

## **POLI 427/CANS 406: The Politics of Social Policy in Canada (3 credits)**

Winter 2024

### **Instructor**

Daniel Béland, James McGill Professor of Political Science and Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada (MISC)

**Classroom:** Strathcona Anatomy & Dentistry 1/12

**Class hours:** Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:05 to 11:25 am

**Office hours:** Wednesdays from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

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### **Teaching Assistant**

TBA

### **Course Overview**

This course explores the politics of social policy in Canada, with a specific focus on the evolution of different social policy instruments (i.e. programs) over time. More specifically, the course studies the politics of social policy change by comparing/contrasting reform dynamics across specific policy areas such as health care, housing, pensions, family policies, and unemployment benefits. Such a comparative approach draws on the best available scholarship to make the students aware of important similarities and differences across policy areas within the Canadian welfare state. Because of the nature of Canada's political system, special attention is given to federalism and the relationship between Ottawa and the provinces in social policy reform. Overall, the course should 1) provide a broad, theoretically informed overview of the politics of Canadian social policy in comparative perspective and 2) allow students to understand social programs and the factors shaping their evolution over time.

**Textbook** (available at the McGill bookstore or, for the electronic copy, through University of Toronto Press: <https://utorontopress.com/ca/changing-politics-of-canadian-social-policy-second-edition-3>)

Rice, James J. and Michael J. Prince. 2013. *Changing Politics of Canadian Social Policy* (second edition) Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

## **Other Readings**

All the other readings are listed below, and they are available online through the McGill library system, MyCourses, or the URL provided at the end of the reference.

## **Course Requirements**

There are three written assignments: 1) an in-person midterm; 2) a short paper on one of the topics suggested by the instructor (double-spaced; Chicago style with in-text citations and reference list); 3) and an in-person final exam held during McGill's official exam period.

The short paper should be double-spaced and formatted using Chicago Style with in-text citations (author/year system); the strict word counts provided above for the op-ed and the take-home essay exclude the references. *This is an individual assignment and university rules about cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced.*

## **Grade Distribution**

Midterm: 30%

Short Paper: 30%

Final Exam: 40%

## **Extraordinary Circumstances**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

## **Copyright**

All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor's intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor's intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.

## **Language of Submission**

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives. (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

*Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

## **Academic Integrity**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information). *L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity>).*

## **Land Acknowledgement**

McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose presence marks this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

## **Course Schedule and Readings**

### Week 1 (05/01): Introduction

Reading: please read the course available on MyCourses outline before coming to class.

### Week 2 (10/01; 12/01): Capitalism and Welfare Regimes

Readings: Béland and Mahon, 2016: 1-42; Esping-Andersen, 1990: 9-34.

### Week 3 (17/01; 19/01): Historical Legacies

Reading: Rice and Prince, 2013: 1-114.

### Week 4 (24/01; 26/01): Retrenchment and Restructuring

Readings: Rice and Prince, 2013: 115-137; Pierson, 1996; Bashevkin, 2000; Béland, Prince and Weaver, 2021.

### Week 5 (31/01; 02/02): Globalization, Diversity, and Racial Inequality

Guest speaker (02/02): Tari Ajadi

Readings: Rice and Prince, 2013: 138-218; Banting and Thompson, 2021; Ajadi and Thompson, 2021.

### Week 6 (07/02; 09/02): Homeless People and the Housing Crisis

Pre-recorded guest speaker (09/02): Alison Smith

Readings: Smith, 2022; Suttor, 2017, CMHC, 2023 (read the PDF report and watch the 15-minute video); Mishra, 2023; Rajaonson, 2023.

Week 7 (14/02; 16/02): Gender Relations and Civil Society

Reading: Rice and Prince, 2013: 219-320.

Week 8 (21/02; 23/02): Indigenous Peoples, Federalism, and Social Policy

Guest speaker (21/02): Thomasina Phillips

Readings: Papillon, 2019; Banting, 2005; Béland and Weaver, 2019.

Week 9 (28/02; 01/03): Taxation; **in-class midterm on March 1.**

Readings: Tilly 1985; Jacques, 2020

Week 10 (06/03; 08/03): Reading Week (No Lectures)

Week 11 (13/03; 15/03): Employment Insurance and Support for People with Disabilities

Guest Speaker (15/02): Samuel Ragot

Readings: Hale, 1998; Chejfec and Samson. 2022; Prince 2009; Ragot, 2022.

Week 12 (20/03; 22/03): Health Care

Readings: Maioni, 1997; Martin et al., 2018; Hacker, 2004; Bhatia, 2010.

Week 13 (27/03): Federalism and Education Policy

Readings: Vergari, 2010; Wallner and Marchildon, 2019.

Week 14 (03/04; 05/04): From Family Policy to Old-Age Pensions

Mahon with Prince, 2019. Arsenault, Jacques and Maioni, 2018; Mathieu, 2023. Béland and Myles, 2005.

**Short Paper Due on 05/04**

Week 15 (10/04; 12/04;): Social Policy Responses to COVID-19 and Review

Readings: Béland, Dinan, Rocco, and Waddan, 2021; Béland and Marier, 2020; Lightman and Baay, 2021.

The **final exam** will take place during the official exam period (April 15-30): the time, date, and location of the exam will be announced later during semester.

**Mandatory Readings**

Ajadi, Tari and Debra Thompson. 2021. "The Two Pandemics of Anti-Black Racism and COVID-19 are Tied Together," *The Globe and Mail*, May 22. Reading available on MyCourses.

Arsenault, Gabriel, Olivier Jacques, Antonia Maioni. 2018. "What makes Quebec such an outlier in Child Care?" *Policy Options*, April 24. URL: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/april-2018/what-makes-quebec-such-an-outlier-on-child-care/>

Banting, Keith G. 2005. "Canada: Nation-Building in a Federal Welfare State" in Herbert Obinger, Stephan Leibfried and Frank G. Castles (eds.), *Federalism and the Welfare State: New World and European Experiences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 89-137. PDF available on MyCourses.

Banting, Keith and Debra Thompson. 2021. "The Puzzling Persistence of Racial Inequality in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. doi:10.1017/S0008423921000585 Reading available on MyCourses.

Bashevkin, Sylvia. 2000. "Rethinking Retrenchment: North American Social Policy during the Early Clinton and Chrétien Years," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 33(1): 2000: 7-36. PDF available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel, Shannon Dinan, Philip Rocco, and Alex Waddan. 2021. "Social Policy Responses to COVID-19 in Canada and the United States: Explaining Policy Variations Between Two Liberal Welfare State Regimes," *Social Policy & Administration*, 55(2): 280-294. Reading available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel and Rianne Mahon. 2016. *An Advanced Introduction to Social Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 1-42. PDF available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel and Patrik Marier. 2020. "COVID-19 and Long-Term Care Policy for Older People in Canada," *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 32(4-5): 358-364. Reading available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel and John Myles. 2005. "Stasis amidst Change: Canadian Pension Reform in an Age of Retrenchment." In Giuliano Bonoli and Toshimitsu Shinkawa (eds.), *Ageing and Pension Reform around the World*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing: 252-272. PDF available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel, Michael J. Prince, and R Kent Weaver. 2021. "From Retrenchment to Selective Social Policy Expansion: The Politics of Federal Cash Benefits in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming). PDF available on MyCourses.

Béland, Daniel and R. Kent Weaver. 2019. "Federalism and the Politics of the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans," *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 35(1): 25-40. PDF available on MyCourses.

Bhatia, Vandna. 2010. "Social Rights, Civil Rights, and Health Reform in Canada," *Governance*, 23: 37-58. PDF available on MyCourses.

Chejfec, Richardo and Rachel Samson. 2022. *Building a Package of Compromise Solutions for EI Reform*. IRPP Commentary (December). Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy. <https://irpp.org/research-studies/building-a-package-of-compromise-solutions-for-ei-reform/>

CMHC. 2023. *Housing shortages in Canada: Updating how much housing we need by 2030*. Ottawa: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-research/research-reports/accelerate-supply/housing-shortages-canada-updating-how-much-we-need-by-2030>

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: 9-34. Assigned material available on MyCourses.

Hacker, Jacob S. 2004. "Privatizing Risk without Privatizing the Welfare State: The Hidden Politics of Social Policy Retrenchment in the United States," *American Political Science Review* 98(2): 243-60. PDF available on MyCourses.

Hale, Geoffrey E. 1998. "Reforming Employment Insurance: Transcending the Politics of the Status Quo," *Canadian Public Policy*, 24(4): 429-451. PDF available on MyCourses.

Jacques, Olivier. 2020. "Funding the state: Taxation in Canada from a comparative political economy perspective" in Elsbeth Heaman and David Tough (eds.). *Who Pays for Canada?* Montreal-Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press. PDF available on MyCourses.

Lightman, Naomi and Courtney Baay. 2021. "Will COVID-19 finally force us to address the devaluation of long-term care workers?" *Policy Options*, March 18. URL: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/march-2021/will-covid-19-finally-force-us-to-address-the-devaluation-of-long-term-care-workers/>

Mahon, Rianne with Michael Prince. 2019. "From Family Allowances to the Struggle for Universal Childcare in Canada" in Daniel Béland, Gregory P. Marchildon, and Michael Prince (eds.), *Universality and Social Policy in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 83-102. PDF available on MyCourses.

Maioni, Antonia. 1997. "Parting at the Crossroads: The Development of Health Insurance in Canada and the United States, 1940-1965," *Comparative Politics*, 29(4): 411-431. Reading available on MyCourses.

Martin, Danielle, Ashley P Miller, Amélie Quesnel-Vallée, Nadine R Caron, Bilkis Vissandjée, and Gregory P Marchildon. 2018. "Canada's universal health-care system: achieving its potential," *The Lancet*, 391: 1718–1735. URL: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)30181-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)30181-8/fulltext)

Mathieu, Sophie. 2023. *Access to Parental Benefits in Canada*. Vanier Institute of the Family. URL: <https://vanierinstitute.ca/policy-brief-access-to-parental-benefits-in-canada>

Mishra, Ankit. "Four steps to relieving the Canadian housing crisis," *Policy Options*, May 3. URL: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/may-2023/four-steps-housing-crisis/>

Papillon, Martin. 2019. "Segmented Citizenship: Indigenous Peoples and the Limits of Universality" in Daniel Béland, Gregory P. Marchildon, and Michael Prince (eds.). 2019. *Universality and Social Policy in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 137-154. PDF available on MyCourses.

Pierson, Paul. 1996. "The New Politics of the Welfare State," *World Politics*, 48(2): 143-179. PDF available on MyCourses.

Plante, Charles. 2019. "Policy or window dressing? Exploring the impact of poverty reduction strategies on poverty among the Canadian provinces," *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, 35(1): 112-136. PDF available on MyCourses.

Prince, Michael. 2009. *Absent Citizens: Disability Politics and Policy in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Introduction and Chapter 4. PDFs available on MyCourses.

Rajaonson, Juste. 2023. "Why bricks and mortar alone won't solve the housing crisis," *Policy Options*, November 6.  
<https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/november-2023/we-need-to-redefine-the-social-value-of-housing/>

Ragot, Samuel. 2022. *Passing Bill C-22 Promptly: A Priority for Persons With Disabilities or With Mental Health Conditions in Quebec*. Joint submission about Quebec's Bill-C22. PDF available on MyCourses.

Rice, James J. and Michael J. Prince. 2013. *Changing Politics of Canadian Social Policy* (second edition) Toronto: University of Toronto Press. Copies available for purchase at the McGill bookstore.

Smith, Alison. 2022. *Multiple Barriers: The Multilevel Governance of Homelessness in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Chapter 2. PDF available on MyCourses.

Suttor, Greg. 2017. "Lessons from the past on a national housing strategy," *Policy Options*, March 27.  
URL: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/march-2017/lessons-from-the-past-on-a-national-housing-strategy/>

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 169-191. PDF available on MyCourses.

Vergari, Sandra. 2010. "Safeguarding Federalism in Education Policy in Canada and the United States," *Publius*, 40(3): 534-557.

Wallner, Jennifer and Gregory P. Marchildon. “Elementary and Secondary Education: The First Universal Social Program in Canada” in in Daniel Béland, Gregory P. Marchildon, and Michael Prince (eds.). 2019. *Universality and Social Policy in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 63-82. PDF available on MyCourses.