



# POIR623

## Contemporary Issues in Australian Politics

S2 External 2015

*Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Ashley Lavelle

[ashley.lavelle@mq.edu.au](mailto:ashley.lavelle@mq.edu.au)

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to GradCertPP or GradCertIntRel

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides an opportunity for in-depth study of contemporary and persistent questions in Australian society and politics. It explores the themes of race, gender, class, and nation and relates these to current political debates and policy making. It examines issues around Indigenous Australia, national identity, gender and sexuality, and class relations and egalitarianism following the economic boom of the past two decades, and critically examines the political and policy responses to these issues by Australian governments.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)

To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)

To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)

To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it

reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)

To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)

To have the capacity to determine how much interplay there is between discourse, ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of race, nation, class and gender.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Reading Critique</a>	25%	Week 5 August 28
<a href="#">Minor Essay</a>	30%	Week 9 October 9
<a href="#">Major Essay</a>	45%	Week 13 November 6

### Reading Critique

Due: **Week 5 August 28**

Weighting: **25%**

Students should choose one reading (book, chapter from an edited book collection, or journal article) from the list of Further Readings provided after each week's lecture topic. The aim is to critique and discuss the reading and the subject matter it raises. No references are required other than for the reading that is chosen. The critique should be approximately 1500 words long.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
- To have the capacity to determine how much interplay there is between discourse,

ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of race, nation, class and gender.

## Minor Essay

Due: **Week 9 October 9**

Weighting: **30%**

This essay, approximately 2000 words in length, deals with one of the 'important questions' listed in the Week 1 lecture notes for the course. You should refer to a minimum of 12 sources in answering your chosen question. In writing your essay, you should follow largely the same format as that for the major essay, including for referencing.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
- To have the capacity to determine how much interplay there is between discourse, ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of race, nation, class and gender.

## Major Essay

Due: **Week 13 November 6**

Weighting: **45%**

The essay, approximately 3000 words in length, provides students with the opportunity to explore a topic of interest in depth. Students should develop a considered answer to a specific question based on reading a range of sources wider than simply the key readings. (Students must read and refer to a minimum of 15 substantive sources. See below for notes on sources.) A high standard essay would draw upon a wide range of resources to support a well-organized argument in response to the set question. Remember, there is no necessarily 'correct' answer to each question: rather, there are arguments that are more persuasively made and intelligently

constructed. Consider whether the arguments you read are logical and provide convincing evidence. The same criteria should apply to your own work.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
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## Delivery and Resources

For lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetable website: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>. This website will display up-to-date information on your classes and classroom locations.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be

imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
- To have the capacity to determine how much interplay there is between discourse, ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of race, nation, class and gender.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## **Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative**

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)

- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
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## **Assessment tasks**

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## **Commitment to Continuous Learning**

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
- To be able to critically analyse Australian politics and assess the degree to which it reinforces and normalises inequality; (1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
- To be able to assess the extent to new media and new economic technologies impact – if at all – on the reproduction of existing social relations; (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
- To have the capacity to determine how much interplay there is between discourse, ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of



race, nation, class and gender.

## Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Major Essay

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
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## Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
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### Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
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## Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)

- To understand and identify the linkages between, class, racial, and sex cleavages and Australian nationhood; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9)
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## **Assessment tasks**

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
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ideology, structures and agency in shaping the makeup of Australian society in terms of race, nation, class and gender.

## Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay

## Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- To have the ability to peer below the surface feature of Australian politics and its discourse to identify the underlying class, racial, and sex inequalities at play; (1, 2, 6, 7, 8)
- To have an appreciation of the limited, contingent, and transient nature of Australian political institutions, and to be able to articulate these effectively, in verbal and written format; (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)
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## Assessment tasks

- Reading Critique
- Minor Essay
- Major Essay