



IRPG844

The Asian-Pacific Region and Australia

S3 Day 2015

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Conor Keane

conor.keane@mq.edu.au

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MIntRel or PGDipIntRel or PGCertIntRel or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntRel or MIntRelMIntTrdeComLaw or MTransInterMIntRel or MAppAnth or PGDipAppAnth or MDevCult or PGDipDevCult or MPP or PGDipPP or MGlobalHlthDevStud or GradCertIntRel or GradDipIntRel

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit studies the international relations of Australia in the Asian-Pacific region, focusing on government policy in foreign, security and economic policy but also including the interactions of NGOs and individual Australians with the global system in such issues as disarmament, the environment, human rights, foreign aid and labour conditions. Australia's bilateral and multilateral relations will also be considered.

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:

Australians comprise less than one-third of one per cent of the world's population.

Despite its size and geographical isolation, Australia has been involved in nearly every major military conflict that has occurred since 1901, especially those in its own backyard: the Asia-Pacific region. Despite such extensive military involvement, it is hard to pinpoint Australia's place in Asia with any precision. Its strategic environments are Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, while its major strategic ally is in North America. Its major trading partners lie in Northeast Asia, while the historical and cultural roots of the largest proportion of its population lie in Europe. This sense of uncertainty about the country's

environment is partly what prompts Australian policy-makers to undertake international activism: Australian foreign policy has a sense that the country needs to shape or be shaped. At the same time, security of distance has given Australia the confidence to take risks with fewer consequences than for others. This quality is more noticeable in Asia, where countries take a more cautious, incremental approach to foreign policy. Australia's capacity to influence the outside world has been labelled by some as that of a middle power. This means that Australia is large enough to have specific interests in global and regional affairs, such as issues relating to the promotion of human rights or the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but it lacks the capacity of a great power to impose its will. However, historically all Australian governments and political ideologies have not had the same vision for Australia's foreign policy. The most enduring divide lies between those, such as Robert Menzies, who believed that Australia's interests would be best advanced by the US, and those such as Paul Keating, who believed that Australia must find its security in Asia. These divisions are not found exclusively within or between individual political parties – most Australian governments make rhetorical nods in all direction, not least for reasons of political caution. This unit explores the historical evolution of Australian foreign policy; issues relating to peace and security; regional interventions, such as the Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands; the economy; and a series of foreign policy case studies. This unit has a strong normative orientation. This means that it addresses more than simply Australia's changing interests and identity in relation to the Asia-Pacific. It considers ways in which Australia's defence, economic, aid and foreign policies might be re-imagined in favour of a more inclusive and people-centred engagement with the Asia-Pacific region.

All academic programmes at Macquarie seek to develop graduate capabilities. These are: COGNITIVE CAPABILITIES 1. Discipline Knowledge and Skills Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields. 2. Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher-level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory. 3. Research and Problem Solving Capability Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to

enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving. INTERPERSONAL and PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS 4. Effective Communication Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats 5. Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical citizens Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues 6. Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This unit provides the tools for international relations students and practitioners to:

- A. Critically assess Australia's evolving identity and interests on a range of issues in the Asia-Pacific region and understand how these identities and interests have been formed
- (1) B. Understand and apply a range of interdisciplinary theories to assess Australia's engagement with the Asia-Pacific
- (2) C. Gather and analyse primary and secondary data sources using the ideas and theories presented in this course
- (3) D. Evaluate ethical, political and legal dilemmas of negotiating Australia's interests with the respective interests and rights of countries and peoples in the Asia-Pacific
- (3) E. Effectively communicate – both verbally and in writing – Australian foreign policies on a range of issues in the region, and understand the geopolitical, geostrategic and geoeconomic factors influencing, and being influenced by, Australia's engagement in the Asia-Pacific
- (4) F. Critically assess Australia's policies, policy-making processes and government actors from a normative perspective and imagine ways of improving these policies and processes with a view to achieving a more inclusive and people-centred engagement with the Asia-Pacific
- (5) G. Provide evidence-based, articulate opinions on a range of topics in relation to Australia and the Asia-Pacific
- (6)

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Class presentation</u>	15%	11/01/2016
<u>Minor Essay</u>	15%	17/01/2016
<u>Final Essay</u>	50%	31/1/2016
<u>Class Discussion</u>	20%	Ongoing

Class presentation

Due: **11/01/2016**

Weighting: **15%**

Description:

Evidence of preparation and participation in the regional press conference on asylum seekers and refugees on Day 4, 11 January, including submission of prepared statements, will comprise 15% of the unit. Groups will be organized on ilearn in December

Aim

The aim of this activity is for students to understand how national interests and policies are formed using the case study of a domestic policy issue with regional implications: asylum seekers and refugees.

Background

The loss of life on dangerous maritime voyages in search of Australia's protection has been increasing. The number of asylum seekers arriving by boat in Australia continues to rise. These realities have changed the circumstances that Australia now faces.

In response to this, on 28 June 2012, the Australian Prime Minister and the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship announced that the Australian Government invited Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston (Ret'd), the former chief of Australia's defence force, to lead an Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers. The Expert Panel provided advice and recommendations to the Government on policy options to prevent asylum seekers risking their lives on dangerous boat journeys to Australia.

Since the release of the Expert Panel's report, the Government has made a range of legal reforms and initiated a number of "regional solutions" with states in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. The current government's policy, "Operation Sovereign borders," places the Australian Defence Force at the centre of the refugee issue, and it has been particularly controversial.

Setting for activity

A press conference will be held on Saturday, 12 January 2016 on asylum seekers and refugees and you have been asked to give a statement.

While it is unlikely that all the delegates cited below would be together in the same room commenting on the issue of asylum seekers, this setting indicates that your statements are being recorded by the media, and will therefore be accessible to (and targeted at) domestic and/or regional audiences.

Delegates

- Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia
- Bill Shorten, Leader of the Opposition
- Sarah Hanson-Young, Greens Senator

- Retno Marsudi, Indonesian Foreign Minister

- Anifah Aman, Malaysian Foreign Minister
- Baron Waqa, President of Nauru
- Peter O'Neill, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea
- Refugee Council of Australia
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Activity

Groups of students will play the role of *one* of the delegates. Roles will be allocated on the first day of class. You will prepare a 15 minute speech articulating the kinds of policies that the delegate you are representing might propose on this issue of asylum seekers and refugees.

In other words: what does the “solution” look like for your delegate? The context provided earlier is deliberately broad. It is your job to frame the issues and propose a response accordingly.

Your statement is based on real time events. This means that if events take place between now and when you deliver the statement, these will affect what you say.

Your statement could address some or all of the following:

- How does your delegate define the problem – for example, an increasing number of people dying on boats, people smugglers, an invasion of “illegal persons”, Australia shirking its international responsibilities etc? How do these views differ from those of the Australian government?
- What are your delegate’s priorities for the short, medium to long term - for example, stopping the boats, upholding international obligations, providing a sustainable regional

solution for asylum seekers, hosting Australian detention centres in your country etc, reducing the number of asylum seekers/refugees in your country?

- Are these priorities already being realised/implemented? Identify techniques or strategies you believe could achieve or maintain these priorities.
- What are some of the political challenges and opportunities (domestic, bilateral and multilateral) to realising or sustaining your “solution”?
- Other issues that you believe are important for your delegate to address.

In some cases, your delegate might not have explicitly expressed their position on the questions above. In such cases, you are expected to make an educated guess based on analyses of statements and policies that are accessible on the internet.

Remember this is a political statement so only say things that you would be prepared for your audience to hear.

Who are your audience? You decide who your speech is targeting. Where necessary, this should be *implicit* in your speech but *explicit* in your minor essay.

Each student must provide a hard copy of their statement to me.

Question Time: following each presentation, the press gallery (i.e. other students in the class) are encouraged to ask the delegates questions about their policies. This is part of the assessment criteria (see below).

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of understanding the issues surrounding asylum seekers and refugees, and recognition of the perceived implications for Australia and/or the country you are representing
- Evidence of research and understanding of the (likely) position of your delegate
- Ability to ask relevant questions during “question time”
- Clarity and coherence of presentation
- Intelligent expression of arguments in your statement.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Minor Essay

Due: **17/01/2016**

Weighting: **15%**

Description:

A 1,500 word reflection on the regional press conference on asylum seekers and refugees is due on 19 January. This will comprise 20% of the assessment for the course.

Assessments that exceed the word limit will be penalised. The word limit does not include the bibliography and footnotes.

Essay question: What conceptions of national interests inform your statement on asylum seekers and refugees? To what extent are the “solutions” you proposed holistic, fact-based and sustainable? To what extent are they consistent with the obligations under international law of the country you are representing?

You are not “in character” in the essay. This is your opportunity to reflect on the process of writing the statement and to be explicit on issues that might have been inappropriate to include in your presentation.

The essay should be fully referenced and incorporate relevant ideas that emerged from the lecture and discussion surrounding the regional press conference. It should be written as a formal essay with an introduction, body and conclusion.

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of understanding factors that shape national interests
- Recognition of the challenges and opportunities of effecting change domestically, bilaterally and multilaterally
- Thoughtful and intelligent expression of ideas and arguments including application of themes and theories discussed during the course
- Evidence of reflective and critical wider reading and research, with full bibliography
- Ability to develop and present a coherently and scholarly argued analysis within the set word limit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Final Essay

Due: **31/1/2016**

Weighting: **50%**

Description:

Students must write a 3,000 word academic essay worth 50%. As students will have access to the unit material from December 1st I would encourage you to begin your essay in December. Students may send me a draft essay plan by January 3rd and I will provide you with advice and feedback.

Essays that exceed the word limit will be penalised. The word limit does not include bibliography and footnotes.

Essay topics:

- What do Australian policy-makers regard as major security threats to the country? To what extent are these *real* threats?
- Should Australia move away from neoliberalism? Justify your answer.
- To what extent and in what ways is Gillard's engagement with the Asia-Pacific region different to that of Kevin Rudd's?
- Does Australia play a "deputy sheriff" role to the US in terms of regional security? What are the political risks to regional strategic and diplomatic relations to such a relationship?
- Do you agree that a good international citizen can pursue vital security interests at the expense of moral ones? Justify your answer.
- To what extent did Australia's relations with Asia suffer under John Howard's leadership compared to under Hawke/Keating's?
- To what extent has Australia been successful in promoting human rights in the Asia-Pacific region?
- Explain Australia's role as a middle power and the extent to which it has been effective in facilitating change in the region. Draw on at least one case of Australia's engagement with the region.
- What factors shape Australia's "national interests" and how have these interests been translated into Australia's policies and actions in the region? Draw on at least one case of Australia's engagement with the Asia-Pacific region.
- Design your own question: If you chose this option the topic must be based on the lectures and approved by me beforehand.

The essay **must not** be written on asylum seekers and refugees.

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of research and understanding of 1) the nature and context of Australia's engagement in the region and 2) key geopolitical, geoeconomic and/or geostrategic issues affecting Australia's engagement.
- Evidence of normative considerations – ways that Australia's defence, economic, aid and/or foreign policies might be reimagined in favour of a more inclusive and people-centred engagement with the region.
- Evidence of critical thought and intelligent analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities faced by Australia as it seeks to advance its national interests.
- Use of theory and key themes of the course to examine case(s).
- Evidence of reflective and critical wider reading and research, with full bibliography or reference list of sources.

Tip: Get started on your essay early!

Electronic Submissions

All assignments must be submitted through Turnitin through iLearn. Information about how to submit work online can be accessed through the iLearn unit.

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Class Discussion

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Description:

Ongoing reading and preparation for classes is essential in order to facilitate learning and participation in this unit. Participation in class discussions, including evidence of intelligent reflection and preparation, will comprise 20% of the assessment for the course. Students can prepare responses for the weekly questions and should always review the required readings. Moreover, looking at one additional reading per week (of your choice) will help to bring a diversity of opinion/material to the seminars.

The required readings are listed for each session in this course outline, and are available on e-Reserve and iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Australians comprise less than one-third of one per cent of the world's population.

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factors influencing, and being influenced by, Australia's engagement in the Asia-Pacific

(4) F. Critically assess Australia's policies, policy-making processes and government actors from a normative perspective and imagine ways of improving these policies and processes with a view to achieving a more inclusive and people-centred engagement with the Asia-Pacific

(5) G. Provide evidence-based, articulate opinions on a range of topics in relation to Australia and the Asia-Pacific

(6)

Delivery and Resources

Class Dates: 6/1/16 to 12/1/16 (no classes Saturday and Sunday)

Class Times: 9am – 5pm

Further details are found in the course guide, which is available on ilearn

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

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

Disruption to Studies Policy 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/

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.

Student Support

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

[dents.mq.edu.au/support/](https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/support/)

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (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

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

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Australians comprise less than one-third of one per cent of the world's population. Despite its size and geographical isolation, Australia has been involved in nearly every major military conflict that has occurred since 1901, especially those in its own backyard: the Asia-Pacific region. Despite such extensive military involvement, it is hard to pinpoint Australia's place in Asia with any precision. Its strategic environments are Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, while its major strategic ally is in North America. Its major trading partners lie in Northeast Asia, while the historical and cultural roots of the largest

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(4) F. Critically assess Australia's policies, policy-making processes and government actors from a normative perspective and imagine ways of improving these policies and processes with a view to achieving a more inclusive and people-centred engagement with the Asia-Pacific (5) G. Provide evidence-based, articulate opinions on a range of topics in relation to Australia and the Asia-Pacific (6)

Assessment tasks

- Class presentation
- Final Essay

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

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Assessment tasks

- Minor Essay
- Final Essay
- Class Discussion

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

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Learning outcomes

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Assessment tasks

- Minor Essay
- Final Essay
- Class Discussion

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

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Learning outcome

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Assessment task

- Minor Essay

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Assessment tasks

- Class presentation
- Class Discussion

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

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This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

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Assessment task

- Class presentation