

Western University
Department of Political Science
Public Administration
Political Science 2546F-001
Fall 2025

Instructor: Dr. Joseph Lyons
Office: SSC 7215
Office hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:30pm, or by appointment
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Course Information

Course Description: This course explores many of the inner workings of government. Students will be introduced to selected research and issues in public administration in the context of Canada's federal system. Topics include the machinery of government, the politics-administration dichotomy, intergovernmental relations, representative bureaucracy, accountability, and alternative service delivery, among others.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will have developed a good understanding of the basic theories and concepts in public administration and be able to apply them to the Canadian context. They will be equipped with tools to help make them informed observers of government. Students will also refine and sharpen their communication and research skills through class discussions, tutorials, and analytical assignments.

Course Organization: Weekly meetings occur on Thursdays beginning at 2:30pm. Classes will consist of a combination of lectures and class discussions. Tutorials will follow, as scheduled below, at 4:30pm.

Anti-Requisite: Political Science 2246E

Readings and Materials:

Required Textbooks

Johnson, David. 2022. *Thinking Government: Public Administration and Politics in Canada*, 5th edition. University of Toronto Press. (Hereafter referred to as Johnson.)

Savoie, Donald J. 2024. *Speaking Truth to Canadians about Their Public Service*. McGill-Queen's University Press. (Hereafter referred to as Savoie.)

Students have full and unlimited access to digital copies of both textbooks through [Western Libraries](#).

Paperback copies of both textbooks are also available for purchase through the Bookstore: https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/POL2546F.

All other assigned readings will be available through Western Libraries, the course's OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>), or online. Assigned reading should be done **BEFORE** the class in which it is to be discussed.

If students need assistance with Brightspace, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#) online or by phone at 519-661-3800 for technical support. Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled.

Course Requirements

The final grade for this course will be composed of *four* components.

1. Tutorials. Tutorials begin on September 18th. Students will be informed of their tutorial room assignment by September 11th. Students in each tutorial room will be divided into smaller teams. Students will remain on the same team throughout the semester. During tutorials, teams will work on a specific aspect of an [ImpactLab London](#) project on building a more resilient London. A key theme explored during this project will be the need for cooperation and coordination between government and non-state actors to address complex policy challenges like building resiliency. This project will also be tied to an event with the [Coalition for a Better Future](#) held during class time on November 27th.

The tutorial grade will consist of two components: *Individual Contribution* and *Team Submission*. Tutorial attendance is mandatory and will be monitored. Students may miss **ONE** tutorial without penalty. The *Individual Contribution* grade will be based partly on peer assessment. At the end of class on **December 4, 2025**, each team will submit their *Team Submission*. Students who miss **more than two** tutorials (on top of their one absence grace and one undocumented academic consideration request) will receive a grade of zero on the *Team Submission* component. More specific information and instructions will be provided in class and on Brightspace.

*Please note that students needing to be excused from an additional tutorial – on top of the one absence grace – can request academic consideration by completing a request through the Student Absence Portal. **Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation.***

Tutorial teams are expected to submit their Team Submission by the deadline of December 4th at 4:30pm. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request academic consideration and tutorial teams are permitted to submit their assignment up to 4:30pm on

*December 7, 2025 (72 hours past the deadline) without a late penalty. **No Team Submission submitted more than 72 hours past the deadline will be graded.***

3. *Savoie Quotes Journal*. Students must write and submit an independent collection of their written responses to **five** of the 10 quote-prompt pairings provided by the instructor. All the quotes come from the Savoie text. The prompts are intended to highlight the themes and ideas underlying the quotes and make connections to real-world issues. Each journal entry should be as close to 400 words as possible and written in full sentences and paragraphs. Students **must** draw from both course texts and at least one external source for each entry. Cite all sources, including assigned course readings, using the [Chicago-style author-date system](#) and include a single reference list at the end of your journal. All in-text citations **must** include the specific page number or page range from which the idea/information was drawn. For example, (Johnson 2022, 275) or (Savoie 2024, 158-59). The list of quote-prompt pairings and further instruction are available through Brightspace in the “Savoie Quotes Journal Instructions Document”.

The *Savoie Quotes Journal* is due by **2:30pm on Thursday, October 30, 2025** through the ‘Assignments’ function in Brightspace. All papers will be checked for plagiarism by Turnitin.com. Students wishing to have their papers marked up with edits and comments **must** also submit a paper copy to the instructor by the deadline. Students who only submit an electronic copy or submit their papers past the deadline will only receive more limited written feedback in Brightspace.

*Please note that students are expected to submit their Savoie Quotes Journal by the deadline of October 30th at 2:30pm. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request academic consideration, and they are permitted to submit their assignment up to 2:30pm on November 2, 2025 (72 hours past the deadline) without a late penalty. Should students submit their assessment after the 72 hour no-late penalty period, **a late penalty of 5 percent per day** will be applied against their percentage grade. The late penalty rolls over each day at 2:30pm. **No Savoie Quotes Journal will be graded if it is submitted after 2:30pm on November 13th.** Academic consideration requests may be granted only for extenuating circumstances that started before the deadline and lasted longer than the 72 hour no-late-penalty period. Requests for academic consideration **must** be made through the Student Absence Portal. Students **must not** make academic consideration requests to the instructor directly.*

3. *Midterm Test*. An in-class test will be held on **November 13, 2025**. This will be a multiple-choice test based on the material covered up to that point.

*Please note that the Midterm Test is considered to be central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for this assessment will be required to make a request through the Student Absence Portal with formal supporting documentation. Students who are granted academic consideration for this assessment will be provided with the opportunity to write a makeup test on **Friday, November 21, 2025 at 10am**. Students **must not** make academic consideration requests to the instructor directly.*

4. *Final Exam*. There will be a *Final Exam* during the December examination period. The Final Exam will be cumulative and consist of short- and/or long-answer questions.

*If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the academic counselling office of your faculty of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write a Special Examination. A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the university has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#). Students **must not** make academic consideration requests to the instructor directly.*

Evaluation

1. Tutorials:	20%	
a. Individual Contribution (10%)		Continuous
b. Team Submission (10%)		Due December 4, 2025 by 4:30pm
2. Savoie Quotes Journal:	25%	Due October 30, 2025 by 2:30pm
3. Midterm Test:	20%	November 13, 2025 @ 2:30pm
4. Final Exam:	35%	As scheduled by the Registrar
	100%	

Missed Coursework: The university's policy on academic considerations is described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

Scholastic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a scholastic offence, at the following Web site:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the university for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): The use of generative AI tools in this course is permitted for brainstorming ideas, finding preliminary information about topics, checking for how assignments might be received by a potential grader, and improving grammar and style. The use of AI is not permitted for writing entire sentences, paragraphs, sections, or a

complete draft of your assignments. If AI is used for one or more of the permitted uses for individual or group assignments, a statement must be included at the end of the assignment, before the reference list, disclosing how it was used. This statement should be included under the heading, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) Declaration”. It must explain which AI tools were used, for what reasons, and acknowledge that the author has full responsibility for the contents of the assignment. Copies of all AI generated content used in individual or group assignments must be saved and made available to the instructor or TAs if asked. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways may result in a failure to receive full grades, the need to resubmit a revised version, or a grade of zero. If in doubt about acceptable AI usage, please ask the instructor for clarification. If AI is not used at all, no declaration is needed. AI declarations will not be counted towards word limits.

Appeals: A student may request that a grade on a particular piece of work, or a final standing in a course or program, be changed, or a student may request an exemption from a Senate academic regulation. The subject of a request for relief can range from a waiver of progression requirements to accuracy of grades on examinations or assignments. Such a request can include questions of fairness or appropriateness of general grading practices and can be launched regardless of whether a record of the student's work exists. A student must submit their request for relief pursuant to the Procedure for Undergraduate Student Academic Requests for Relief: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf.

Religious Accommodations: When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the university or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the academic advising office of their faculty of registration. This notice should be made as early as possible but not later than two weeks prior to the writing or the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on the university’s EDID website for the recognized religious holidays: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>.

Accessible Education: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/AcademicAccommodation_disabilities.pdf.

Support Services: Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education if you have any questions regarding accommodations: http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html.

Students must also read and abide by the policies and procedures including in the Department of Political Science's Appendix to Undergraduate Course Outlines: <https://politicalscience.uwo.ca/undergraduate/docs/outlines/2025-26/APPENDIX%20TO%20UNDERGRADUATE%20COURSE%20OUTLINES1.pdf>.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Sept. 4 **Introduction and Overview**

Sept. 11 **What is Public Administration?**

Readings: Inwood, Gregory. 2012. *Understanding Canadian Public Administration: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. Pearson, pp. 1-25.
Johnson, Ch. 1 (skim pp. 14-36 – good background on important political issues) and pp. 169-182.

Sept. 18 **Bureaucracy I: Foundational Theories and Early Practice**

Readings: Barker, Paul and Tim Mau. 2017. *Public Administration in Canada*, 2nd ed. Nelson, pp. 29-51.
Johnson, pp. 182-199 and 266-272.

Tutorial 1

Sept. 25 **Bureaucracy II: Contemporary Theories and Practice**

Readings: Johnson, Chs. 8, 2 (skim pp. 67-75), and pp. 272-275.

Tutorial 2

Oct. 2 **The Executive and the Bureaucracy**

Reading: Johnson, pp. 81-112 and 138-166.
Savoie, Chs. 1 and 7.

Tutorial 3

Oct. 9 **The Legislature, the Judiciary, and the Bureaucracy**

Readings: Johnson, pp. 345-365.

Thomas, Paul. 2018. "Parliament and the Public Service." In *The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration*, 3rd ed., edited by Christopher Dunn. Oxford University Press, pp. 143-165.

Tutorial 4

Oct. 16 **Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations**

Readings: Wallner, Jennifer. 2020. "Practices of Canadian Federalism." In *Canadian Politics*, 7th ed., edited by James Bickerton and Alain Gagnon. University of Toronto Press, pp. 147-169.
Papillon, Martin. 2020. "The Two Faces of Treaty Federalism." *Canadian Politics*, 7th ed., edited by James Bickerton and Alain Gagnon. University of Toronto Press, pp. 217-234.

Tutorial 5

Oct. 23 **Public Finance**

Reading: Johnson, Ch. 6.
Savoie, Ch. 5.

Tutorial 6

Oct. 30 **Senior Leadership**

Readings: Johnson, pp. 127-138 and Ch. 10 (skim).
Siegel, David. 2010. "The Leadership Role of the Municipal Chief Administrative Officer." *Canadian Public Administration* 53 (2): 139-61.
Savoie, Ch.8.

Savoie Quotes Journal due by 2:30pm

Nov. 6 ***No Class – Fall Reading Week***

Nov. 13 ***Midterm Test***

Nov. 20 **Street-Level Bureaucrats, Representative Bureaucracy, and Employment Equity**

Readings: Johnson, pp. 253-266 and 275-298.
Lipsky, Michael. 1980. *Street Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 3-12. (skim).
Savoie, Ch. 3.

Tutorial 7

Nov. 27 ***Class Event – Coalition for a Better Future's Campus Tour***

Readings: Coalition for a Better Future. 2025. *Off Target: Canada's Uncertain Path to a Better Future*, https://www.canadacoalition.ca/s/Coalition-2025-Scorecard-Report-English_web.pdf.

Tutorial 8

Dec. 4 **Accountability and Service Delivery Alternatives**

Readings: Johnson, pp. 329-345 and 112-124.

Barker, Paul and Tim Mau. 2017. *Public Administration in Canada*, 2nd ed.
Toronto: Nelson, pp. 143-159
Savoie, Chs. 9 and 12.

Tutorial Team Submission due by 4:30pm

***Final Exam* as Scheduled by Registrar**