

Huron Brief Course Outlines

Fall/Winter 2023-2024

Course Title: Citizens Governing

Course Number and Section

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

3003F - 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

We live in an era when trust in public officials, governments, experts and leaders across sectors are reaching critical lows, with important consequences for the legitimacy of decision making, the health of our democracy, and our ability to solve complex problems. Some observers are ringing the alarm bells, dubbing this an era of polarization and pessimism, or characterized by disinformation ('fake news'), division and disconnection.

There are many innovations and experiments underway to more meaningfully engage citizens in decision making and transform conventional approaches to policy making and governance: citizen assemblies like the Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression; empowered Citizen Conventions in Chile to build a new constitution; deliberative summits like the G1000; the introduction of a permanent sortition in Eupen, Belgium. Co-production models and new forms of collaborative governance imagine greater cooperation across sectors and more empowered communities.

Are these interventions empowering citizens and producing different (and better) policy outcomes? Is reimagining the role and place of citizens and communities enough to address the steady erosion of trust in leaders and public institutions? What do we imagine the future or ideal role that each of us as citizens can play in shaping the world around us?

This new special topics course takes a deep, curiosity-driven look into the idea of 'the citizen' and what can happen when citizens are empowered to play a greater role in governance, leadership and policy-making. It is an intentionally multi-disciplinary look into a timely topic about contemporary shifts evolving in the world around us.

Learning Outcomes:

Conceptualize multiple definitions, ideas and theories related to key concepts including citizenship, community engagement, empowerment, forms of democracy (deliberative democracy, participatory democracy), co-creation and more;

Integrate knowledge and develop critical understanding of the connections and interplay between citizenship, governance and leadership;

Demonstrate critical awareness of and commitment to the public good and ethical decision making, including transparency and accountability, particularly in the formation of public policy; and

Develop self-awareness about their own interest as citizens in the world.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

This course draws on two central texts which are both available on OWL or via the Library:

Bua, Adrian and Sonia Bussu, *Reclaiming Participatory Governance: Social Movements and the Rise of Democratic Innovation*, Routledge Studies in Democratic Innovations (2023). Available on OWL.

OECD, *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave*, OECD Publishing, Paris (2020). Available on OWL.

We will also be drawing on an array of materials including journal articles, media reports, podcasts and more. All readings are posted in the schedule below, and when possible will be made available in OWL. Weekly readings may change or be added, as events develop (eg. relevant media articles about current events will be added throughout the course).

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Class Participation	12/07/23	20
Weekly Reflections	12/07/23	30
Case Study	12/07/23	20
Final Essay	12/07/23	30

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.