**DEPARTMENT:** School of Political Studies  
**PROFESSOR:** Daniel Stockemer  
**RESEARCH TITLE:** Candidate Appearance in Québec Elections  
**NUMBER OF STUDENT:** 2-4  
**LANGUAGE:** English/Bilingual

**RESEARCH DESCRIPTION:**

This research project addresses how the physical appearance and attractiveness of electoral candidates influences their chances of winning. There exists currently a relatively large body of literature that has found a candidate’s appearance to be important for their electoral fortunes, with more attractive-, trustworthy-, and authoritative-looking candidates being more likely to win office. Existing studies have either been conducted via experiments, where it is unclear if voters will carry these biases over into real elections, or by observing real elections, in which case researchers cannot be certain that voters have actually seen the candidates. In this project, we will be examining the unique case of the provincial elections in Québec; unlike in other jurisdictions, voters in Québec receive a ballot with each candidate’s photograph appearing next to their name, thus ensuring that all voters have a chance to be influenced by candidate appearance.

The students involved in this research project will engage in the following tasks:

1. Collecting census data and election results from Québec’s provincial elections
2. Collecting official candidate photographs from Elections Québec
3. Building an original dataset on Québec’s election outcomes and candidate appearance
4. Reviewing and succinctly summarising existing literature on candidate attractiveness

**KEY LEARNING ACTIVITIES:**

- Learning about an emerging topic in political science
- Synthesizing the literature
- Learning about census data and building a novel dataset
- Learning about accessing government records
- Conducting some simple statistical tests
- Learning how to work independently
- Make sound judgement about the quality of prior research