



**Political Science 2101B (670)**  
**INTRODUCTION TO LAW AND PUBLIC POLICY**  
**Summer 2026**

**Instructor:** E. Nicolaidis

**Email:** enicolai@uwo.ca

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### **Course Information**

#### **Calendar Description:**

This course is designed to address a series of overarching questions about law, governance and public policy. Students will learn a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to study law and public policy, with a focus on the application of these debates to contemporary social and political issues.

**Extra Information:** 3 hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** POLISCI

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## King's University College

### POLISCI 2101B: Intro to Law and Public Policy

Summer 2026

#### Course information:

Course Name, Number, Section: POLISCI 2101B, Number 2129, Section 670

Instructor: Eleni Nicolaidis, Ph.D. (she/her)

Contact Information: [enicolai@uwo.ca](mailto:enicolai@uwo.ca)

*Office hours information can be found on OWL Brightspace*

#### Course description:

This course is designed to address a series of overarching questions about law, governance and public policy. Students will learn a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to study law and public policy, with a focus on the application of these debates to contemporary social and political issues.

#### Course learning outcomes:

**By the end of the course, students should be able to:**

1. Describe different types and areas of law
2. Understand key policies and judicial decisions in different areas of law
3. Critically analyze policies, judicial decisions, and scholarly debates
4. Evaluate the policy impacts of judicial decisions and interpretation of the law
5. Conduct research concerning judicial decisions, legislation, legislative debates, and academic literature

#### Mode of Instruction:

- Distance Studies/Online Asynchronous

#### Course textbooks/materials:

- Required Textbook: Neil Boyd, Helene Love, and Tamara O'Doherty, "Canadian Law: An Introduction," 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Emond Publishing, 2024)
- Bookstore link to Textbook: [https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=KC&term=W2025B&courses%5B0%5D=570\\_KC/POL2101B](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=KC&term=W2025B&courses%5B0%5D=570_KC/POL2101B) (\$79.00-\$112.20)
- Additional required readings are indicated below (at no additional cost)

**Methods of evaluation:**

Method	Weight	Due Date
Quizzes	25% (5% x 5 quizzes)	Weekly starting in Week 2, due Fridays at 11:59pm
Case Brief	35%	July 3 at 11:59pm
Research Paper	40%	July 24 at 11:59pm

- **Quizzes:** Quizzes are designed to ensure students understand the unit content. The quizzes will run weekly beginning during the second week of the course, for a total of 5 quizzes. The quizzes will each consist of approximately 10 questions (true or false, multiple choice, multi-select, or matching) and will be based on the lectures. Each quiz will be open from Monday at 9:00am until Friday at 11:59pm. Quizzes will be accessed through the Quizzes function on OWL Brightspace. Time limit: 45 minutes per quiz (plus accessibility accommodations in place)
- **Case Brief:** Students will be expected to write a brief summarizing key parts of a judicial decision and provide a brief analysis of its significance. Students will have a choice of 1 out of 4 cases (in the areas of family law, torts, administrative law, or criminal law). No sources other than the judicial decision should be used in identifying elements of the case, though students may cite outside sources in the summary/analysis section. All direct quotes and paraphrasing from the case should be properly cited. If outside sources are used in the summary/analysis section, they must be properly cited. The case briefs should be approximately 1,250-1,500 words. For further information about this assignment (including the choice of cases, format, what information to include, and the rubric), see Assignments on OWL Brightspace.
- **Research Paper:** Students will be expected to write a research paper on one unit in the course (constitutional law, family law, torts, labour law, administrative law, or criminal law). Students should use at least 5 academic sources (peer-reviewed journal articles or books) to critically analyze the policies and judicial decisions discussed in the unit. All sources should be properly cited. Papers should be approximately 1,500-2,000 words. For further information about this assignment (including the rubric), please see OWL Brightspace.
- **No student collaboration is allowed on evaluations.**
- **Students will be required to submit written assignments through plagiarism-detection software integrated in OWL Brightspace.**

### Academic Considerations:

- The new **Policy on Academic Consideration** may be found here: [https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep\\_24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep_24.pdf)
- **Submission windows: a 72-hour grace period** is available for all methods of evaluation. **Evaluations will not be accepted beyond the submission window.** There are two exceptions: 1) you have emailed the professor to request an extension prior to the due date (reasonable requests will be granted), or 2) you face extenuating circumstances and have submitted a request for academic consideration through the Student Absence Portal, generally with supporting documentation. Requests, either by email or through the Student Absence Portal, must include a clear proposed date for submission so that the professor may accurately assess the request. Please note that due to the flexibility in assessments, academic consideration requests may still be denied when they lack sufficient justification.

### Academic Integrity:

- Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read **Western's Scholastic Discipline Policy**, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)
- **Within this course**, use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT, translation tools, and grammar-checking tools) is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.
- **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>).

**Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>1 (June 15-19)</b>	<b>June 15</b>	6-week second-term courses begin <b>Unit 1 Lecture: Introduction to the Course and to the Law</b> <b>Readings:</b> Textbook, Chapter 1: "The Role of Law" Textbook, Chapter 2: "The Sources of Canadian Law" Textbook, Chapter 3: "How Do Judges Interpret Ambiguous Statutes?"
	<b>June 19</b>	Last day to drop a 6-week second-term course. Courses dropped by this date will not appear on a transcript. Courses dropped after this date will appear on a transcript with a grade of 'WDN' (withdrawn, without academic penalty).
<b>2 (June 22-26)</b>	<b>June 22</b>	<b>Unit 2 Lecture: Constitutional Law</b> Textbook, Chapter 4: "Canada's Constitution" Ian Binnie, "Interpreting the Constitution: The Living Tree vs. Original Meaning," <i>Policy Options</i> , October 2007, <a href="https://policyoptions.irpp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/assets/po/free-trade-20/binnie.pdf">https://policyoptions.irpp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/assets/po/free-trade-20/binnie.pdf</a> Leonid Sirota and Benjamin Oliphant, "Originalist reasoning in Canadian constitutional jurisprudence," <i>University of British Columbia Law Review</i> 50, no. 2 (2017): 505-576.
	<b>June 26</b>	<b>Unit quiz due at 11:59pm</b>

Week	Date	Event
3 (June 29-July 3)	June 29	<p><b>Unit 3 Lecture: Family Law</b> Textbook, Chapter 8, "The Changing Family and Family Law" Grace Shin, "Departing from the 'Natural Parent Presumption' in <i>BJT v JD</i>," theCourt.ca, January 18, 2022, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/departing-from-the-natural-parent-presumption-in-bjt-v-jd/">http://www.thecourt.ca/departing-from-the-natural-parent-presumption-in-bjt-v-jd/</a> Kai Tanveer, "<i>F v N</i>: 'Best Interests of the Child' in Parental Abduction cases," theCourt.ca, February 6, 2023, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/f-v-n-best-interests-of-the-child-in-parental-abduction-cases/">http://www.thecourt.ca/f-v-n-best-interests-of-the-child-in-parental-abduction-cases/</a></p>
	July 3	<p><b>Unit quiz due at 11:59pm</b> <b>Case Brief due at 11:59pm</b></p>
4 (July 6-10)	July 6	<p><b>Unit 4 Lecture: Torts and Labour Law</b> <b>Readings:</b> Textbook, Chapter 7, "Torts of Intention and Negligence" West Coast LEAF, "Hansman v Neufeld [2022]," June 24, 2022, <a href="https://westcoastleaf.org/work/hansman-v-neufeld-2022/">https://westcoastleaf.org/work/hansman-v-neufeld-2022/</a> Mary Thibodeau, "Solidarity Forever! A Right to Strike is Recognized in Saskatchewan Federation of Labour v Saskatchewan," theCourt.ca, February 4, 2015, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/solidarity-forever-a-right-to-strike-is-recognized-in-saskatchewan-federation-of-labour-v-saskatchewan/">http://www.thecourt.ca/solidarity-forever-a-right-to-strike-is-recognized-in-saskatchewan-federation-of-labour-v-saskatchewan/</a></p>
	July 10	<p><b>Unit quiz due at 11:59pm</b></p>
5 (July 13-17)	July 13	<p><b>Unit 5 Lecture: Administrative Law</b> Textbook, Chapter 9, "Administrative Law" Rebecca Rossi, "<i>Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration) v Vavilov</i>: The Supreme Court of Canada Gifts Administrative Law a New Standard of Review Analysis," theCourt.ca, December 26, 2019, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/canada-minister-of-citizenship-and-immigration-v-vavilov-the-supreme-court-of-canada-gifts-administrative-law-a-new-standard-of-review/">http://www.thecourt.ca/canada-minister-of-citizenship-and-immigration-v-vavilov-the-supreme-court-of-canada-gifts-administrative-law-a-new-standard-of-review/</a></p>
	July 17	<p><b>Unit quiz due at 11:59pm</b></p>

Week	Date	Event
6 (July 20-24)	July 20	<p>Last day to withdraw from a 6-week second-term course resulting in a grade of 'WDN' (withdrawn, without academic penalty). Course withdrawals after this date will appear on a transcript with a grade of 'F'</p> <p><b>Unit 6 Lecture: Criminal Law</b></p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  Textbook, Chapter 10, "Criminal Law"  Shirin Monga, "<i>R v Hilbach</i>: SCC Holds Mandatory Minimum Sentence for Firearm Offence is Constitutional," theCourt.ca, February 22, 2023, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/r-v-hilbach-scc-holds-mandatory-minimum-sentence-for-firearm-offence-is-constitutional/">http://www.thecourt.ca/r-v-hilbach-scc-holds-mandatory-minimum-sentence-for-firearm-offence-is-constitutional/</a>  Kai Tanveer, "<i>R v Metzger</i>: The Supreme Court of Canada overrules the Trial Judge on Findings of Fact," theCourt.ca, April 3, 2023, <a href="http://www.thecourt.ca/in-r-v-metzger-the-supreme-court-overruled-a-trial-judges-findings-of-fact-and-refused-to-hold-the-accused-silence-against-them/">http://www.thecourt.ca/in-r-v-metzger-the-supreme-court-overruled-a-trial-judges-findings-of-fact-and-refused-to-hold-the-accused-silence-against-them/</a></p>
	July 24	<p>6-week second-term courses end</p> <p><b>Unit quiz due at 11:59pm</b></p> <p><b>Research Paper due at 11:59pm</b></p>

# King's University College

## General Course Policies

### 2025-2026

#### **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

##### **Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

##### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

##### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details [https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/exams/index.html](https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html).

Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

## **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

## **GBSV Support:**

King's 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://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### **3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

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; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate

cheating.

## **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.