

# POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT SPRING 2026

## PLSC 406 | CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

**Historically, Canada and the United States have been key allies and trade and defense partners. In 2026, the US-Canada relationship is being strained by trade wars, tariffs, border tensions, and differences in foreign policy. The relationship is more frayed than at any time since the War of 1812.**

**This course will offer timely insights into Canadian politics and US-Canada relations past, present and future.**

### Course Description

This class is an introduction to Canadian politics and the Canadian political system. Why should American students study Canada? First, Canada is the United States' closest neighbor and historically largest trading partner. What happens in Canada has an impact on the U.S., especially locally. Second, despite many similarities and shared qualities as industrialized, settler North American states, Canada has important differences with the U.S. in both political culture and institutional structure that have led to differences in economic and social policies. Understanding these differences provides a better understanding of the unique aspects of the U.S. system. Third, Canada has faced some interesting challenges – discussions of major changes to the constitution and the threat of separatism – that the U.S. has not faced since the Civil War era. In a broader comparative politics context, Canada also provides a good comparison with other federal states.

**TR 12-1:50 also offered as C/AM 406**



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