



SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

PUBL 304/POLS 381 CABINET GOVERNMENT

2005 PAPER OUTLINE (First Trimester Paper – 24 points)

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Lecture Timetable: Wednesdays, 11.00 am -
12.50 pm, Murphy 632

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the course is to study the constitutions, power dynamics and policy capacities of selected political executives in parliamentary systems. This year we will focus on: leaders (principally Prime Ministers); the interface between politics and administration, and emerging issues in New Zealand's system of cabinet government. Case studies will form an important part of the course. You should acquire:

- an understanding of the main features of cabinet government,
- an in-depth knowledge of the subjects you selected for essay and seminar presentation;
- the ability to analyse the material critically;
- knowledge of the relationships between different political structures, cabinet processes and policy outcomes;
- the capacity to explain and evaluate the central governmental policy systems of at least two countries.

TEXT

There is no required text book for this paper, however students will be required to purchase PUBL 304/POLS 381 *Cabinet Government* from Student Notes

ASSESSMENT

The assessment entails: one essay proposal (10%) and full essay (30%)
 one seminar presentation (10%)
 final, three-hour examination (50%)

Please note that, unless the grade for the proposal (worth 10%) is *higher* than the grade for the submitted essay (30%), the proposal grade will not be included in the overall assessment of the essay (40%).

Assessment aims:

- to write an essay, involving the tasks of essay design, gathering material on a specialised topic, analysing the material, and presenting an argument in a literate and structured form;
- to contribute to the development and delivery of an oral presentation, testing your ability to present material in an accessible, interesting and lively manner; and
- to write examination answers, testing your overall grasp of the content of the course and your ability to structure ideas quickly and to answer questions in brief, relevant essays.

If you have difficulties meeting the course requirements because of personal problems you should see Chris Eichbaum as soon as possible.

The Essay (10% plus 30%)

Your essay may focus on one country or it may be comparative, i.e. drawing upon your knowledge of at least two states. The essay is submitted in two parts: the proposal (10%) and the finished work (30%).

(1) You are required to present an essay proposal before or on **Wednesday 23 March**. This proposal should be about two pages in length and must contain:

- a draft title;
- a brief summary of your argument and/or the questions you wish to ask;
- an outline of the organisation of the essay (including draft headings if you wish); and
- a bibliography, correctly set out, containing ten references relevant to the topic you are studying, including a range of sources (e.g. books, journal articles and internet sites).

(2) The submission date for the completed essay is **Friday 13 May**. It should be no more than 3000 words long.

(3) After handing in your essay proposal (23 March) you will be expected to make an appointment for an individual tutorial to discuss your topic.

Please note that you are not permitted to interview politicians or any other persons without first obtaining permission from the Victoria University Ethics Committee. Thus, if you plan to interview, you must discuss your essay with Chris Eichbaum early in the course.

The Seminar Presentation (10%)

You are required, as part of a group, to develop and deliver a 20 minute seminar on a topic to be finalised no later than **Wednesday 16 March**. This will be a case-study, the topic to be agreed with Chris Eichbaum. The group will be required to prepare a 500-word summary, suitable for distribution to the rest of the class (this may take the form of PowerPoint slides). The group will be expected to pose a number of discussion questions at the end of the presentation, and to field and answer questions from the class. Please let Chris know if you wish to use Powerpoint. The overhead projector may also be used. Your presentation will be assessed according to criteria distributed in class.

Possible seminar topics:

- A case study of cabinet decision-making, tracking the passage of a particular issue through the various stages of the policy process within the institution of cabinet government
- Prime ministers – a focus on the career of a particular prime minister, including consideration of his/her approach to cabinet government
- Prime Ministers – a focus on the resources available to prime ministers
- Responsibility and accountability – a case study focusing on ministerial responsibility (individual and/or collective)
- Public policy and decision-making in coalition and single party minority governments (with a particular focus on the implications for the institution of cabinet government)

NB that these topics are included simply to illustrate the range of possibilities

The Examination (50%)

There will be a three-hour examination. Details of the structure and content of the examination will be advised in class well in advance of the examination. You should make yourself familiar with the University's rules about cases where illness, bereavement, or other exceptional circumstances prevent attendance or impair performance at an examination. Students who would benefit from special facilities at examination time because of medical or other reasons, should contact the relevant Faculty Examinations Officer, or a member of the Student Health or Counselling Services, 2-4 Wai-te-ata Road, as soon as possible.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND WORKLOAD

Mandatory Course Requirements

- (a) Submission of the essay proposal on or before the due date;
- (b) Submission of the essay on or before the due date;
- (c) Presentation of one seminar talk;
- (d) Attendance of no fewer than eight of the Wednesday classes; and
- (e) Writing the final examination paper.

Workload

The University norm for a 24 point, 300-level, one-trimester course is 18 hours per week, an adequate guideline for PUBL 304/POLS 381.

COURSE PROGRAMME

NB that changes may need to be made to this programme depending on the size of the class, and the availability of individuals contributing to the teaching programme.

The classes during the first eight weeks comprise informal lectures and class discussion. During the latter part of the second part of the course (Weeks nine to eleven) classes will be based on seminar presentations, focusing on particular themes. I have made some suggestions for seminar topics but you are welcome to develop your own (after discussion with me). A detailed programme for Weeks nine to eleven will be distributed after the mid-trimester break.

Date	Topic	Readings
WEEK ONE 23 <i>February</i>	Introduction: some history, constitutions and cabinet government; the doctrine of the separation of powers	Heywood, "Political Executives" Cabinet Manual 2001
WEEK TWO 2 <i>March</i>	Parliamentary and presidential core executives compared, and the USA as an example of non-parliamentary government. Political Parties and 'Party Government'	Verney, "Parliamentary Government ..." Weller, "Political Parties and the Core Executive" Blondel, "Towards and Systematic Analysis of Government-Party Relationships"
WEEK THREE 9 <i>March</i>	The Westminster model: Cabinet government in Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.	Palmer and Palmer Cabinet Manual 2001 McLeay, "What is the Constitutional Status of the NZ Cabinet Manual?"
WEEK FOUR 16 <i>March</i> <i>NB essay proposals to be submitted today.</i>	Cabinet decision-making (or not) – what happens inside the black box?	Burch and Holliday
WEEK FIVE 23 <i>March</i>	Visit to the Cabinet Office	

MID-TRIMESTER BREAK

<p>WEEK SIX 13 April</p> <p><i>NB seminar topics organised today</i></p>	<p>Cabinet government and governance – the challenge of strategic management from the centre</p> <p>Prime ministers and cabinets</p>	<p>Upton Henderson Keating and Weller Burch and Holliday, “The Prime Minister’s and Cabinet Offices” Giddings</p>
<p>WEEK SEVEN** 20 April</p>	<p>Ministerial accountability and conventions</p> <p>Associate Professor Bob Gregory School of Government Victoria University</p>	<p>Gregory Palmer and Palmer McLeay, “Taking Responsibility”</p>
<p>WEEK EIGHT** 27 April</p>	<p>Cabinet Government in New Zealand under MMP – what’s changed, why, and with what consequences?</p> <p>Dr Richard Shaw Senior Lecturer Massey University</p>	<p>Boston, “Reforming the Executive” Boston, Church, and Bale Boston and Church Cabinet Office, “Coalition, Support, and Cooperation Agreements”</p>
<p>WEEK NINE 4 May</p>	<p>Seminar Presentations</p>	
<p>WEEK TEN 11 May <i>NB essays to be submitted today.</i></p>	<p>Seminar Presentations</p>	
<p>WEEK ELEVEN 18 May</p>	<p>Seminar Presentations</p>	
<p>WEEK TWELVE 25 May</p>	<p>The institution of cabinet government: challenges going forward</p> <p>Discussion of examination.</p>	<p>Keating and Weller</p>

ESSAY QUESTIONS (SUGGESTIONS ONLY – YOU MAY DEVELOP YOUR OWN TOPIC)

- 1) 'Cabinet is both a particular institution—the "full cabinet" which meets under the prime minister's chairmanship—and a network which provides the institutional and personal framework.' Discuss.
- 2) 'The cabinet is a body of equals and its members have each a fiefdom of their own.' Discuss.
- 3) 'Leaders are always under scrutiny, always liable to have their performance tested with the knowledge that if they are seen as weak their position will be challenged.' Discuss.
- 4) Analyse the selection and composition of cabinets in one (or more than one) political system, discussing any strengths and weaknesses you have identified.
- 5) Construct a set of criteria for assessing the power of prime ministers (and/or chancellors). Use examples to illustrate those criteria.
- 6) 'Ministers are expected to behave according to the highest standards of constitutional and personal conduct in the performance of their duties'. Discuss.
- 7) How effectively do legislatures (or a particular legislature) hold ministers responsible for fulfilling their responsibilities?
- 8) Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the doctrine of collective cabinet responsibility. Illustrate your answer with examples.
- 9) 'A key characteristic of cabinet government is its flexibility. This enables the business of government to adapt to the variety of circumstances which occur in a fast-changing world.' Discuss.
- 10) How do cabinets (or a particular cabinet) make policy decisions? Illustrate your answer with examples.
- 11) 'Coalition governments require negotiations between parties. Agreements, once settled, need to be maintained. At the same time, parties need to preserve some form of individual identity for the next election.' Discuss.
- 12) Is cabinet government a durable and stable form of government? Discuss and illustrate.
- 13) Analyse the constitutional rules and informal practices that affect the relationships between governments and parliamentary parties.
- 14) Compare coalition government (minority and majority) with single-party majority government. Comment on internal governmental relationships and, also, policy agenda management.
- 15) Are junior coalition partners always at a disadvantage?
- 16) Are the political and policy advisers the main powerbrokers in cabinet government?
- 17) Compare and contrast the circumstances under which any two leaders came to be Prime Minister or German Chancellor. What impact did those circumstances have on their subsequent performances?
- 18) Take any one policy issue (in either Germany, Britain or New Zealand) and explain how the key decisions were made.
- 19) How have the public sector reforms of the last decade affected cabinet government?
- 20) Analyse the relationship between the legislature and the political executive in any one country.
- 21) Outline and discuss the extent of government information available to citizens in at least one state. Why have governments been so afraid of releasing information to the public? How effectively do governments use electronic means of communication with citizens?
- 22) Given the forces of globalisation, how much power do cabinets have?

READING LIST

- Note that there is a great deal of official information on the internet. The School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations website (accessed through the VUW website) contains links to research tools, including government information around the world and the New Zealand government online information. See especially the following government websites:
<http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/>
<http://www.parliament.uk/>
<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/>
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/>
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/>
<http://www.executive.govt.nz/>
<http://www.bundestag.de/>
<http://eng.bundesregierung.de/frameset/index.jsp>
- See *West European Politics*. Many of the issues of this journal are held behind the periodicals desk on the main level of the library. The contents of are at <http://www.frankcass.com/jnls/wep>. *Governance* is useful. See also *Parliamentary Affairs*, *Public Administration* and *Government and Opposition*, especially for material on Britain. New Zealand's *Public Sector* and *Political Science* are essential sources.
- There is a range of textbooks on the political systems of the UK and Germany in the library, many on Level 3. The texts entitled *Developments in British Politics* and *Developments in German Politics* are useful.
- Biographies and autobiographies provide rich sources of information, especially on political leaders.

COMPARATIVE WORKS: General

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- Blondel, J. and F. Muller-Rommel, (eds.) *Cabinets in Western Europe* (Houndmills, Macmillan, 1988).
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- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter, et al., *Parties, Policies, and Democracy* (Boulder, Westview Press, 1994).
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COMPARATIVE WORKS: Legislatures and the Executive

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GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND STAFF CONDUCT

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct.

The policy on Staff Conduction can be found on the VUW website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website: www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcadmicGrievances.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk.

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University's website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities and equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463 – 6070, email: disability@vuw.ac.nz. The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, please contact the relevant Course Co-ordinator, or Associate Dean who will either help you directly or put you in contact with someone who can.

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/ or email student-services@vuw.ac.nz.

VUWSA employs two Education Co-ordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463 6983 or 463 6984, email education@vuwsa.org.nz.