

Politics, Policy, and Law of Minority Rights

AP/PPAS 3000 3.0

Winter 2023

Course Information

Course Instructor: Stephanie Mackenzie-Smith

E-mail: smacksmi@yorku.ca

Office Hours & Location: Rm. 127
McLaughlin College, Thursdays 1
PM-2 PM

Course Time & Days: R 2:30
PM – 5:30 PM

Class Location: DB1016

Course eClass site:
eclass.yorku.ca/

Land Acknowledgment

York University recognizes that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region ([LA&PS Land Acknowledgement](#)).

[Understanding the Land Acknowledgement](#)

Course Overview

Course Description

Provides students with an overview of the legal and political issues and public policy concerns pertaining to minority rights. Legal definitions of minority and discrimination, as well as how claims are made to counter discrimination in different policy areas, will be critically examined. The minority rights jurisprudence to be covered in this course is comprehensive and policy relevant.

Course Learning Objectives

- Help students understand why minority rights are important to a strong democracy.
- Give students the opportunity to explore real-life examples of how systemic “isms” shape modern-day laws and policies.
- Provide students with an overview of Canada’s anti-discrimination legislation and how it works, or doesn’t work, to protect equity-seeking groups.
- Offer the opportunity for students to learn about the role of bureaucracy and government institutions in protecting and promoting individual rights, as applied to members of racial, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic, or gender and sexual minorities; as well as the collective rights accorded to minority groups.
- Explore the political power of protest as it relates to minority activism and shifts in public policy.
- Give students the theoretical frameworks in the philosophical and legal studies of rights.
- Offer students the opportunity to conduct policy analysis of Canadian public-sector anti-discriminatory legislation at the national, provincial, and local government level (including policing) in Canada.

Course Format and Organization

This is an in-person course that will take place on campus. Due to the sensitivity of the weekly topics and the sharing of lived experiences within the context of the learning outcomes, this class is not recorded or streamed online for remote learning purposes.

Technical Requirements

Several platforms will be used in this course (e.g., eClass, Mentimeter, etc.) through which students will interact with the course materials, the course director, as well as with one another. Again, **this class is 100% in-person**. Zoom may be used to allow guest speakers to remotely join our in-person, on-campus lectures.

Course Communication Plan and Office Hours

- Office Hours are held on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in McLaughlin College Room 127. No appointments are required.
- Outside of office hours, please email your Course Director. Stephanie Mackenzie-Smith checks email every business day and tries to respond to all emails within 24 hours or the next business day if they arrive on Friday afternoons. Email availability on weekends on holidays is variable so please be aware that you may not receive prompt replies on Saturdays and Sundays.

- Students are also encouraged to post questions related to the course materials in the Q&A forum posted to eClass. This allows other students to view the questions and responses.

Course Expectations

As this course deals with sensitive topics, students are expected to be inclusive and respectful at all times. It is important to recognize and acknowledge the lived experiences of all those we share our York community with. In order to further the learning outcomes, students are encouraged to share their lived experiences and it is critical that the privacy of all classmates, instructors and guest speakers be respected. It is also important that students understand that the verbiage used in some of the course texts may be outdated. This will be discussed in the class.

Students are required to do the weekly readings in advance of class and come prepared to the lectures ready and willing to engage with the materials and with their classmates. Lively and inclusive discussions are key to the learning process.

Lectures are not recorded or streamed due to privacy reasons and failing to regularly attend and participate in the lectures will result in lost learning.

Course Evaluation

Assessment	Due Date	Weight %
Book Review Choose one of the four approved books.	February 16	20%
Mid-term exam Online/During Class Time	March 2	20%
Final Project Choice of essay or podcast.	April 13	20%
Participation You must regularly attend in-person classes and meaningfully participate in class discussions and activities.	Throughout term	15%
End of Term Exam	April 6	25%

Online/During Class Time		
		100%

Assessment Descriptions

Book Review (20%)

The purpose of the book review is to take one of the books provided and do two things – summarize the main points of the text and to provide an analysis of the work, considering the role politics and policy play in context of the work. The goal is for students to consider real life events and provide an analysis of how politics and policy played a role in the event or could have resulted in a different outcome. Additional instructions will be posted to eClass. The book review should be 10-12 pages.

Midterm Exam (20%)

You will have 2 hours to answer 10 short-answer questions and one essay question. The questions will be based on the course material to date.

Final Project (20%)

You will be required to either write a position paper of 12-15 pages (topics to be posted to eClass) or you may choose an alternative method of knowledge demonstration, including the production of a podcast or social media series. Should you choose the podcast or social media option, you will be required to submit a short proposal to your Course Director before proceeding. Expectations will be discussed in class and posted to eClass.

Final Exam (25%)

You will have 3 hours to answer a short series multiple choice questions and 3 essay questions. The questions will be based on the course material from the entire term.

Participation (15%)

Participation is not just about attendance. In order to receive full participation marks, you must meaningfully engage with the course material and demonstrate your understanding of the readings and topics being discussed. Participation may be demonstrated in a number of ways as participation looks different for everyone. Please ensure you are connecting with your Course Director to discuss any participation challenges you might have.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments and exams must be submitted via eClass, unless otherwise specified. Academic performance depends on students doing their work both well, and on time. It is the expectation at this level of study that students can manage their time appropriately.

All accommodations, as directed by the Accessibility Office, will be met.

Late Work Policy

Late assignments are penalized at a rate of 10 per cent of the available marks per day (weekends count as one day.) If you have a legitimate reason as to why you can not complete your work on time, you must contact the Course Director as soon as you realize you have a problem. Extensions will only be granted provided there is a legitimate reason, and, in some cases, documentation may be required.

Missed Tests and Exams

Make up tests and exams may only be provided in emergency circumstances (i.e., the immediate illness of yourself or someone you care for, or another serious and unavoidable emergency.) Please note that family vacations do not constitute an emergency. It is critical that you do not book vacations until after your final exam.

Grading

The grading scheme for this course conforms to the 9-point system used in undergraduate programs at York University. For a full description of the York grading system, visit the York University [Academic Calendar](#).

GRADE	GRADE POINT	PERCENT RANGE	DESCRIPTION
A+	9	90-100	Exceptional
A	8	80-89	Excellent
B+	7	75-79	Very Good
B	6	70-74	Good
C+	5	65-69	Competent
C	4	60-64	Fairly Competent
D+	3	55-59	Passing

D	2	50-54	Marginally Passing
E	1	(marginally below 50%)	Marginally Failing
F	0	(below 50%)	Failing

How to Use Citations

Students are expected to use APA 7th Edition to cite and reference all work. Citing and referencing is critical to avoiding academic integrity violations and is good practice as it is required in most policy work environments. Failing to properly cite and reference may result in an academic integrity violation. Please be aware that academic integrity violations, while they may not appear on transcripts, will be made available as part of your academic record in the event an employer or other agency runs a background check on you. Please find below a list of available resources to support research and citation:

- [SPARK Student Papers & Academic Research Kit](#)
- [Chicago Style Overview, YorkU Libraries](#)
- [MLA Style Overview, YorkU Libraries](#)
- [APA Style Overview, YorkU Libraries](#)
- [Drop-in Research Support, YorkU Libraries](#)
- [Writing Centre](#)

Course Schedule: Weekly Readings and Activities

Required Course Materials

Evelyn Kallen, *Ethnicity and Human Rights in Canada*. Third Edition. Oxford University Press, 2010.

- A hard copy and eBook version of the text are available through the York University bookstore.
- The textbook is older and some of the terms contained within it are outdated. We will discuss this in class as part of conversations on education and awareness.

Optional Materials

For the Book Review, students may choose one book from these optional texts:

Cherry, M. (2021). *The Case for Rage: Why Anger Is Essential to Anti-Racist Struggle*. University Press, Incorporated. (Available online through the York University Library)

Criado-Perez, C. (2021). *Invisible women: Data bias in a world designed for men*. Abrams Press.

Ling, J. (2022). *Missing from the village: The story of serial killer Bruce McArthur, the search for justice, and the system that failed Toronto's queer community*. McClelland & Stewart.

Talaga, T. (2017). *Seven fallen feathers: Racism, death, and hard truths in a northern city*. House of Anansi Press Inc. (Available through Kindle, Amazon, etc.)

Course Schedule

Week/Module Dates	Readings and Activities	Assessment Due Dates
<p>Week 1 January 12</p>	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Course outline overview</p> <p>Book review discussion</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Textbook Introduction: Conceptualizing the Human Rights Approach: Guidelines from International Human Rights Instruments</p> <p>Dembour, M.-B. (2010). What Are Human Rights? Four Schools of Thought. <i>Human Rights Quarterly</i>, 32(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.0.0130</p>	

<p>Week 2 January 19</p>	<p>Culture, Identity and Politics</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 1, “Human Unity and Cultural Diversity: The Janus-faced Underpinnings of Ethnicity, Human Rights, and Racism.”</p> <p>Dhamoon, R. (2009). <i>Identity/difference politics: how difference is produced, and why it matters</i>. UBC Press. Chapter 1: The Problem with Culture https://ocul-yor.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_YOR/1jocqcq/alma991028928549705164</p>	
<p>Week 3 January 26</p>	<p>Uncovering Stereotypes and Discrimination</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 2, “The Anatomy of Racism: Key Concepts behind the Invalidation of Racial-Ethnic Differences”</p> <p>Devotta, K., Wilton, R., & Yiannakoulis, N. (2013). Representations of disability in the Canadian news media: A decade of change? <i>Disability and Rehabilitation</i>, 35(22), 1859–1868. https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2012.760658</p>	

<p>Week 4 February 2</p>	<p>Power, -isms and Intersectionality</p> <p>Smith, M. (2018) Diversity in Theory and Practice: Dividends, Downsides, and Dead-Ends. In Brodie, M. J. (2018). Contemporary inequalities and social justice in Canada. University of Toronto Press. https://ocul.yor.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_YOR/j50f41/cdi_gale_infotracmisc_A648963022</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 3, “Social Stratification: Human Rights Violations and the Social Construction of Ethnic and Other Minorities”</p>	
<p>Week 5 February 9</p>	<p>Protest, Policy, and Minority Rights</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 7, “Minority Protest Movements: The Mobilization of Ethnicity in the Pursuit of Protection for Minority Rights”</p> <p>DeGagné, A. (2018). On Anger and Its Uses for Activism. In Brodie, M. J. (2018). Contemporary inequalities and social justice in Canada. University of Toronto Press. https://ocul.yor.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_YOR/j50f41/cdi_gale_infotracmisc_A648963022</p>	

<p>Week 6 February 16</p>	<p>Policing and Minority Rights in Canada</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Saberi, P. (2017). Toronto and the ‘Paris problem’: Community policing in ‘immigrant neighbourhoods.’ <i>Race & Class</i>, 59(2), 49–69. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396817717892</p> <p>Report of the Independent Street Checks Review. (n.d.). Ontario.Ca. Retrieved November 16, 2022, from http://www.ontario.ca/page/report-independent-street-checks-review</p>	<p>Book Review Due</p>
<p>February 23</p>	<p>Winter Reading Week</p>	
<p>Week 7 March 2</p>	<p>Mid-term Exam</p>	
<p>Week 8 March 9</p>	<p>Collective Rights and Multiculturalism Policy in Canada</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 5, “Ethnicity, Ethnocultural Distinctiveness, and Collective Rights Claims”</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 6, “Ethnic Integration and Human Rights: Models and Government Policies of Incorporation of Immigrant and Aboriginal Minorities.”</p>	

<p>Week 9 March 16</p>	<p>Canada’s Settler Colonialism</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (pgs. 37-44) https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wpcontent/uploads/2021/01/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf</p> <p>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Calls to Action https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wpcontent/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf</p> <p>National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Executive Summary of the Final Report: https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2019/06/Executive_Summary.pdf</p>	
<p>Week 10 March 23</p>	<p>Legal Frameworks for the Protection of Minority Rights</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 8, “The Legal Framework for Protection of Minority Rights in Canada: Human Rights Statues”</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 9, “The Legal Framework of Minority Rights in Canada: The Canadian Constitution and Its Charter of Rights and Freedoms”</p>	

Week 11 March 30	Legal Frameworks for the Protection of Minority Rights Cont. Textbook Chapter 9, “The Legal Framework of Minority Rights in Canada: The Canadian Constitution and Its Charter of Rights and Freedoms”	
Week 12 April 6	Final Exam	
April 13	Final Project	Last day for final project submission

Course Policies

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information:

- [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Please also review the following course policies:

Academic Integrity

In this course, we strive to maintain academic honesty to the highest extent possible. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of academic integrity by completing [SPARK’s Academic Integrity module](#) at the beginning of the course. Breaches of academic honesty range from cheating to plagiarism (i.e., the improper crediting of another’s work, the representation of another’s ideas as your own, etc.). All instances of academic dishonesty in this course will be reported to the appropriate University authorities and can be punishable according to the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

Turnitin

To promote academic integrity in this course, students will normally be required to submit their written assignments to Turnitin (via the course’s eClass site) for a review of textual similarities and the detection of possible plagiarism. In so doing, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used only for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin service are

described on the Turnitin.com website. York students may opt out of using Turnitin. If you wish to opt out, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible.

Accessibility

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to achieve excellence, the University recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to perform at their best. The University encourages students with disabilities to register with [Student Accessibility Services](#) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors through their Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Please let your instructor know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. Sufficient notice is needed so that reasonable steps for accommodation can be discussed. Accommodations for tests/exams normally require three (3) weeks (or 21 days) before the scheduled test/exam to arrange.

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate [accommodations to adherents for observances of special significance](#). Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for course examinations, tests, or deadlines conflict with a date of religious significance, please contact the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of class. If the date falls within the formal examination periods, you must complete and submit a [Religious Accommodation for Examination Form](#) at least three (3) weeks before the start of the exam period.

Intellectual Property

Course materials are designed for use as part of this particular course at York University and are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian copyright law. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#), and/or legal consequences for copyright violations.

Student Conduct in the Learning Environment

York University is committed to fostering teaching and learning environments that are free of disruptive and/or harassing behaviour, are physically safe, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy, civility, and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Individuals who fail to adhere to such standards and who violate University or public law may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

For more information, see the policies on [Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations](#), the [Student Conduct and Responsibilities](#), and the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#).

Netiquette for eClass and Online Learning

Students and instructors have a joint responsibility to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Please review and familiarize yourself with behaviours that support “netiquette” in virtual classrooms by consulting the [Guide to Netiquette](#) and [Student Guide to eLearning](#).

Student Notice of Recording for Online Teaching and Learning

Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded may be used and/or made available by the University to students enrolled in the course and those supporting the course for the purpose of materials review, for assessment, etc. Recordings will be managed according to the University's Common Record Schedule and will be securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with York University's [Guidelines on Access of Information and Protection of Privacy](#) and the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). Access to online materials, including recordings or live meetings, is subject to York University's [Senate Policy on Computing and Information Technology Facilities](#).

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University's control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University's knowledge or permission, or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software, or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. In the case of a live stream recording, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality. If you choose to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance to facilitate class participation.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, may not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator, and may not be published, posted, linked to, or otherwise made available online, including on social media feeds, even if those feeds are private.

Health and Safety

All York students and instructors share responsibility for the safety and well-being of the community while on York's campuses. Please continue to check [YUBetter Together](#) for the latest information on health and safety.

Student Support and Resources

To help you succeed academically, York University offers a wide range of resources and services. Everything from writing workshops and peer mentorship to wellness support and career guidance is available to fulfill our LA&PS students' needs. Explore the links below to access these on-campus resources:

- [Academic Advising](#) is available to provide students support and guidance in making academic decisions and goals.

- [Student Accessibility Services](#) are available for support and accessibility accommodation when required.
- [Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing](#) offers workshops, resources, and counselling to support your academic success.
- [Peer-Assisted Study Sessions \(PASS\) Program](#) provides student study sessions for students to collaborate and enhance their understanding of course content in certain courses.
- [Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele \(SNACK\)](#) supports students in courses involving math, stats, and Excel.
- [The Writing Centre](#) provides multiple avenues of writing-based support including drop-in sessions, one-to-one appointments, a Multilingual Studio, and an Accessibility Specialist.
- [ESL Open Learning Centre \(OLC\)](#) supports students with building proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking English.
- [Learning Skills Services](#) provides tips for time management, effective study and learning habits, keeping up with coursework, and other learning-related supports.
- [Learning Commons](#) provides links to supports for time management, writing, study skills, preparing for exams, and other learning-related resources.
- [Roadmap to Student Success](#) provides students with timely and targeted resources to help them achieve academic, personal, and professional success.
- [Office of Student Community Relations \(OSCR\)](#) is responsible for administering the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) and provides critical incident support.
- [goSAFE](#) is staffed by York students and can accompany York community members to and from any on-campus location, such as the Village Shuttle pick-up hub, parking lots, bus stops, or residences.

For a full list of academic, wellness, and campus resources visit [Student Support & Resources](#).