

PSCI 100, Fall 2015. Final mark: 83%. Easiness: 8/10. Interest: 7/10.

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Parliamentary Systems

- It used to be **that kings would rule, but barons wanted to be advisors.**
- Representatives (historically barons) would come together and discuss what was needed.
- Components of the Canadian constitutional monarchy: **the crown, the house of common, the senate, the cabin**
- The crown: **the formal executive.** Consists of the queen of England (head of state), represented by the **governor general. All constitutional power flows through the crown.**
- **The crown in Canada: Crown Corporation (CBC, VIA rail), crown lands. Crown attorney, court cases are R v. whatever.**
- **The crown has lots of ceremonial power:** appoints senators, judges, members of cabinet, gives assent to legislation, summons parliament, suspends parliament. Dissolves parliament, dismisses governments. **(this power is ceremonial, it is rarely used).**

House of commons (**lower house**) - parliament

- 338 seats in the house of commons – any citizen can run to be a member of parliament.
- People represent their ridings, and are called **MP'S**
- They also have the role of **scrutiny**-they have question period where there interrogate government
- **Legislation**-they revise and come up with bills and make recommendation based on bills. They can **pass legislation.**
- **Mp's** hold the **government responsible.**

Upper house (**senate**) – also a part of **parliaments.**

- **Senators are more independent,** as they don't need to remain within a party and are appointed for life.
- **Many senators** feel obligated to not defeat a bill, as they are appointed and would feel as though they are against democracy.

Political executive

- **Includes the prime minister and cabinet.**
- **The** actual executive body of the government – prime minister appoints this cabinet
- **Firstly, you** must be a member of the house of commons.
- Generally, the prime minister picks members of **his party.**
- The executive is pretty much **“the government”.**
- **The executive** then advise the gg on when to use his constitutional powers

- **Executive** makes decisions on how to spend. Most proposals come from the cabinet, **cabinet must also supervise administration of laws** each member has a special designation (defence, transportation, health, economy).
- **There are 4 separate departments to support the cabinet (100s of people) .. 1. Dept of finance 2. Treasury board 3. Prime ministers office** (staff provide political support to prime minister). **4. Privy council office.** (non partisan supporting agency)

Responsible government and party loyalty

- In order to keep responsible government, it requires that **mp's** of the same party stick together, also known as **party discipline**.
- If the governing party's backbenchers voted against their own government bills, confidence would be lost
- **Confidence bills – if parties do not support this bill, government is instantly lost.** This comes from custom. Examples: **speech from the throne (total agenda).** Any **bill that spends money is a confidence bill (only cabinet can do anything with money).**
- Not all legislative pieces are considered matters of confidence.
- Major criticism – **Canadas gives the prime minister too much power.** Might even be a **“prime ministerial government”**.
- **Possible reforms** – elect committee chairs by secret ballot –
- Reform act- MP'S can trigger a leadership review, mp's have power to expel and reinstate colleagues. MP's will choose their own chairperson.

Presidential system

- Very different from parliamentary system, **originated in the US**
- **Cannot have** legislative and executive branches together.
- **Legislative** – house of representatives, senate.
- **Executive – president, vice-president**
- There a lot of required cooperation, especially when the executive and legislative branches are owned by different parties.
- **President is elected** by the people through the electoral college. (a vote for a candidate is actually **a vote for their elector**). Each state has a certain amount of **electoral votes. Each state has a riding.**
- Removing a president: **president can be removed by congress.**
- Congress must pass a motion accusing the president of high crime or misdeamour, they vote to **impeach the president**
- A trial takes place in the senate. If **2/3rds** of the senate vote to impeach, then **the president is ousted.**

Political executive

- **President** is both head of state and head of **government**
- Power figure, but **much of his/her action requires congressional approval.**
- President has a cabinet – you cannot be a senator or from the **hr** in order to be part of this **(sever branch between legislative/executive).**
- Vice president – preside over the senate, strengthening the ticket, supporting the president.
- 25th amendment – **take over president if anything should happen to president.**

- **Vice president** takes over, followed by speaker of the house, then president of the senate
- **Cabinet members** by order of creation of the cabinet
- **Afterwards**, the house of commons will choose president, senate vice-president.
- **Afterwards, anarchy would ensue**, governors are allowed senators, convene the senate to choose a vice president.
- **In Canada, it is easier to get laws passed** due to party discipline

Hybrid examples

- France and Russia. Both countries are popularly elected president, but also a prime minister elected from the house of commons
- President chooses prime minister from the winning party and selects cabinet but takes advice from the PM

Federal unitary systems and the judiciary

Unitary systems

- Central government holds all the constitutional authority. i.e france, Sweden japan, new Zealand.
- **Devolved unitary system** – regional governments have some legislative power – UK with the parliaments of Scotland and wales

Federal system

- Two or more levels of government (first one makes laws for the country, second level makes laws for residents within a defined boundary). There will be **defined provinces or states**.
- **There is no hierarchy between the levels of government**. They are also not dependent on each other. Federal is not a “higher level” than provincial.
- **Why choose federalism** – large countries prefer this style of federal. Also, pre-existing colonial governments might form states in a federal system (historically based).
- **Checks federal power – local decision making – innovation possibilities – a tool to stop conflict**.
- Features: **written constitution**, responsibilities are lined out, a constitution amendment formula, a federal government that is designed in part to represent the provinces/states of the federation.
- Institutions of federalism: federalism means ensuring provincial or state representation (ridings per location). Senate seats are allocated to certain areas. **Cabinet** - it is politically expedient to choose people from diverse provinces
- **How do provinces assert their authority** – interstate federalism (relations between provinces and federal level). **Premiers become** the champions of their province. They have their own legislatures and cabinets provincially

Judicial review

- Process where the courts review the actions of other governments in order to ensure that the laws are consistent with the constitution
- Federal systems offer flexibility. People want union but not unity. Good system for accommodating and balancing territory, religious, and other cleavages in society

- When conflict becomes insurmountable, secessionist movements may begin
- In terms of **sovereignty**, Supreme Court ruled that Quebec does not have the right to secede from government itself.
- Clarity act- **tried to define majority**, negotiating divisions of debts and assets, negotiating debts and responsibilities. **This is a mechanism for breaking up.**

Policy Solution Stream

- Central question: To what degree is there a policy solution already available
- When the window already opens, you already must have a solution. Else, it will be too late as the window will close again
- Who? – existence of a policy community of relevant policy actors?
- What? Is there already a set of predetermined solutions
- Why? – there needs to be a developed rationale for why policy makers develop a certain solution over another
- Exam – **what is a policy community? How many actors? What degree of cohesion?** There are a lot of actors – broad inclusive community. What about the ones in the centre? Consistent? Fragmented – want to **achieve a balance between expertise vs democracy**. How to balance the two?

Proposal stream

- Policy alternatives? Degree of consensus within policy community on alternatives?
- The policy community works together to find the best policy
- Can these options be done? Technically feasible? Budget? Politically feasible? Value acceptability
- Exam question : what is Keynesianism (more government control in business – government spends more money on the economy, or tax more (take from economy)).

Framing issues – social, moral, economic issues, etc

Guest lecture – Syrian refugee crisis

Lloyd axworthy – minister of foreign affairs, minister of employment and immigration, minister of labour, minister of transport

Refugees existed in greek times – **right to sanctuary** – one can seek asylum

Terrorism in the middle east – charter is being challenged via different sets of rights and religious beliefs (example, honour murders)

After then UN, there is a convention on refugees, allowing people to allow to asylum. Virtually every country has signed this law

Still living with the old systems of government, so we are not prepared to deal with the refugee crisis.
No organization or leadership

Justin Trudeau refugee policy – he will bring in 25,000 refugees by the end of the year. Thesis: the refugee crisis we currently know about is a very minute amount of the real issue

- Systemic policy approach
- Specific inputs are generated in society (demands and supports)
- This demand and support is then transferred into laws and politics
- Goes through a “black box” to transform. This black box includes **informal institutions** (parties, media, interest groups), then **formal institutions** (bureaucracy, executive, legislative, judiciary).
 - Sausage grinder: any input always makes the same output
 - Doesn't necessarily start with issues
 - Can start with any issue but does not discuss the definition/framing of the problem
 - Significance:
 - Overly simplistic representation
 - Implies that all inputs make the same output as they always do
 - Only has feedback from the end of the process as if feedback won't stop it
 - Seems as though policy change is a staircase which each step leading to policy change.

Problem oriented approach

- Three streams model
- Believes that policy change comes from recognizing problems in existing policies; new policies are made depending on recognizing and defining these problems
- Everything begins with issues and concerns, and really looks at how the problem is framed and defined
- A lot more feedback is involved, as the policy community is much more vast
- Significance:
 - More accurate, reflects a great scope of feedback
 - A lot more probabilistic
 - More complex and harder to pass new policies due to this complexity
 - Looks are more aspects with analysis
 - Accounts for many influences and factors
- Keynesianism
 - Ensures more governmental control of the economy
 - Believes that government should spend more on economy when private sector is in a slump (when there is unemployment)
 - Government should save money through taxation in periods of inflation when the private sector does spend a lot
 - Direct contrast to neoliberalism in the 1980s and the laissez faire policies in the 19th century.

- Significance:
 - Used in framing a problem – Keynesianism makes many problems such as unemployment, poor health, poor infrastructure, old age, and poverty as social, rather than private issues
 - Used in methods of appealing. Keynesian economics appeal to the social interest - justice.
 - Helps shape the foundation of policies such as free education, pension plans, welfare plans, employment insurance, etc.

- Policy community
 - All actors or potential actors with a direct or indirect interest in the policy area or function who share the same policy focus
 - Forms once a policy area becomes a particular issue
 - This includes subgovernment groups and also the attentive public (experts, media, think tanks)
 - Certain groups have much more influence on policy outcome, such as government actors and business interest groups
 - Significance:
 - See three streams model – large proportion of three-streams model revolves around policy community
 - A way to approach the study of the problem-oriented policy process
 - This policy community can vastly shape the direction of certain policies
 - Policy community members are the ones who often give rationale and find problems in policy areas.

- Stakeholders
 - Groups are key-actors in influencing the policy process that are nongovernmental
 - Direct material interest in the policy outcome
 - Significance:
 - Compare to advocacy groups
 - More prominent in politics stream
 - Less involved than advocacy groups

- Advocacy groups
 - Vocal groups that influence policy outcome
 - No direct material interest
 - Only purpose is for change in policy
 - (Not interest group as they do not use proper conventional political tactics for change)
 - Significance:
 - Compare to stakeholders
 - Prominent in policy community
 - More involved than stakeholders

- Judicial Interpretation
 - Review by judges to ensure policies comply with Charter of Rights and Freedoms
 - Can include when policies are taken to court to see if policy/interpretation stands.

- The judiciary also interprets certain vague elements of a policy in a clear way, setting examples of how a certain provision should be implemented/followed
- Significance:
 - Can be a focusing event – Aboriginal land claims, prostitution
 - Last step of the systemic policy process – judicial approval means that the policy should be able to pass
 - Can occur in several parts of the three streams model/process
 - Judiciary has an arbitrary power to force change upon policies that are inconsistent with their rulings (prostitution act). Judiciary also sets out guidelines for government to act on it's rulings (aboriginal claims – can violate if pressing/substantial objective).
- Sub government
 - Includes Interest associations, government agencies and tribunals, business firms
 - The inner circle of the policy community includes key advocacy groups, members of political and permanent executives. (i.e health care, education)
 - They work together to formulate and implement policy in a specific area
 - Significance:
 - Actually the ones to write the details of the policy
 - Represent the underground “writing” agencies that the executive, which actually implements and presents the policy, hires to create policy.
 - Can resist change if minority government is present
 - Bureaucratic opposition
 - Tensions can arise between bureaucrats and elected policymakers
- Pluralism
 - The assumption that society is made of multiple groups, each with their different interests. These groups are believed to be highly autonomous and compete freely and openly in the political process
 - These groups compete for their ideas to be heard and want policies that favour their ideas
 - Significance:
 - Not true – some groups have an advantage in terms of resources, political will, even through nepotism, favouritism, bribery.
 - Contributes to problem framing – each side views the problem differently
 - Contributes to the policy community and thus policy ideal/appeals. Policies suggested in a pluralistic society are often vastly different from each group, with different ideologies.
 - Due to pluralism, it is common to see wide-ranging public opinion on a policy issue.
- Third sector
 - Voluntary sector
 - Does not expect anything in return
 - Significance:
 - Contrast to public and private sectors
 - More neutral as a political entity

