Course Objectives and Description

Intergovernmental relations affect all areas of policy in Canada. As a result, it is critical for responsible public servants to have a good understanding of how this field of policy operates. This course will enter the debate on Canadian intergovernmental relations and federalism by addressing key questions on the current practices, strategies and animating ideas of policymaking in Canada. These questions include: Are the current processes and structures for negotiating policies legitimate? By what standards? Do our institutions work effectively? What functions do they perform? How are they changing? What is the role of effective intergovernmental advisors and negotiators in policymaking? The answers will be found through hands-on application of knowledge to current issues.

The course has four main objectives. First, it is designed to provide students with practical insight into the operation of intergovernmental relations by involving them in actual exercises in intergovernmental negotiations. Second, it is intended to provide students with a solid understanding of Canadian federalism and the challenges facing our intergovernmental structures of government in contrast with other countries. Third, the course is intended to provide students with an opportunity to explore in greater depth two aspects of intergovernmental public policy-making by working directly with two government departments. Fourth, the course is intended to develop individual and collective research, negotiation and communication skills that will serve students well in their careers. In achieving these objectives, the course builds on the MPA program goals...
of strengthening strategic thinking, enhancing analytical skills and the application of knowledge to situations, honing interpersonal engagement and communication skills, and building professional, collaborative and leadership skills.

**Course Information**

Classes with operate in two parts. One part will consist of student-centred discussions of readings in which the instructor will act as a facilitator and contributor. The second part of classes will give students an opportunity to explore aspects of intergovernmental affairs by building and applying their knowledge in practice. For this part of the course, students will work as a team on a policy issue currently facing government departments. This part of the work will involve presenting before current practitioners.

Negotiations with the federal government and a provincial government are currently in process for the two intergovernmental case experiences. Two classes will also feature practitioner experts on intergovernmental relations and negotiating strategies.

**Course Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Precis work (preparation for discussion)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefing Notes (2x15)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (oral and powerpoint 2x15)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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**THE DISCUSSION PORTION OF THE COURSE**

The course will utilize a variation of the University of Chicago Learning through Discussion format to maximize student benefits from discussion and participation. Each week, discussions will proceed in five steps: 1. Key terms and concepts; 2. Main theme of reading(s); 3. Critical ideas from each reading; 4. Comparative Ideas; 5. Evaluation. As part of this exercise, students will be asked prepare 1 page précis for class and to submit 3 samples of their précis work.

These written assignments are intended to show that the student has made a serious effort to understand the material and to raise challenging ideas or questions that will inspire group learning. They are not graded for factual or analytical accuracy since they are a learning tool. Satisfactory assignments will receive a (v). The students will submit 3 of the précis for grading purposes. If all 3 are submitted by the end of the class for which they are prepared the student will receive the full 10 marks. No late précis will be accepted given that it is intended as part of the preparation for class learning.

The mark for seminar participation will be based upon quality of comments or questions, attendance, evidence of preparation, willingness to challenge accepted ideas, concern for
the views expressed by others, solicitation of other people’s ideas, ability to respond creatively to criticism, and helpful suggestions for each other’s work. The final grade for participation will be based on a combination of self and instructor assessment. If you are unable to attend a class, please let the instructor know in advance.

The combined written and discussion format are used for four reasons. First, this seminar method facilitates the synthesis and analysis of large amounts of material and thus provides the basis for more rigorous debate. Second, it develops critical writing and analytical skills useful for future study or work, especially briefing notes in the public service. Third, it promotes longer term memory of the material. Fourth, it gives the students credit for preparation.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS & POLICY PORTION OF CLASS

This component of the course will focus on applying the theoretical learning in practice. Students will function in teams to advise a current government department on a policy issue provided by the officials.

This portion of the course will operate in four sections:

1. **Understanding the world of intergovernmental negotiations and policy.**
   Possible guest speaker in the second week of classes. In the final week of classes, students will reflect on what they have learned and lessons going forward.

2. **Understanding intergovernmental negotiation strategy**
   Guest speaker in the third week of classes who will discuss intergovernmental negotiation strategy. The professor will also conduct a short exercise to help students apply the strategic knowledge.

3. **Two cycles of negotiations**
   Students will work on two issues for each 3-week cycle. Cycle 1: January 29–February 26. Cycle 2: March 4 – March 25. In the first class of each cycle, students will receive the topics and divide up the work among team members. In the second class, students will begin compiling the work. In the third week, students will prepare the briefing note and powerpoint presentation for submission a few days before the presentation. In the fourth week, the students will present their briefing note to the professor and government/political officials.

The style of briefing notes and presentations for the two government departments will depend on the purpose of the communication. However, they may include the following sections: Purpose/Issues Section; Background; Current Situation; Key Considerations (SWOT/PESTLE Analysis); Options/Approach; Conclusions/Recommendations/Next Steps. The Briefing Notes should not exceed 8 pages (2,000 words) excluding the list of references at the end. For BN formats & tips, see: [www.writingforresults.net/classic.pdf](http://www.writingforresults.net/classic.pdf) & [www.publicsectorwriting.com](http://www.publicsectorwriting.com). On presentation day, students will be given 15 minutes to present with 5/15 minutes for questions and discussion of the topic.
TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week I: Introduction: IGP in Action	January 8
Course format and requirements will be explained. Students and the professor will agree on the grading scheme and workload.

A discussion of the division of powers in Canada followed by small group discussions of a key intergovernmental issue will ensue. Students will form working teams (approx. 4-6 people) for the course.

READINGS: TBA

Week II: Importance of Intergovernmental Relations	January 15
Guest Speaker on the importance of intergovernmental relations in government policy-making.

READINGS: TBA

Week III: Negotiating in the Intergovernmental Arena	January 22
Guest Speaker on intergovernmental negotiating strategies.

READINGS: TBA

Week IV: Fiscal Relations & Federalism	January 29
READINGS: TBA

Intergovernmental Negotiations: Cycle 1, Class 1
Students will receive an introductory orientation by government officials to the first topic on which they will be presenting a briefing note.

Week V: Courts and Federalism	February 5
READINGS: TBA

Intergovernmental Negotiations: Cycle 1, Class 2
Students will use this class to advance their research on the briefing note.
Week VI: Ideas & Realities in Negotiations February 12
READINGS: TBA

*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 1, Class 3*

Students will finalise the briefing note for presentation to MP Nater and will work on their powerpoint version of the written briefing note.

**Reading Week – No class** February 19

Week VII: An Accommodating Federation February 26
Class is devoted to presentations.

*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 1, Class 4*

Students will present their briefing notes and answer questions (10-15 minutes total for each presentation, depending on the number of groups). Government officials will attend either in person or by skype. At the end of the presentations, students will receive oral feedback on their work if time permits.

Week VIII: Accommodating Difference in the Federation March 4
READINGS: TBA

*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 2, Class 1*

Students will receive an introductory orientation by government officials to the first topic on which they will be presenting a briefing note.

Week IX: Federalism & Reconciliation? March 11
READINGS: TBA

*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 2, Class 2*

Students will use this class to advance their research on the briefing notes.

Week X: A Changing Federation and Accommodation March 18
READINGS: TBA
*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 2, Class 3*

Students will finalise the briefing note for presentation to governmental officials and will work on their PowerPoint version of the written briefing note.

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**Week XI: Governance I**  
**March 25**

**READINGS: TBA**

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*Intergovernmental Negotiations Cycle 2, Class 4*

Students will present their briefing notes and answer questions (10-15 minutes total for each presentation, depending on the number of groups). Governmental officials will attend either in person or by Skype. At the end of the presentations, students will receive oral feedback on their work.

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**Week XII: A Reflection Back on Intergovernmental Policy**  
**April 2**

A guest speaker from either the west or Ontario will reflect on the need for reform in the federation.

Students will reflect on lessons learned from the cycles and readings.

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