

# Civic Engagement

At this time in our history, it seems that there is a lot of debate about the legitimacy of how we are governed. We are seeing the rise of populism, and the apparent erosion of faith in key institutions. This may suggest that our democratic traditions are under threat, or, at least, our democratic systems are not as healthy.

The lecture will examine Canada's democratic nature using a variety of measures. In this talk, Dr. Perrella will touch on how we participate (i.e., not just by voting) and some attitudes that we hold about democratic governance. Dr. Perrella will focus on whether people think the democratic system is responsive and whether citizens think they are adequately skilled to participate. The lecture will also at times provide comparisons with other countries to determine if what is happening in Canada is uniquely "Canadian."

**Dr. Andrea Perrella** (Ph.D. Université de Montréal) is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Wilfrid Laurier University and a Deputy Director of the Laurier Institute for the Study of Public Opinion and Policy. His main areas of research focus on voting, public opinion and the media. He is published in a variety of journals, and is often sought by the media for commentary and analysis on contemporary political affairs.

Some of his more recent research involves an examination of attitudes toward public health and local governance, as well as a look at how the public in Canada views the country's efforts towards Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.



Suggested readings for those interested in learning more.

- Clarke, Harold D., Jane Jenson, Lawrence Leduc, and Jon H. Pammett. 2019. *Absent Mandate: Strategies and Choices in Canadian Elections*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Dalton, Russell J. 2019. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Washington: CQ Press.
- Gidengil, Elisabeth, Neil Nevitte, André Blais, Joanna Everitt, Patrick Fournier. 2012. *Dominance and Decline: Making Sense of Recent Canadian Elections*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.