**POLI 3546.2**

***Political Parties and Democratic Change***

***Saint Mary’s University***

**Time:** Tues. 4 - 6:30 pm  **Professor:** Dr. Alexandra Dobrowolsky

**Class Location:** Burke 207 **Email:** adobrowolsky@smu.ca

**Office Phone:** (902) 420-5895 **Office Hours:** Tues. 11:30 – 2:30pm;

Wed.1 - 4pm

**Office location:** MN 405 *\* or by appointment*

**Calendar Description:** 3 credit hours. The historical evolution, as well as the contemporary promises and pitfalls of political parties are critically examined. The party ideal is appraised in relation to changing political and representational realities. Given growing public dissatisfaction with political parties as democratic vehicles, representational alternatives are examined. The focus is on Canada, but party politics and democratic change in other countries will provide comparative insights.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credit hours in POLI.

**Course Description / Objectives:**

In recent decades, perhaps one of the most troubling developments for electoral politics has been the public’s increasing disenchantment with the political party as a representational form, and with elections as democratic vehicles. Indeed, some groups, such as youth, have appeared especially disengaged when it comes to partisan politics and voting. While voter turnout, in general, and in relation to youth (particularly young women) and Indigenous peoples, improved in Canada’s 2015 general election, significant democratic challenges remain. This course critically examines various theories and practices, past and present, around political parties and elections. By analysing Canadian parties on several bases—theoretically, historically, comparatively and in relation to other representational forms-- continuities and changes that help to explain this current democratic malaise and what can be done about it are identified and evaluated. The first aim of this course, then, is to develop a more in-depth, informed, understanding of political parties, elections, and their contemporary challenges. In the process of acquiring this broader and deeper knowledge of the promises and pitfalls of partisan politics, the second course objective is to consider constructive solutions to current representational and democratic shortfalls in political parties and elections, and beyond.

**Course Texts:**

1. **Alain G. Gagnon & A. Brian Tanguay eds., *Canadian Parties in Transition 4th edition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).**
2. **Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan eds., *The Canadian General Election of 2015* (Toronto: Dundern Press, 2016).**
3. **Alex Marland and Thierry Giasson eds., *Canadian Election Analysis: Communication, Strategy and Democracy* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015) FREE download, access on line at:** <http://www.ubcpress.ca/CanadianElectionAnalysis2015/>

**FORMAT AND EVALUATION**

**Course Requirements:**

Class Participation 10%

Class Presentation 15%

In Class Test (February 27) 20%

Two Reaction Papers (2 ½-3 pp. each; 1st due Jan.23; 2nd tbd) 10% X 2= 20%

Essay Outline (3-4 pp. due March 6) 10%

Research Essay (10-12 pp. due April 3) 25%

***Class Participation:*** students are required to attend ***all*** scheduledclasses and to participate extensively in class discussions (10%). Since this course contains a significant participation component, it is important that you read the required readings ***before*** each class (and also submit your reaction papers ***before*** the appropriate class).

***Class Presentation:*** you will prepare one, formal presentation with speaking text, notes and discussion questions worth 15%. You will be evaluated on content (both substance and style), as well as on your ability to engage the class. This will entail preparing a topical presentation and then facilitating class discussion. Depending on class size, but most likely working in pairs or a group of three, you will choose an innovative presentation style that imparts information and stimulates a structured learning experience and class discussion. If you require special equipment, please inform the professor one week in advance.

***In Class Test:*** the test will take place on February 27th, and will be comprised of identify and given the significance as well as essay questions. It will be worth 20%.

***Reaction Papers***: you are required to write TWO reaction papers. The first is due at the start of class on January 23rd, the second will be due before class, on a week of your own choosing (but NOT on the week of your presentation). Each reaction paper will be a 2 ½-3 page (typed and double-spaced) response to the coming week’s readings and is worth 10%. It will review and evaluate the course materials. The goal is to develop and build students’ analyses of the readings as the course proceeds. Thus, the purpose of this exercise is not only to ensure that students are reading and following the required materials (in lieu of a final examination), but also to provide an opportunity for students to hone their critical analytical, skills. Please take note of the following:

1. Your first reaction paper is due on ***January 23***, and will be an assessment of the January 23rd readings.
2. You will then sign up for the due date of your second reaction paper. Once you have committed to a date, there will be no extensions or changes. Your options are: ***Jan. 30; Feb. 6; Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27.***
3. Each reaction paper must be handed in to the professor ***BEFORE*** the class on the readings in question (reaction papers will not be accepted during, or after, the class).
4. You cannot submit a reaction paper for the week of your presentation (i.e., no reaction papers on your presentation topic).

***Essay Outline:***  you will prepare a 3-4 page essay outline with an annotated bibliography. Your outline will be due on March 6 and is worth 10%.

***Research Essay:***  you will research and write a paper that is approximately 10-12 pages in length (typed and double spaced) related to the subject matter of the course *(but, your topic must be unrelated to your class presentation)*. Your essay will convey more than a general understanding of the topic chosen, and will contain an assessment. In other words, this assignment requires that you pursue an argument, and develop an informed analysis. Moreover, this is a research essay. Your paper must be properly, fully referenced or it will not be graded. Your essay will be due on April 3 and is worth 25%.

**NOTE:** all assignments must be completed, typed, proof read and submitted on time. Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluations of assignments.

***No extensions will be granted:***  late assignments will only be accepted in the event of illness in which case medical documentation is required. If accepted, a penalty of one grade point (i.e, from A to A-) per day will be imposed on late work.

**\*Students with disabilities**: please consult with the professor at the start of the course should any accommodations be necessary.

***PLAGIARISM:*** constitutes a serious academic offence. Taking someone else’s work or quoting another person’s research/writing without reference; taking unattributed material from the Internet; submitting a piece of work for credit in more than one course, are all examples of academic fraud (see the 2017-2018 Academic Calendar for details). Students found committing these or other academic offences will receive a grade of zero for the work in question, will be reported, and may fail the course.

**Schedule, Topics & Readings**

1. **Jan. 9: *Welcome:* *introductions; course overview; setting the stage for the drama of party politics in Canada; buy textbooks & start reading!***

REQUIRED:

\*Christopher Dornan, “The Long Goodbye: The Contours of the Election,” Chapter 1 in Pammett & Dornan.

1. **Jan. 16: *Political Parties & Elections: Canadian Conundrums & Challenges***

REQUIRED:

\*Richard Johnston, “Polarized Pluralism in the Canadian Party System,” Chapter 4 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Louis Massicotte, “Roll Back! The Conservatives Rewrite Election Laws, 2006-2015,” Chapter 7 Pammett & Dornan.

\*Grant Amyot, “The Waning of Political Parties?” Chapter 5 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*(60) Pamela Palmater, “All About Strong Alliances: First Nations Engagement in the Federal Election,”’(118) Allison Harell & Tania Gosselin, “The Youth Vote in the 2015 Election,” in Marland & Giasson pp.60-61 & 118-119.

**\*Sign up for Presentations**

**\*\*REMINDER: FIRST REACTION PAPER DUE NEXT WEEK:**

**Write your critical review and assessment of the Jan.23rd readings.**

**Submit BEFORE class begins on January 23rd**

**Papers handed in during, or after class, will not be accepted.**

1. **Jan. 23: *Party System Changes & Challenges***

REQUIRED:

\*Steve Patten, “The Evolution of the Canadian Party System: From Brokerage to Marketing-Oriented Politics,” Chapter 1 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*James Bickerton, “Parties and Regions: Representation and Resistance,” Chapter 3 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Brooke Jeffrey, “The Liberal Party of Canada: Rebuilding, Resurgence, and Return to Power,” Chapter 7 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Jon H. Pammett & Lawrence LeDuc, “The Fall of the Harper Dynasty,” Chapter 14 in Pammett & Dornan.

Recommended: \*Royce Koop & Amanda Bittner, “Parties and Elections after 2011: The Fifth Canadian Party System” Chapter 14 in Bittner & Koop; Heather MacIvor, “Introduction” in Heather MacIvor ed., *Election* {K}; John Courtney, “Forty and Counting” in Heather MacIvor ed., *Election*; Gidengil et al., “Chapter 11: The Shifting Contours of Canadian Elections” in *Dominance and Decline: Making Sense of Recent Canadian Elections;* Brad Walchuk, “A Whole New Ballgame: The Rise of Canada’s Fifth Party System,” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 42:3 (2012).

***REMINDERS:***

***\*\* Hand in your 1st Reaction paper (Jan.23) before class begins.***

***\*\*Sign up for a date to hand in your 2nd Reaction Paper (Jan. 30; Feb. 6; Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27).***

***\*\*Presentations begin January 30.***

1. **Jan. 30: *Brokerage versus Ideology & Informed Political Participation***

REQUIRED

\*Nelson Wiseman, “Ideological Competition in the Canadian Party System,” Chapter 6 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*David McGrane, “Ideological Moderation and Professionalization: The NDP under Jack Layton and Tom Mulcair,” Chapter 9 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Alex Marland & Thierry Giasson, “From Brokerage to Boutique Politics: Political Marketing and the Changing Nature of Party Politics in Canada,” Chapter 16 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Henry Milner, “Participation, Mobilization, and the Political Engagement of the Internet Generation,” Chapter 19 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*(70) Shannon Sampert, “The ‘New Normal’ of Mediatization and Narrowcasting” in Marland & Giasson, pp. 70-71.

Recommended: R. Kenneth Carty, “A Different kind of Party” in *Big Tent Politics: The Liberal Party’s Long Mastery of Canada’s Public Life*, Chapter 4.

***\*\*JAN. 30th Presentation 1: Do new campaign strategies diminish or enhance brokerage politics and with what consequences?***

**V) Feb.6: *Governing Parties, Nations, Nationalism & Populism***

REQUIRED:

\*Brooke Jeffrey, “Back to the Future: The Resurgent Liberals” Chapter 3 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*Faron Ellis, “Stephen Harper and the 2015 Conservative Campaign: Defeated but not Devastated,” Chapter 2 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*Peter Woolstencroft, “The Conservatives: Rebuilding and Rebranding, Yet Again,” Chapter 8 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Alain G. Gagnon & François Boucher, \*Party Politics in a Distinct Society: Two Eras of Block Voting in Quebec,” Chapter 13 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

Recommended: Gidengil et al, “Chapter 4: Party Loyalties” in *Dominance and Decline: Making Sense of Canadian Elections*. R. Kenneth Carty, “Four Eras, Four Liberal Parties” in *Big Tent Politics: The Liberal Party’s Long Mastery of Canada’s Public Life*, Chapter 3.

***\*\*FEB. 6th Presentation 2: Will populist resurgence affect Canada’s nationalist parties, if not, why not, if so, how?***

1. **FEB. 13th Recap, Review & Reflections; Essay Research Tips**

***\*\*FEB. 13th  Presentation 3: OPEN TOPICS: presentation topics selected by student(s)***

***Wildcard!***

***READING WEEK / STUDY BREAK FEB. 19 -23***

***REMINDERS:***

***\*\*Test: Feb. 27***

***\*\* Essay Outlines due in class on March 6***

1. ***Feb. 27 in class TEST***
2. **Mar. 6: *Moving Beyond the Political Centre?***

REQUIRED

\*Éric Bélanger, “Third Parties in Canada: Variety and Success,” Chapter 10 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*David McGrane, ‘’From Third to First and Back to Third: The 2015 NDP Campaign,” Chapter 4 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*Kristin Good, “Muncipal Political Parties: An Answer to Urbanization or an Affront to Traditions of Local Democracy?” Chapter 20 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*(22) Eric Montigny & Francois Gélineau “Le NPD au Québec: doublé sur la gauche,”; (52) Andrea Lawlor, “Third Parties in the 2015 Federal Election: Partying Like It’s 1988,”; (54) Rachel Laforest, “Organized Interests Strike Back!” in Marland and Giasson pp.22-23; 52-53; 54-55.

Recommended: Elisabeth Gidengil et al, “Chapter 10: Electoral Dynamics in Quebec” in *Dominance & Decline: Making Sense of Recent Canadian Elections* ; Ailsa Henderson, Chapter 15 “Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts: Political Cultures and Regions” in Heather MacIvor ed., *Election;* David Laycock & Linda Erickson eds., *Reviving Social Democracy: The Near Death and Surprising Rise of the NDP*.

***\*\*MAR. 6th Presentation 4: What’s Left of the Left?***

**Hand in Essay Outlines (Mar. 6th)**

**IX) Mar.13: *Movements & Mobilization In & Outside Parties***

REQUIRED:

\*Éric Bélanger and Richard Nadeau, “The Bloc Québécois in a Rainbow-Coloured Quebec,” Chapter 5 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*Susan Harada, “Opportunities and Obstacles: The Green Party of Canada’s 2015 Campaign,” Chapter 6 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*Jacquetta Newman, “Back to the Future: Encoding and Decoding Interest Representation Outside of Parties,” Chapter 12 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*A. Brian Tanguay, “The Promise of Direct Democracy: Is That All There Is?” Chapter 15 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

Recommended: Gidengil et al, “Chapter 3: Values and Beliefs” in Gidengil *Dominance & Decline: Making Sense of Recent Canadian Elections;* Per Gahrton, *Green Parties Green Future: From Local Groups to the International Stage (2015).*

***\*\*MAR. 13th Presentation 5: Do social movements help or hinder partisan politics & elections?***

**X) Mar. 20: *Parties as Representational Vehicles, in Question***

REQUIRED:

\*Joanna Everitt, “Where are the Women in Canadian Political Parties?” Chapter 14 in Gagnon & Tanguay.

\*Brenda O’Neill & Melanee Thomas, “ ‘Because It’s 2015’: Gender and the 2015 Federal Election,” Chapter 11 in Pammett and Dornan.

\*Allison Harell, “Revisiting the “Ethnic” Vote: Liberal Allegiance and Vote Choice among Racialized Minorities” Chapter 7 in Bittner & Koop {*PDF to be provided}.*

\*(46) Melanee Thomas, “Gender and Election 2014: Continuity with No Real Change,”; (50) Erin Tolley “Visible Minority and Indigenous Members of Parliament,”; (48) Joanna Everitt “LGBT Activism in the 2015 Election,” & Mario Levesque, (88) “Missing in Action Disability Policy and Persons with Disabilities,” in Marland & Giasson, pp. 46-47; 50-51; 48-49 & 88-89.

Recommended: Steve Patten, Chapter 7 “Democracy and the Candidate Selection Process in Canadian Elections” In Heather MacIvor ed., *Election*. Linda Trimble & Manon Tremblay, *Women & Electoral Politics in Canada*; Linda Trimble & Jane Arscott, *Still Counting Women in Politics Across Canada*; Lisa Young, *Feminists in Party Politics*.

***\*\*MAR. 20th: Presentation 6: Are quotas the answer to the problem of under-representation?***

**XI) Mar 27: *Public Perceptions and Party Portrayals***

REQUIRED:

\*Tamara A. Small, “Two Decades of Digital Party Politics in Canada: An Assessment,” Chapter 18 in Gagnon & Tanguay

\*Mary Francoli, Josh Greenberg and Christopher Waddell, “Like, Share, Vote: The CTV/Facebook Partnership and the 2014 Election,” Chapter 9 in Pammett & Dornan

\*André Turcotte, “A Debate About *The Debates*,” Chapter 10 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*David Coletto, “Polling and the 2015 Federal Election,” Chapter 12 in Pammett & Dornan.

\*(84) Patricia Cormack & Mireille Lalancette, “Trudeau as Celebrity Politician: Winning by More than a Hair,”; (114) Yannick Dufresne & Clifton van der Linden, “Digital Technology and Civic Engagement: The Case of Vote Compass,” in Marland & Giasson, pp. 84-85; 114-115.

Recommended: Tamara A. Small, Chapter 9 “Still Waiting for an Internet Prime Minister: Online Campaigning by Canadian Political Parties” in Heather MacIvor ed., *Election*; André Turcotte, Chapter 10 “Polling as Modern Alchemy: Measuring Public Opinion in Canadian Elections” in Heather MacIvor ed., *Election.* Section 4: The Media and Political Communication, in Marland & Giasson, pp.64-85 & Section 7 Public Opinion Polls and Voter Behaviour, in Marland and Giasson, pp. 106-119.

***\*MAR. 27th: \*Presentation 7: Canadian Party Politics, Image at the Cost of Substance? New or Old Problem?***

***REMINDER:***

***Essays due on April 3nd***

**XII)*****Apr 3rd: Elections: Last class: Wrap Up & Hand in Essays***