



POL 207

Australian Governments and Public Policy

S1 External 2017

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Glenn Kefford

glenn.kefford@mq.edu.au

W6A 428

Thursday 10-11 or by appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp at 100 level or above or (3cp in HIST or MHIS or POL units)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit surveys recent literature of public policy studies and policy analysis and examines the complex processes of governmental policy making. Questions are raised about the state in contemporary society and the distribution of power in the unfolding stages of policy development, implementation and evaluation. The unit draws on analytical literature from a variety of sources, but its empirical content is supported throughout by Australian examples.

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:

Analyse the role of different actors and institutions in influencing policy

Identify, critically analyse and discuss the major debates and controversies involved in this subject, including the impact of ideology, economics and institutions

Understand theories and models of the policy-making process including their strengths and weaknesses as well as selection of policy instruments

Understand and can explain debates about power and how they are said to influence policy

Communicate research findings and views accurately and effectively using a variety of

techniques (written, spoken, visual)

Understand and can explain the role of actors, institutions and ideas key to specific policy areas in Australia

General Assessment Information

Assignment Submission

All written assignments must be submitted using the “Turnitin Assignments” facility on the iLearn website. This facility includes software which scans the uploaded assignments for plagiarism. Follow the instructions on the screen carefully. Your assignment should be uploaded before midnight on the due date.

In all cases, you should ensure that you keep a copy of the assignment.

Return of marked work

Marked assignments will be returned via the same facility on iLearn. When marks are released, you will need to go back in to the assignment submission box, and open your uploaded assignment. When you click on the “GradeMark” button, you will be able to see the marker’s comments on your work. You can save or print the essay with the comments.

Extensions

Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and will require documentary evidence such as a medical certificate to support the request for an extension. You should contact the convenor as early as possible if you think you may need an extension. While we do understand that most students are engaged in paid employment, extensions cannot be granted on this basis alone.

Penalties for late submission

Assignments which are submitted after the due date, without having an extension granted by the convenor, will be penalised, at a rate of 3% of the mark for each week day after the due date. Any paper submitted more than 3 weeks after the due date will not be marked, and the student will be failed for the assignment.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Quick Analysis</u>	15%	No	7 April
<u>Major Essay</u>	35%	No	26 May
<u>Seminar Discussions</u>	20%	No	Ongoing
<u>Exam</u>	30%	No	TBA

Quick Analysis

Due: **7 April**

Weighting: **15%**

Students are to select a policy issue from those posted and undertake a quick analysis of 1000 words

Students should address each of the following questions in relation to their chosen topic. These correspond with the first five weeks of unit content:

- (1) How does the Australian policy context affect policymaking in this area? (*See Week 1-3 content*)
- (2) Who are the key policy actors involved in this issue and what roles do they play? (*See Week 4 content*)
- (3) How would you describe the 'policy type' at stake here? (*See Week 4 content*)

To substantiate your response, refer to unit readings, additional listed readings and conduct your own research to find quality sources such as journal articles, books and book chapters. Authoritative websites such as those of media outlets can also be used, particularly to assist with your understanding and representation of the selected topic area.

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Major Essay

Due: **26 May**

Weighting: **35%**

Students are to select a policy issue from those posted (which cannot be the same as the issue selected for the quick analysis) and produce a research essay of 2500 words

Students should address each of the following questions (corresponding with unit content delivered from weeks 2 to 11) in relation to their chosen topic in **essay format**.

- (1) Is this policy area ideological? If so how? (Week 2 content)
- (2) To what extent is this policy area pluralistic or is there evidence that some actors exert disproportionate power and influence over the policymaking process? (See *Week 5 content*)
- (3) What types of policy instruments are used? (Week 6 content)
- (3) What types of consultation processes are utilised in this policy area and how effective are these arrangements? (See *Week 7 content*)
- (4) What are the implementation and evaluation challenges in this policy area? (See *Week 8 content*)
- (5) Does the media play an agenda setting role in relation to this policy issue? (See *Week 9 content*)

To substantiate your response, refer to unit readings, additional listed readings and conduct your own research to find quality sources such as journal articles, books and book chapters. Authoritative websites such as those of media outlets, NGOs and government should also be utilised in order to assist with your understanding and analysis of the selected policy topic.

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Seminar Discussions

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Seminars will be held weekly (Starting in Week 2) and will run for between 90 minutes and two hours in length dependent on the material. Seminars offer students an opportunity to discuss readings, consider case studies in more detail, analyse written and web based materials and work with fellow students and teaching staff to advance their knowledge.

Seminar topics follow a week behind the lecture content. Hence, in the first seminar in week 2, this will cover week 1's lecture and be an introduction to the unit and set out what is required in the seminars. The seminar in week 3 will consider the topic from Week 2's lecture and so on.

Throughout the semester, group work will be used frequently and each student is required to speak on behalf of their group at least once. Each student will also be assigned a week in the semester and be asked to lead the discussion as a dialogue facilitator about a policy issue that they have identified and which is in the media. This will be considered **part** of the participation mark but not all of it. Contributing to class discussions and within groups will also be important.

These marks are for "participating" not merely attending. That is, in tutorials you should regularly contribute your opinions and ideas

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Exam

Due: **TBA**

Weighting: **30%**

The end of semester examination is used to test students knowledge of the material covered throughout the unit. More information on the exam will be provided later in the semester.

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Delivery and Resources

Delivery:

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.

Internal students are expected to attend the following classes each week:

Lecture: Thursday 11-12

Seminars: Thursday 12-2, 2-4; Friday 12-2

External students: The lecture is digitally recorded and can be downloaded from the ILearn website shortly after it is delivered. You will also find lecture slides on the website.

External student participation is based on participation to discussion board questions. This includes responses to questions listed by the unit convenor and discussion with fellow external students. Students are expected to contribute and participate each week on the discussion board as they would in an on-campus tutorial.

Resources:

This unit has a unit webpage which is accessible only to currently enrolled students. Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>

The text book for this unit is Maddison, S. and Dennis, R. 2013. *An Introduction to Australian Public Policy: Theory and Practice*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. Additional readings will be accessible electronically via the Macquarie University Library iShare system. Links will be posted on the iLearn site.

Unit Schedule

Week	Lecture Topic
<u>Module 1: Introduction and Context</u>	
1	Introduction and Overview
2	Government, Parliament and Policy
3	Ideology, Economics and Public Policy
4	Policy Actors and Policy Types

<u>Module 2: Policy Theory, Models and Components</u>	
5	Power and Public Policy: from Pluralism to Structuralism
6	Policy Process Models and Policy Instruments
7	Consulting with Stakeholders
8	Implementation and Evaluation
<u>Module 3: Australian Policy in Practice</u>	
9	The Media as Policy Agenda Setters
10	<u>**Assignment Preparation for major essay: no lectures or tutorials**</u>
11	Economic Policy: Trade, Industry and Tax
12	Social and Welfare Policy
13	Unit review and exam guide

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_2016.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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://students.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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

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

Graduate Capabilities

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

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- Understand and can explain debates about power and how they are said to influence policy
- Understand and can explain the role of actors, institutions and ideas key to specific policy areas in Australia

Assessment tasks

- Quick Analysis
- Major Essay
- Seminar Discussions
- Exam

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.

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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:

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- Understand theories and models of the policy-making process including their strengths and weaknesses as well as selection of policy instruments
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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

- Identify, critically analyse and discuss the major debates and controversies involved in this subject, including the impact of ideology, economics and institutions
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