participation
Test
Final Paper
Final Exam

REQUIRED READING

Additional readings, including articles, chapters, and online commentaries, will be on CourseLink. A reading schedule will be made available on CourseLink with further instructions.