Coordinator 
Dr Keith Suter

Classes  Twice per week at appointed times

Course Description
Summary:
This course examines the Australian system of government and key public policy issues, such as economic policy, foreign and defence, environment, human rights, health and social policy. Comparisons are made where appropriate with the US system of government and key public policy issues.

Content:
An introduction to an understanding of Australian government and politics, focusing on
a. the key institutions of the Federation: the constitution, the instruments of government, political parties, interests groups, in both the historical and current contexts,
b. the major domestic and external issues of political debate
c. the policy making processes and policy case studies

Course Objectives:
a. establishing a conceptual and analytical framework for the study of politics, domestic and global
b. acquiring a basic understanding of Australian government and politics in both the historical and contemporary contexts
c. an analysis of Australia’s place in the world
d. developing the skills needed for effective research, logical argument and clear presentation
e. developing a greater understanding of US politics on the basis of comparison with Australian politics

Assessment
1. Research Paper 40%
   A research paper of between 2500-3000 on a topic chosen from the list supplied.
2. Seminar Presentation 15%
   A presentation (10-15mins) on the same topic as chosen for the research paper, which will be delivered at a seminar class, date to be advised.

3. Mid-course Short Paper 15%
   A Short Paper, of about 1,000 words

4. Final Examination 25%
   A two-hour, two question open-book examination will be held. There will be a limited choice of questions, which will be based on the lecture topics.

5. Participation 5%
   All absences must be supported by documentation

LECTURES AND TUTORIALS
A great deal of photocopied material will be distributed during the lectures
Australian political documentaries will also be shown each week, followed by a discussion of their contents

The Lecture Program
Week 1 Introduction to Australia and its Politics
   Political Institutions; Major Political Parties

Week 2 Minor Political Parties; Role of Women in Australian Political Life
   Media/Lobby Groups/NGOs

Week 3 Australian Economy
   Australian Foreign and Defence Policy
   First Elective Paper due

Week 4 Social Policy, Healthcare, Law and Justice
   Human Rights/Indigenous Affairs

Week 5 Environmental Politics

Week 6 Seminar Presentations: Reports on Research; Future of Work/Looking to the Future
Books
Highly recommended:
*The Oxford Companion to Australian Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2007
Firth, S., *Australia in International Politics*, Allen and Unwin 1999

Internet:
Australia Strategic Policy Institute  [www.apsi.org.au](http://www.apsi.org.au)
Australian Institute for International Affairs  [www.aiia.asn.au](http://www.aiia.asn.au)
Lowy Institute  [www.lowyinstitute.org](http://www.lowyinstitute.org)
Inside Story, Swinburne Institute for Social Research:  [www.inside.org.au](http://www.inside.org.au)
Australian Broadcasting Corporation:  [www.abc.net.au/iview](http://www.abc.net.au/iview)
Global Directions  [www.global-directions.com](http://www.global-directions.com)