



McLAUGHLIN COLLEGE

As part of our popular Lunch Time Talk Series McLaughlin College Proudly Presents:

Democratic Politics, Ethics, and Expertise: Reflections on Canada's Fight Against COVID-19

Presented by:

George Fallis



This talk is a case study of government decisions in a democracy, offering reflections on the role of politicians, experts, and ethics.

We begin by exploring what is a democracy and contrast it with rule by experts – Guardians, Plato called them, deeply committed to governing for the common good and superior to others in their knowledge of how to achieve it. Then we offer a framework for analyzing Canada's fight against COVID-19, emphasizing that the fight has many rounds and is not over yet and that Canada faced an unprecedented health crisis and the government's response brought on an unprecedented economic crisis. Health policy and economic policy are inextricably interconnected.

As we examine government decisions at each round of the fight, we will explore the role of politicians versus experts and the role of ethical/value judgments, highlighting the trade-offs confronting decision makers between lives and jobs.

GEORGE FALLIS is University Professor Emeritus of Economics and Social Science at York University. He completed his BA in Political Science and Economics at University of Toronto, and his PhD in Economics at Princeton University. His current research interests are the university's role in democratic post-industrial societies, the evolution of the welfare state, income inequality, and housing policy. He is author of several books including *Multiversities, Ideas, and Democracy* (UofT Press, 2007). He often contributes opinion pieces to newspapers, most recently: *Scoring Canada's COVID fight over its first three rounds - of six* <https://financialpost.com/opinion/2020-hindsight-george-fallis-scoring-canadas-covid-fight-over-its-first-three-rounds-of-six>

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021

12:30 – 1:30 PM via ZOOM

CLICK here to register: <https://yorku.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwoduqqpjgtHtQe7xpv5TSs7oilxVToAcOx>

For further information email Vicky Carnevale at vcarneva@yorku.ca