

# GRADLIS 9316 Government Information

## Summer 2020

### ***Instructor***

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### ***Course Description***

This course covers the nature, extent, variety and value of government information sources and services. Issues in the management of government information products are examined. The focus is on official information sources of Canada, the United Kingdom, United States and Intergovernmental Organizations, such as the United Nations.

*Prerequisites:* GRADLIS 9003

*Program Content Area:* Connecting People with Information

### ***Course Site***

### ***Course Objectives***

1. To promote an awareness of the nature, extent, variety and value of government information and methods of handling government information products.
2. To develop an understanding of the complexities of organization and function of governmental bodies.
3. To provide guidelines for identification, selection, acquisition, organization and use of government information in libraries and information centres.

### ***Relationship to the Goals and Objectives of the MLIS Program***

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. demonstrate an awareness of professional values and standards regarding government information access and provision (from Goal 2, Obj. 1);
2. respond to fast changing developments in government information access in a spirit of intellectual inquiry based on sound analysis of reliable data (from Goal 2, Obj. 2, 3);
3. apply basic principles and techniques of research in problem-solving using government information (from Goal 2, Obj. 4);
4. analyze government information access problems in a spirit of creativity and critical inquiry (from Goal 2, Obj. 5);
5. identify, select, acquire, organize, describe and provide access to recorded government information in a variety of formats (from Goal 2 Obj. 3,4);
6. identify the needs of users of government publications and information and develop collections and services to meet these needs (from Goal 2, Obj. 5);
7. employ appropriate technologies in accessing government information (from Goal 2, Obj. 4);
8. communicate and work cooperatively and efficiently with others in providing government information services and responding to inquiries (from Goal 2, Obj. 5).

### ***Topics Covered***

- Structure and Organization of the Government of Canada
- Government Information Dissemination Policies. Bibliographic Control and Distribution of Canadian Federal Government Publications. Key general reference tools and web sites
- Parliamentary Papers: Journals; Debates; Reports and Proceedings of Committees; Sessional Papers; Bills; Parliamentary Procedure; Passage of Legislation
- Laws and Regulations
- Royal Commissions; White Papers and Green Papers
- Provincial and Local Government Information
- Statistics
- Foreign National Governments (US and historical UK focus)
- International Governmental Organizations (IGOs): UN System, OECD, Bretton Woods Institutions, EU
- Issues in service delivery; Collection management; Professional development

### ***Required Texts***

There are no assigned textbooks. Background reading and reference resource lists will be distributed throughout the term.

### ***Course Delivery***

This is an online course and OWL will be used as the means of course delivery. The instructor is not resident on campus but is happy to set up “meeting times” for consultations via Skype or telephone. For those students in Toronto, the instructor will be able to meet face to face pending uplifting of the COVID-19 restrictions.

A week will run from Monday to Sunday. A series of self-contained modules and supplementary material will be provided to the class by Monday 9AM at the latest. Assignments are deemed to be due at the end of the week and should be submitted by Sunday at 11:55PM.

For each module, there will be a recorded lectures (.mov) and two supporting documents (.pdf); slides used in the recordings and lecture notes. The instructor recommends that students work through the modules in the order in which they are presented.

Handouts will be supplied as necessary. They will consist of additional readings and lists of resources used in government information work. As this is an online course, required readings and resources will be made available in a digital format. Print materials remain important, however, and students are encouraged to investigate items listed on the handouts when they are able to do so.

## **Assignments and Weighting**

1. *Bill Tracing Assignment (20%)*. Students will be assigned a Canadian (Federal) Bill and will be required to trace its passage by both chambers of Parliament. *Due:* Sunday June 14th, 2020, 11:55PM
2. *Statute and Regulation Updating Assignment (20%)*. Students will be assigned a (Canadian) Federal Law and will be required to update it to the present (factoring in amendments passed but not yet in force and Bills under consideration that may amend the Law). They will then do the same for an assigned Regulation made under that Law. *Due:* Sunday July 5th, 2020, 11:55PM
3. *Current Issue Report/Research Guide (30%)*. Two options:
  - Students will select a topic and prepare a brief (5 pages) overview with a list of resources and suggested readings. The report will take the form of a policy briefing designed to bring a non-academic audience (MPs, lobbyists, etc.) up to speed on a topic.
  - Students will select a topic or resource of interest to a pre-determined demographic (university students, lawyers, high school students, investors, association directors, etc.) and will prepare a guide to government resources likely to be of use.*Due:* Sunday August 9th, 2020, 11:55PM
4. *Reference Questions (20%)*. Students will be given three sets of reference questions and will be required to provide answers to them. Marks will be assigned based on the accuracy of the answers and the quality of sources used.
  - Reference Question Assignment 1 *Due:* Sunday May 31st, 2020, 11:55PM
  - Reference Question Assignment 2 *Due:* Sunday July 19th, 2020, 11:55PM
  - Reference Question Assignment 3 *Due:* Sunday August, 2nd, 2020, 11:55PM
5. *Participation and Discussion (10%)*. Students will be expected to participate on an ongoing basis. They are to engage the material and to interact with their classmates and the instructor via a discussion board set up in OWL. Formal discussion topics will be suggested by the instructor from time to time but students are encouraged to bring up anything relevant for discussion and may draw upon course material and stories in the media.

*Statement on Academic Offences:* Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

*Support Services:* Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

## Class Outline

### **Week 1: Course Introduction, Structure and Organization of the Government of Canada (May 4)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Forsey, Eugene. *How Canadians Govern Themselves*. 9th ed. Available at: [http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/senatoreugeneforsey/book/assets/pdf/How\\_Canadians\\_Govern\\_Themselves9.pdf](http://www.lop.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/senatoreugeneforsey/book/assets/pdf/How_Canadians_Govern_Themselves9.pdf)
- Severson, Andrea L. "How to Think Like a Government Documents Librarian." In *Fundamentals of Government Information: Mining, Evaluating and Using Government Resources*. 2nd ed. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2011, 25-47. (Available in OWL)

### **Week 2: Bibliographic Control of Canadian Government Publications, Basic Reference Tools (May 11)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Bishop, Olga B. "Official Publications: Classifications and Indexes." In *Canadian Official Publications*, Ch. 3: 57-71, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981. (Available in OWL)
- Canadian Government Information Digital Preservation Network. *Report on Fugitive Canadian Government Information*. February, 2015. (Available in OWL)
- Wakaruk, Amanda. "What the Heck Is Happening Up North?" *Dttp: A Quarterly Journal Of Government Information Practice & Perspective*, 42:1 (2014): 15-20. (Available in OWL)
- Reference Question Assignment 1 distributed
- Bill Tracing Assignment distributed
- Current Issue Report/Research Guide Assignment distributed

### **Week 3: The Canadian Parliament: Organization and Procedure (May 18)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Barnes, Andre and Laurel Brosseau. *Transition to the 43rd Parliament: Questions and Answers*. Publication No. 2019-30-E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, Oct. 22, 2019. Available at: <https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/BackgroundPapers/PDF/2019-30-e.pdf>
- Barnes, Andre and Erin Virgint. *The Legislative Process from Government Policy to Proclamation*. Publication No. 2019-31-E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, October 1st, 2019. Available at: <https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/InBriefs/PDF/2019-31-e.pdf>
- "Daily Order of Business." Available at: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Schedules/DailyOrderOfBusiness-e.html>

### **Week 4: The Canadian Parliament: Publications and Sources of Information (May 25)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- O'Brien, Audrey and Marc Bosc, eds. "The Parliamentary Record." In *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, Second Edition, Ch. 24. Ottawa: House of Commons, 2009. Available at: <http://www.ourcommons.ca/procedure-book-livre/>
- "Documents, Journals and Broadcasting." In *Companion to the Rules of the Senate*, Second Edition, Ch. 4 Ottawa: The Senate of Canada, 2013. Available at: <https://>

[sencanada.ca/en/about/procedural-references/companion-to-the-rules-of-the-senate/](http://sencanada.ca/en/about/procedural-references/companion-to-the-rules-of-the-senate/)

- "Parliamentary Publications." Available at: [http://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Compendium/ParliamentaryPublications/c\\_g\\_parliamentarypublications-e.htm](http://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Compendium/ParliamentaryPublications/c_g_parliamentarypublications-e.htm)
- Reference Question 1 Assignment Due (May 31st, end of week 4)

### **Week 5: Passage of Legislation (June 1)**

*Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Bedard, Michel. *Coming into Force of Federal Legislation*. Publication No. 2009-03-E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, May 15, 2009, rev. May 30, 2012. Available at: <https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/InBriefs/PDF/2009-03-e.pdf>
- "Legislative Process." Available at: [https://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Compendium/LegislativeProcess/c\\_g\\_legislativeprocess-e.htm](https://www.ourcommons.ca/About/Compendium/LegislativeProcess/c_g_legislativeprocess-e.htm)
- Reference Question 2 Assignment Distributed

### **Week 6: Statutes and Regulations I: Statutes (June 8)**

*Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- "The Parliamentary Process." In *Guide to Making Federal Acts and Regulations*. 2nd ed., pp. 145-165, Ottawa: Privy Council of Canada and Dept. of Justice Canada, 2001. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/publications/guide-making-federal-acts-regulations.html>
- "Making Regulations." In *Guide to Making Federal Acts and Regulations*. 2nd ed., pp. 173-188, Ottawa: Privy Council of Canada and Dept. of Justice Canada, 2001. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/publications/guide-making-federal-acts-regulations.html>
- Smith, Alex. *The Parliamentary Financial Cycle*. LoP Publication 2015-41-E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, October 22nd, 2019 (rev. ed.). Available at: <https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/BackgroundPapers/PDF/2015-41-e.pdf>
- Treasury Board Secretariat. Cabinet Directive on Regulations: Policies, guidance and tools. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/federal-regulatory-management/guidelines-tools.html>
- *Guide to the Federal Regulatory Development Process*. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/federal-regulatory-management/guidelines-tools/guide-federal-regulatory-development-process.html>
- Bill Tracing Assignment Due (June 14th, end of Week 6)
- Statute and Regulation Updating Assignment Distributed

### **Week 7: Statutes and Regulations II: Regulations, Royal Commissions, Green and White Papers, Provincial Government Information (June 15)**

*Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Privy Council Office. *Commissions of Inquiry* (April 23, 2014). Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/commissions-inquiry.html>
- Smith, Alex. *The Parliamentary Financial Cycle*. LoP Publication 2015-41-E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, October 22nd, 2019 (rev. ed.). Available at: <https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/BackgroundPapers/PDF/2015-41-e.pdf>

### **Week 8: Canadian Statistics (June 22)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Statistics Canada. *Departmental Plan, 2020-2021* (March 10, 2020). Available at: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/about/dp/2020-2021/index>
- Statistics Canada. *Departmental Results Report, 2018-2019*. (February 26, 2020). Available at: <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/about/drr/2018-2019/index>

### **Reading Week (June 29-July 5)**

- Statute and Regulation Updating Assignment Distributed (July 5th, *end* of Reading Week)

### **Week 9: Introduction to IGOs. The United Nations (July 6)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- United Nations. Dag Hammarskjold Library. *Research Guides: UN Documentation: General*. Available at: <http://research.un.org/en/docs>
- United Nations. Dag Hammarskjold Library. *Research Guides*. Available at: <http://research.un.org/en> [From the main page, Select UN Documents then the guides to General Assembly, Security Council, ECOSOC, the Secretariat, and others according to your needs and interests]
- Church, James and Mike McCaffrey. "International Organizations: Available Information and Documentation." In *Routledge Handbook of International Organizations*, edited by Bob Reinalda. Abingdon: Routledge, 2013, 27-40. (Available in OWL)

### **Week 10: Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank, IMF, GATT/ITO/WTO), OECD, EU (July 13)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Hainsworth, Susan and Charles Eckman. "The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the World Trade Organization." In *International Information*. 2nd ed., vol II, Edited by Peter I. Hajnal. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, 2001: 91-107. (Available in OWL)
- International Monetary Fund. *The IMF at a Glance*. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/IMF-at-a-Glance>
- World Bank Group. *About the World Bank*. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about>
- Ross, Donald F. "The International Monetary Fund: Operational and Research Documentation." In *International Information*. 2nd ed., vol II Edited by Peter I. Hajnal. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, 2001: 44-71. (Available in OWL)
- Cardiff University European Documentation Centre. *ESO: European Sources Online*. Available at: <https://www.europeansources.info/>
- Reference Questions 2 due (July 19th, *end* of week 10)
- Reference Questions 3 distributed

### **Week 11: US, UK, Other Foreign National Governments (July 20)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Forte, Erik, Cassandra Hartnett, and Andrea L. Severson, "Introduction: The People's Information. In *Fundamentals of Government Information: Mining, Finding, Evaluating, and Using Government Resources*. 2nd. ed., Ch. 1: 3-24. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2016. (1st edition version in OWL)

- Ginsberg, Wendy and Michael Greene. *Access to Government Information in the United States: A Primer*. CRS Report 97-71. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, March 18, 2016. Available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/secretcy/97-71.pdf>
- Hartnett, Cassandra. "Congressional Publications." In *Fundamentals of Government Information*. 2nd ed., by Cassandra J. Hartnett, Andrea L. Sevetson, and Eric J. Forte, Ch. 3: 49-75. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman, 2016. (1st edition version in OWL)
- Hartnett, Cassandra. "Regulations." In *Fundamentals of Government Information*. 2nd ed., by Cassandra J. Hartnett, Andrea L. Sevetson, and Eric J. Forte, Ch. 6: 101-121. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman, 2016. (1st edition version in OWL)
- Jarrett, Peggy Roebuck. "Public Laws and the US Code." In *Fundamentals of Government Information*. 2nd ed., by Cassandra J. Hartnett, Andrea L. Sevetson, and Eric J. Forte, Ch. 5: 83-99. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman, 2016. (1st edition version in OWL)
- McKinney, Richard J. *An Overview of the US Congressional Serial Set*. Washington, DC: LLDC, 2006. Available at: <http://www.llsdc.org/assets/sourcebook/serial-set.pdf>
- Rodgers, Frank. "The Evolution of Official Publishing" and "General Catalogues and Indexes." In *A Guide to British Government Publications*, Ch 4: 40-54 and Ch 5: 55-66. New York, HW Wilson, 1980. (Available in OWL)
- Whisner, Mary. "The United States Code, Prima Facie Evidence and Positive Law." *Law Library Journal* 101:4 (Fall 2009): 545-556.
- Current Issue Report Due

### **Week 12: Foreign and International Statistics (July 27)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Mikolich, Don. *Economic Indicators: Where to Look: A Guide to North American Economic Releases*. 3rd edition. Toronto: CIBC World Markets, 2006. (Available in OWL)
- United Nations. General Assembly, Resolution 68/261 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. A/RES/68/261 New York: UN, 29 January 2014. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/gp/fundprinciples.aspx>
- United Nations. Statistical Commission. Report on the 50th Session. ECOR 2019 Suppl. 4. New York: UN, 2019. E/2019/24 and E/CN.3/2019/34. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/50th-session/documents/Report-on-the-50th-session-of-the-statistical-commission-E.pdf>
- United States. Executive Office of the President. Office of Management and Budget. *Statistical Programs of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2017*. Washington: OMB, January 10, 2017. Available at: [https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/information\\_and\\_regulatory\\_affairs/statistical-programs-2017.pdf](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/information_and_regulatory_affairs/statistical-programs-2017.pdf)
- United States. Executive Office of the President. Office of Management and Budget. *Statistical Programs of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2018*. Washington: OMB, 2018. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/statistical-programs-2018.pdf>
- Reference Questions 3 due (August 2nd, end of Week 12)

### **Week 13: Government Information Policy, Professional Development (Aug. 3)**

#### *Required Resources/Readings and Assignments:*

- Campbell, Graeme, Michelle Lake, and Catherine McGoveran. "Government Publication Depository Programs: The Canadian Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Landscapes." In *Government Information in Canada: Access and Stewardship*. Amanda Wakaruk and Sam-chin Li, eds. Edmonton, Univ. of Alberta Press, 2019, 3-46. Available at: <https://www.uap.ualberta.ca/titles/923-9781772124064-government-information-in-canada>
- Paterson, Susan, Nicholas Worby, and Darlene Fichter. "Web Harvesting and Reporting Fugitive Government Materials: Collaborative Stewardship of At-Risk Publications." In *Government Information in Canada: Access and Stewardship*. Amanda Wakaruk and Sam-chin Li, eds. Edmonton, Univ. of Alberta Press, 2019, 295-324. Available at: <https://www.uap.ualberta.ca/titles/923-9781772124064-government-information-in-canada>
- Schaaf, Robert W. "International Organizations Documentation: Serving Research Needs of the Legal Community." *Government Publications Review* 13:1 (Jan-Feb. 1986): 123-133. (Available in OWL)
- Severson, Andrea L. "How to Think Like a Government Documents Librarian." In *Fundamentals of Government Information: Mining, Evaluating and Using Government Resources*. 2nd 3d. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2011, 25-47. (Available in OWL)
- Wakaruk, Amanda. "What the Heck Is Happening Up North?" *Dttp: A Quarterly Journal Of Government Information Practice & Perspective*, 42:1 (2014): 15-20. (Available in OWL)
- Current Issue Report/Reference Guide due (August 9th, end of Week 13)