DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE

POLS*6510 - Political Participation and Engagement

Credit Weighting: 0.5 **Pre-/Co-Requisites:** n/a **Restrictions:** n/a

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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GENERAL DETAILS

The focus of this course is on the political participation of denizens (including non-citizens), through both traditional (e.g., voting) and alternative (e.g., protest, participatory governance models) mechanisms. We will explore theories and ideas about public participation, and consider policy frameworks and legislation that govern public engagement across jurisdictions. We will consider the Canadian context, and also contestations of the Canadian state by Indigenous Nations, governments, and Peoples. The course is guided by broad questions such as:

(1) What theories and ideas ground thinking about political participation and engagement?
(2) How do governments across jurisdictions engage with denizens and how do they engage with governments, or despite governments?
(3) Why/how/does political participation and engagement matter?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

• participate knowledgeably in discussions about political participation, including related to relevant foundational concepts and theories, key processes, notable challenges, and future directions
• systematically consider the strengths and limitations of: traditional and alternative political participation mechanisms
• evaluate the effects of structural and agentic barriers and opportunities on the public's participation
• apply your learning to a contemporary political participation challenge
• lead a discussion related to public participation and engagement, including by engaging your peers, selecting appropriate readings, guiding discussion, and introducing thematic ideas

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

You will have a range of opportunities to demonstrate your learning in this class including through: class participation and reading summaries; discussion leadership; and term projects. There may be an opportunity to work with a community partner as part of your term project.

REQUIRED READING

The readings and other learning materials for this course cover inter-related areas such as: theories of democratic participation; public inclusion & exclusion; and formal and alternative forms of political participation and resistance. All course readings will be available online or on Ares (via CourseLink).