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Association canadienne de science politique

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L'état de la discipline / The State of the Discipline

Graduate Programmes / Les études supérieures

La recherche / Research in Political Science

The Practice of Political Science / La pratique de la science politique

Canada: L'avenir de la communauté / The Future of the Community

1991 Election 1991

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LE MOT DU DIRECTEUR / FROM THE EDITOR

In this first issue of 1991, we continue with our regular columns. David Leyton-Brown has kindly accepted to be responsible for the column on the State of the Discipline which deals, in this issue, with International Relations' studies in Canada. Notre collègue Lucille Beaudry a, pour sa part, gracieusement accepté de tracer pour nous les contours du programme d'études supérieures au département de science politique de l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Les professeurs David Charters du département d'histoire et Miron Rezun du département de science politique de l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick établissent, quant à eux, un bilan très complet des activités du Center for Conflict Studies de Fredericton. Our column on the Practice of Political Science has been written by Professor Agar Adamson of Acadia who reflects on the situation of research and teaching in a small university. Finally, Professor Louis Balthazar of Laval has kindly accepted to share with us his vision of the Canadian community he foresees at the end of the century.

I want to express to all of them my most sincere appreciation.

This issue of the **Bulletin** also constitutes a very special occasion. If memory serves me well, it is the first time in the history of the **Bulletin** that we have the pleasure to benefit from a collaboration from outside Canada. Our colleague, Professor Ileana Cid Capetillo of UNAM, has very kindly accepted to present to us an overview of the situation of study and research in International Relations in Mexico. I want to express to her my most sincere appreciation. It is my hope that we will be able to continue this type of collaboration in future issues of the **Bulletin**.

Finally, let me thank again Joan Pond and Peter Russell for their support. Je remercie également **Marie-Pierre Ashby** ainsi que **Erick Duchesne** et **Claude Goulet** qui m'ont aidé à préparer ce numéro du **Bulletin**.

Gordon Mace

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT /
LE MOT DU PRESIDENT**

by Peter H. Russell

We Canadian political scientists are living through very interesting times. Right now the future of Canada seems open to just about any possibility - a redesign of the federation, a truly confederal organization, break-up into two or more sovereign states. Perhaps even the status quo is a remote possibility.

As we live through these events, inevitably our personal biographies and the biography of our country intersect. It becomes more difficult than ever in these circumstances for many of us to keep our cool academic souls from being consumed by a more personal conception of citizenship.

However much we may differ on whether and how Canada should change, I hope you will all agree with me that whatever happens to Canada the Canadian Political Science Association will continue to function as a vital and effective academy for the exchange of knowledge and ideas about the political realm. The exchanges, both written and oral, which the CPSA has facilitated over the years have enriched us all. This process, so essential for our scholarly integrity, must continue to be a constant factor in the midst of unprecedented political change. We Canadian political scientists in the organization of our professional discourse will, perversely I hope, resist the political storms swirling around us - the better to understand them.

In that spirit I look forward to seeing you at Kingston in June as we participate in the excellent program Bob Young and his program committee have put together for us.

**L'ETAT DE LA DISCIPLINE /
THE STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE**

**TEACHING AND STUDYING INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

David Leyton-Brown
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The intellectual concerns and priorities of the international relations field in Canadian political science departments can perhaps best be identified by an examination of the curricula offered to students of that field. What we decide to teach our students reflects our sense of what is central and inescapable to

the field, and also our sense of developments in the field important enough to be incorporated into course content and design. The themes and patterns in our collective curricular offerings are the functional equivalent of "voting with our feet", or "putting our money where our mouth is".

In that context, I have reviewed the international relations component of the curriculum in the political science departments at seventeen Canadian universities¹. What follows is a personal perspective rather than a systematic or exhaustive survey. While making allowance for the fact that larger departments are able to offer more courses in a richer curriculum, several commonalities are evident. The curricula are by no means identical, but there are several themes which are common to the vast majority of the departments reviewed. These major themes include: foreign policy, international security studies, international political economy and international organization. The wide availability of these elements leads to the inescapable conclusion that there is a common and distinctive character to the undergraduate and graduate education in international relations made available to students in Canada.

Foreign Policy

Almost every department offers one or more courses on Canadian foreign policy or Canadian external relations. In keeping with the literature on Canadian foreign policy, most of these courses are relatively non-theoretical. They tend to present a historical description of policy developments and/or a survey of policy problems, cases and issues. Many of these functional or geographical issue areas are enduring, and so give a predictable sense of historical continuity and comparability to the courses presented at different universities. Another common theme in Canadian foreign policy courses is an examination of the Canadian policy-making process.

Managing the relationship with the United States has often been described as the most important problem in Canadian foreign policy. The international relations curricula across the country reflect that proposition. Several universities offer courses devoted entirely to the Canada-U.S. relationship, across all of the policy issues involved, including defence, economics, environment, culture, fisheries, energy, boundaries, etc. Where that is not the case, a major theme in the course or courses dealing with Canadian foreign policy is sure to be relations with the United States.

¹ In fine Canadian constitutional fashion, these seventeen universities are drawn from eight different provinces, containing more than seventy-five percent of the Canadian population.

Some departments offer foreign policy course devoted to other particular Canadian policy relationships. Usually because of the individual expertise of particular faculty members, such specialized courses as Canada and the Third World, Canada and Latin America or Canada and the Pacific, might be available in individual universities.

The teaching and study of foreign policy is not restricted to that of Canada. Another prominent theme is the foreign policies of other major states. The most common is U.S. foreign policy, closely followed by that of the Soviet Union. Some departments offer a course on comparative foreign policy, encompassing both the United States and the Soviet Union (and sometimes other major states), or the foreign policies of the superpowers. Present but relatively rare are comparative foreign policy courses which engage in a comparison of theories of foreign policy analysis rather than of actual policies.

Again because of the expertise of individual faculty members, some departments offer foreign policy courses with a geographical focus other than these. Examples are courses on the foreign policies of African states, or of East Asian states.

International Security Studies

This theme is the least consistently titled across different universities, but it is very common. Whether known as international security studies, strategic studies, defence or security policy, or international conflict and conflict resolution, courses under this theme can be found in the vast majority of Canadian political science departments.

The wide availability of these courses can be understood to result from at least two factors. First, the traditionally dominant paradigm of international relations - realism - has been concerned especially with issues of force and the security interests and policies of states. Accordingly the study of the role of force in international relations, and the security policies of states, has been of central importance to the literature and teaching of the field. Second, the military and strategic studies (MSS) program of the Department of National Defence has funded the research and teaching of this area across the country. The imperative of regional distribution which underlies so many government programs in Canada has encouraged the development of research centres and "teaching chairs" at universities in seven different provinces. The MSS program has supported research and teaching in some other disciplines (e.g. history, sociology, economics, etc.), but the majority of the activity has been in political science.

Within the array of course titles covering this subject matter, a number of sub-themes can be found. One type of course deals with Canadian defence policy or national security policy, or with that of other major powers like the United States. Another treats issues of strategy, and especially nuclear strategy and deterrence. An offshoot of this approach, which is quite widespread in Canadian curricula, is a focus on arms control and disarmament. Some courses examine the role of force in international relations - nuclear, conventional and unconventional. Of increasing prominence is a set of courses dealing with international conflict (causes and dynamics) and conflict resolution.

Two evolutionary developments are evident in the curricula dealing with international security studies. The first is the rise of peace studies. Sometimes these issues are raised within the types of courses described above (e.g. arms control and disarmament, or a critical approach to defence or security policy). At other times courses explicitly addressing peace research are mounted. The second is the shift of the dominant preoccupation of this field away from the East-West strategic (nuclear) relationship to a broader security agenda. As "peace is breaking out all over", and international security studies comes to be less focused on Cold War bipolarity, the reconceptualization of security, to encompass economic, social and especially environmental concerns, is a prominent theme not only in current government policy, but also in pedagogy. Even long standing courses on defence policy and the like are being reshaped by these new concepts.

International Political Economy

This has been the most rapidly growing area of curricular innovation, and of (graduate) student interest. In that context of rapid growth, it is not surprising that there should be a lack of consensus about how this particular field should be approached and taught. There are, in fact, three clearly distinct approaches to international political economy.

The first is an approach which examines the politics of international economic relations. This is referred to by some as the U.S. approach to international political economy, because the major authors are American (e.g. Gilpin, Spero, Blake and Walters, etc.), and because the assumptions, methods and epistemology of the approach are situated within the liberal interdependence paradigm in which the international position of the United States is an accepted part of the status quo.

The second approach subscribes to a very different set of epistemological assumptions. It tends to be marxist

