



Wollongong College Australia

A College of the University of Wollongong

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CRICOS 02723D
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Foundation Studies Program

(CRICOS course codes: 007732G, 023266F)

Subject Outline Summer 2009/10

FSP 020 Government & Policy

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WCA-FSP 020-S0/6

Government and Policy

Subject description

Government and Policy engages students in the study of politics and social policy issues in Australia. The subject provides an introduction to:

- ▶ the principles and theories underlying modern representative democracy
- ▶ an overview of parliamentary democracy, including voting systems and elections, and the distribution of responsibilities between Federal and State governments
- ▶ the Westminster system of government, including the separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government
- ▶ the role of political parties, the media, and interest groups
- ▶ major public debates

Subject structure

Government and Policy is a 4 credit point, single-session subject delivered as 4 hours of scheduled classes per week. The subject consists of a 1 x 2 hour lecture and 1 x 2 hour tutorial each week. The session is of 14 week's duration with face-to-face classes scheduled for the first 12 weeks and a study/examination period in Weeks 13 and 14.

In addition to scheduled class sessions, students are expected to spend additional time in individual study and research. As a general guideline students will need to spend at least 1 hour in private study (including completing homework and revision) for every hour of scheduled class time.

Teachers will be available for a consultation time each week. Students will be notified of the time and location of the consultation session during Week 1 of the Session. It is recommended that students experiencing difficulty with this subject arrange to consult with the teacher as difficulties are encountered.

Some students may require tutorial support to improve language/literacy skills. Where this is recommended, students will be advised to use the College's self-access facilities in the Multimedia Centre in their own time. These facilities are located upstairs in building 30. Where this is recommended, your attendance at and use of these facilities may form part of your participation mark.

Learning resources

There is no set text for this subject. A weekly tutorial program with discussion questions will be provided by the tutor.

The following textbooks may be useful:

Bridgman, P. & Davis, G. *The Australian Policy Handbook*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2000

Colebatch, H. K. *Policy*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1988

Dalton, T., Draper, M., Weeks, W. & Wiseman, J. *Making Social Policy in Australia: an introduction*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2000

Hughes, O. E. *Australian Politics*, Macmillan, South Yarra (any recent edition)

Jaensch, D. *The Politics of Australia*, 2nd. Ed. Macmillan, South Yarra, 1997

Smith, R. & Watson, L. (eds) *Politics in Australia*, Allan & Unwin, St Leonards (any recent edition)

Subject outcomes

Successful completion of Government and Policy will enable students to:

- apply subject vocabulary in appropriate contexts
- know and understand the basic features and functioning of representative democracy and the Westminster system of government in Australia
- identify and assess the role of political parties, the media, and interest groups in Australia
- analyse and evaluate major public debates
- effectively communicate their own position in both written and oral form, and using appropriate information technology
- develop independent learning skills and assume responsibility for disciplined tertiary study

Subject outline in weeks

The following guide to lessons and activities may be adjusted to suit the needs of the group as long as subject outcomes and assessment criteria are met.

Week 1

Overview of subject requirements and assessment tasks

Types of government; The need for government in Australia

Week 2

Features of democracy

Week 3

The Westminster system; Parliament and Law making in Australia

Week 4

Political parties and democracy in Australia

Week 5

Voting systems and elections in Australia

In-Class Test

Week 6

The role of the media

Week 7

Mid-session test

Week 8

Interest groups in Australia

Week 9

Governments and human rights in Australia

Week 10

A current internal political issue

Essay Due

Week 11

A current issue in Australian foreign relations

Week 12

Exam Revision

Weeks 13 & 14 Final examination Period

Examination and study period. Please refer to examination timetable for the exact date, time and location of the final exam.

Assessment

Assessment and plagiarism policy

All written assessment tasks, with the exception of examinations and in-class tasks, must be word-processed unless students are otherwise advised.

Students must keep copies of all assessment tasks submitted for marking with the exception of class tests and examinations.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or stealing that happens when a student uses someone else's work and presents it as his/her own without showing where it comes from. To avoid this, students are expected to submit their own original work for assessment and to accurately acknowledge all references and sources used in essays and assignments.

For information regarding assessment, plagiarism, acknowledging sources and examination rules, please refer to the Wollongong College Australia Student Handbook <http://www.wca.uow.edu.au/handbook>

Assessment schedule

Task	Due	Weighting	Length/Time
In-class Test	Week 5	15%	1 hour
Mid session Test	Week 7	20%	1.5 hours
Essay	Week 10	25%	1200 words
Final examination	Week 13/14	30%	2 hours
Participation	Ongoing	10%	Weeks 1-12

Marking Guidelines

WCA best practice is that students can normally expect to have assessment tasks handed back within two weeks, and before the next assessment task is due. On occasion there may be exceptions to this time frame due to, for example, the size of the task, the size of the class, teacher illness or teacher leave.

Where there are several teachers marking a major assessment task, tasks will be handed back by all the teachers within the same week.

Assessment criteria and explanation of components

All assessment components are marked according to set marking criteria. Some assessment tasks may undergo check-marking by a panel of tutors.

In-class Test **15%**

In the second half of the Week 5 tutorial students will be required to write answers to questions based on material related to weeks 1 - 4.

Mid Session Test **20%**

A 1.5 hour test in Week 7, of content covered in Weeks 1-6.

Essay **25%**

A 1200 word essay, to be submitted in Week 10. Criteria and topics will be issued in class.

Final Examination **30%**

The final examination will be held during the formal examination period in weeks 13 and 14, and will examine all topics covered during this session.

Participation **10%**

Active participation in tutorials is expected of all students in all classes. Participation in class discussions will help develop the student's confidence in questioning and commenting on material presented, encourage critical thinking and allow the tutor to evaluate the student's progress.

Participation marks may be allocated according to the following criteria:

- Constructive contribution to general class discussion
- Constructive feedback and contribution to discussions following presentations
- Active participation in tutorial support classes where recommended
- Proactive consultation with class teacher and/or tutorial support where relevant
- Completion of non-assessable tasks including homework and other tasks
- Preparedness for class sessions
- Active participation in group work