POIX201

Contemporary Issues in Australian Politics: Race, Nation, Class and Gender

S1 OUA 2017

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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OUA Co-Ordinator
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Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
As Australia progresses through the second decade of the 21st century, it confronts a number of persistent questions: Has it lived up to its reputation as an egalitarian country whose unofficial motto is 'fair go!'? How have class relations been impacted on – if at all – by the economic boom of the past two decades? Are Australian women and men really equal in the context of the rise and fall of the Women's Liberation Movement and the emergence of so-called 'raunch feminism'? What are the prospects for closing the gap between the country's indigenous people and its more recent arrivals? Taking as its central themes, race, nation, class and gender, the unit is structured in the following way: weeks 2-4 deal with race and nation; weeks 5-8 with class politics; weeks 9-12 with gender and sexuality; week 13 concludes the unit by examining the health of the Australian body politic in light of the foregoing discussions about its divided state. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/

Learning Outcomes

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

1. A sound understanding of the foundations of the Australian political system and the major contemporary issues within Australia's socio-political framework.
2. A working knowledge of the agenda's and policies of Australia's political parties and the debates and controversies that surround them

3. Familiarity with the main political ideologies that are influential in the Australian political scene
4. Development of a sophisticated analytical vocabulary for better appreciating some of the more pressing contemporary issues in Australian politics

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
First Essay	30%	No	Week 6, Sunday, 11.59pm
Second Essay	45%	No	Week 12, Sunday, 11.59pm
Reading Review	10%	No	Multiple
Participation	15%	No	Ongoing

First Essay

Due: **Week 6, Sunday, 11.59pm**
Weighting: **30%**

This essay, approximately 1200 words in length, deals with one of the 'important questions' listed below. You should refer to a minimum of 6 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.

1. How is power exercised and distributed in Australia? 2. How deep are some of the divisions in Australian society? Are they getting worse, or better? 3. What role does the state play in fostering – or lessening – some of these antagonisms? 4. Is Australian egalitarianism a myth? 5. What impact has the economic growth of the last two decades in Australia had on class division? 6. Can conflicts in Australia be resolved through parliamentary reform?

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Second Essay

Due: **Week 12, Sunday, 11.59pm**
Weighting: **45%**

The essay, approximately 2500 words in length, provides students with the opportunity to explore a topic of interest in depth.

Choose one of the following questions for your major essay. 1. What is behind some of the racist attacks on Indigenous sporting stars? 2. ‘Australia is not the land of the “fair go”!’ Discuss in relation to Australia’s response to asylum-seekers? 3. ‘Class divisions in Australia make a mockery of rhetoric extolling the “‘national interest”.’ Discuss. 4. Is feminism relevant in 21st century Australia? 5. Would same-sex marriage liberate lesbians and gays? 6. What can the Australian government do, if anything, about the depression epidemic?

7. What explains tPauline Hanson's return as a political force?

8. Are Australian's 'fed up' with the two major political parties?

More information about the essay will be available on iLearn, and it will be further discussed in class in coming weeks

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 ‘correct’ answer to each question: rather, there are arguments that are better expressed, more persuasively made, intelligently constructed, supported with evidence, and deeply analysed. Consider whether the arguments you read are logical and provide convincing evidence. The same criteria should apply to your own work.

General Guidelines

1. Rely primarily on scholarly references (all JSTOR sources count as scholarly). 10-15 sources are usually required for a sophisticated critical essay. 2. Avoid suspect websites like blogs. Newspapers are fine to use, but they are not scholarly. Research essays from think-tanks are scholarly. 3. Be sure that the essay is your own point of view based on your own reading 4. Both Harvard (in-text) and Chicago (footnotes) systems of referencing are acceptable. No endnotes. 5. You may go 10% under or over the word limit.

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the more pressing contemporary issues in Australian politics

Reading Review

Due: **Multiple**
Weighting: **10%**

Students are asked to choose one week, and then select one reading (book, chapter from an edited book collection, or journal article) that is relevant to the week in question. You are required to post a response to the reading on the Discussion Forum for that week. Your response, which should be between 400-600 words in length, should include a short summary of the reading's argument and a critical response to this argument. Other students may respond to your post during discussion. This is your chance to do some further research on a topic that you are interested in. You may include reference to the source you chose in either of your essays.

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Participation

Due: **Ongoing**
Weighting: **15%**

You will be assessed on your participation in online discussion undertaken through the unit website. This task develops your ability to communicate ideas, your appreciation and comprehension of the themes and concepts discussed in the course, your ability to critically assess and evaluate the arguments of others, and your ability to clearly articulate your thoughts. It is also a task that monitors your progress across the unit topics. You are expected to do the weekly readings, participate in weekly discussions and make postings within the time frame of each discussion topic. These begin on Monday of the discussion week and run through to the following Sunday. You should look to answer at least one of the set questions each week, as well as engaging with the posts of other students. Each individual post should be kept to a maximum of 100 words. A professional and courteous approach towards staff and fellow students is expected at all times

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Delivery and Resources

As Australia progresses through the second decade of the 21st century, it confronts a number of persistent questions: Has it lived up to its reputation as an egalitarian country whose unofficial motto is ‘fair go!’? How have class relations been impacted on – if at all – by the economic boom of the past two decades? Are Australian women and men really equal in the context of the rise and fall of the Women’s Liberation Movement and the emergence of so-called ‘raunch feminism’? In what way has its capitalist ancestry as a British colony left a legacy in Australia’s politics and society – for, example, the White Australia policy? What are the prospects for closing the gap between the country’s indigenous people and its more recent arrivals?

In spite of the power and reach of what has come to be known as globalisation, every polity remains different. Australia is no exception – it has its own political nuances and idiosyncrasies that make it both interesting and worth of study in its own right. Anyone who lives, works or studies in Australia needs a thorough grasp of its politics. This course delves far below the surface of politics portrayed by the mass media, which – to the extent that it’s interested in politics at all – remains obsessed with personalities, scandal, and leaders of institutions, whose existence and rationale are always accepted uncritically. In contrast, this course takes nothing for granted, and, following the cry of the philosopher Frederic Jameson to ‘historicise everything’, we view all aspects of Australian society from a critical and historical perspective.

Taking as its central themes, race, nation, class, and gender, the course is structured in the following way: Weeks 2-4 deal with race and nation; Weeks 5-8 with class politics; Weeks 9-12 with gender and sexuality; Week 13 concludes the course by examining the health of the Australian body politic in light of the foregoing discussions about its divided state.

Primary readings will be provided each week on ilearn, a suggested reading list for each week will also be available via a pdf. Your tutor may also introduce contemporary sources relevant to each weeks topic.

Here are some further resources that will be useful for your essays:

Aulich, C. & Wettenhall, R. (eds.) (2005) *Howard’s Second and Third Term Governments*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Frankel, B. (2004) *Zombies, Lilliputians and Sadists: The Power of the Living Dead and the Future of Australia*. Fremantle: Curtin University Press.

Hirst, J. (2002) *Australia's Democracy: A Short History*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Irving, H. (2004) *Five Things to Know About the Constitution*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 92-107.

Maddox, G. (2005) *Australian Democracy in Theory and Practice, 5th edn*. Melbourne: Longman.

Parkin, A., Summers, J. & Woodward, D. (eds.) (2006) *Government, Politics, Power and Policy in Australia 8th edn*. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education Australia.

Singleton, G. (ed.) (2000) *The Howard Government: Australian Commonwealth Administration 1996-1998*. Sydney: UNSW Press.

Singleton, G., Aitkin, D., Jinks, B. & Warhurst, J. (2006) *Australian Political Institutions*, 8th edn. Melbourne:

Longman.

Smith, R. (2001) *Australian Political Culture*. Melbourne Longman.

Vromen, A. & Gelber, K. (2005) *Powerscape: Contemporary Australian Political Practice*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Young, S. (2004) *The Persuaders: Inside the Hidden Machine of Political Advertising*. Melbourne: Pluto Press Australia.

USEFUL JOURNALS AND MAGAZINES

Arena

Australian Journal of Political Science

Australian Journal of Politics and History

Australian Journal of Political Economy

Australian Journal of Public Administration

Australian Journal of Social Issues

[Australian]Journal of Sociology

AQ: Journal of Contemporary Analysis

Griffith Review

Journal of Political Ideologies

The Monthly: Australian Politics, Society and Culture

Thesis Eleven

USEFUL WEBSITES

Macquarie University's Politics subject site:

http://www.lib.mq.edu/resources/subject/politics

The Commonwealth parliamentary Library: http://www.aph.gov.au/library/index.htm

The National Library of Australia: http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/gov /

Elections data base website at the University of Western Australia: http://elections.uwa.edu.au

NSW government website:

http://www.nsw.gov.au/government.asp

Australian Bureau of Statistics: http://www.abs.goc.au/

ABC Online: http://www.abc.net.au

Australian Policy Online: http://www.apo.org.au/index.shtml

Australian Review of Public Affairs: http://australianreview.net

Online Opinion http://www.onlineopinion.com.au New Matilda Magazine www.newmatilda.com/home/default/.asp

The Whitlam Institute http://www.whitlam.org/about

The Australia Institute www.tai.org.au/

The Centre for Independent Studies http://cis.org.au/

The Green Left Weekly http://www.greenleft.org.au/

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit Ask MQ and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to the census date (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to apply for Special Circumstances. If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can apply online.

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to apply directly to Macquarie University.

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

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 outcome

- 3. Familiarity with the main political ideologies that are influential in the Australian political scene

Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Second 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:

Assessment task

- Participation

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 outcome

- 4. Development of a sophisticated analytical vocabulary for better appreciating some of

the more pressing contemporary issues in Australian politics

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

- 1. A sound understanding of the foundations of the Australian political system and the major contemporary issues within Australia's socio-political framework.
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- 3. Familiarity with the main political ideologies that are influential in the Australian political scene
- 4. Development of a sophisticated analytical vocabulary for better appreciating some of the more pressing contemporary issues in Australian politics

Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Second Essay
- Reading Review

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

- 2. A working knowledge of the agenda's and policies of Australia's political parties and the debates and controversies that surround them
- 3. Familiarity with the main political ideologies that are influential in the Australian political scene

Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Second Essay
- Participation

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

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Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Second Essay
- Reading Review

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

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Assessment tasks

- First Essay
- Second Essay
- Reading Review
- Participation

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:

Assessment task

- Participation

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:

Assessment task

- Participation