

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
PhD Comprehensive Examination
April 2017

You must choose ONE questions from EACH of the three sections on this exam. The questions are of equal value. The exam must be completed in SIX hours.

CORE

1. How has the presence of Quebec affected the overall evolution of the Canadian political system. Discuss with reference to: central institutions, political parties, and parliament.
2. Since Confederation, the institutions of Canadian government have interacted with, and adapted to change in, other institutions. With perspectives from the literature, discuss how other institutions have affected and been affected by: judicial review, parliament, and federal central agencies
3. Discuss whether, why, and how the following factors inhibit the practice of responsible government: Canada's multi-national nature, central agencies, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

FEDERALISM & REGIONALISM

1. What factors account for the degree of decentralization that marks Canadian federalism? Is decentralization a one-way street? Answer with historical evidence.
2. What accounts for the high levels of intergovernmental interaction in Canadian federalism? Is it a 'patch' for institutional insufficiencies, or a natural consequence of some institutional feature or other of the system.
3. Federalism provides opportunities for collective action and diversity at the same time. It can also muddy accountability and stymie regional autonomy. All things considered has the federal system served Canadians well, or does it fail in its promise. Use examples to illustrate.

PUBLIC POLICY, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, & POLITICAL ECONOMY

1. Have contemporary scholars neglected valuable insights from the Canadian political economy tradition? How might that literature be integrated with – or challenge – the current literature on Canadian public policy?
2. Much of contemporary theorizing concerning stages in the policy process has been derived in the US context. Reflect on how theories of agenda setting and/or implementation apply — or don't — in the Canadian context. What insights are gained through a comparative approach to these phenomena?
3. How can the federal government's recent commitment to a national carbon price be explained? Please indicate what kinds of evidence you would seek out to test or distinguish between different hypotheses?