

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



Experts gather at Laurier to discuss minority government in Canada

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Contact: Dr. Christopher Anderson
Assistant Professor, Political Science, Wilfrid Laurier University
(519) 884-0710 ext. 2200 or canderson@wlu.ca

or Kevin Crowley, Associate Director: News and Editorial Services
(519) 884-0710 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

WATERLOO – Leading political science scholars will gather at Wilfrid Laurier University on Friday, Feb. 8 to discuss and explore how two successive minority governments have influenced Canadian Parliament and its policies.

The day-long event, called “Minority Report: The Effects of Minority Government in Canada since 2004,” will include two panel discussions and the launch of *Two Cheers for Minority Government: The Evolution of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy*, a new book by well-known political scientist and University of Toronto professor emeritus Peter H. Russell.

“Minority government raises some pretty important questions for Canadians, questions to which we still lack really good answers,” said Christopher Anderson, event organizer and an assistant political science professor at Laurier. “While some believe it increases the government’s responsiveness to a wider range of societal interests, others feel it reduces the government’s ability to act and its accountability to citizens.”

During the morning panel, which explores the effects of minority government on Parliament, Russell will draw from his book to address the effects on the prime minister and the executive; David Good from the University of Victoria will cover the effects on the public service; and Paul Thomas, a senior researcher from Senator Yoine Goldstein’s office, will look at parliamentary committees and the Senate.

The afternoon panel covers the influence of minority government on policy, and includes Adam Chapnick from Canadian Forces College on foreign policy, Gerard Boychuk

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from the University of Waterloo on social policy, and Laurier’s Debora VanNijnatten on the environment.

“With it being the second year in power for the Harper government and Parliament just back in session, both this panel and Professor Russell’s book speak directly to events unfolding at this time,” said Anderson.

The event runs from 9:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 8 in Laurier’s Senate and Board Chamber. It is free and open to the public. Advanced registration is not required.