School of Humanities Creative Industries SocialSci

CMNS3520: Public Affairs
Singapore PSB
Trimester 3 - 2023 (Singapore)

OVERVIEW

Course Description

The course explores the processes of communication as they relate to structures of government and to other socio-political and institutional forces within society. It examines responsibilities and relationships between tiers of government and probes processes of decision and policy-making. The course considers concepts related to power, influence, ideology and values, political involvement and active citizenship. Through contemporary issues and events, consideration is applied to the Australian system of government, and how political power is contested, gained, exercised, and resisted. The role and influence of social and political movements as methods of organising political ideas and action will be examined.

Assumed Knowledge

60 units at 2000 level including CMNS1090.

Contact Hours

Singapore PSB
Lecture
Face to Face On Campus
1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s)

Tutorial
Face to Face On Campus
2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s)

Unit Weighting

10

Workload

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator　**Singapore PSB**
Mr Clarence Fu
ClarenceFu.Fu@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation: Request for face-to-face student consultation will be by email appointment only; consultations will usually be carried out before or after classes for CMNS3520.

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SYLLABUS

Course Content　Content explores the significant institutions and forces that shape political society and their role in contemporary public affairs. Topics will include:
- Local, regional and national systems;
- The role and operation of the various spheres of government;
- Political parties, campaigns and elections;
- The parliamentary, executive and judicial arms of government;
- Electoral systems and voter behaviour;
- The public and private sectors;
- Interest groups, not-for-profits and non-government organisations;
- The formulation of public policy;
- The role of communication professionals in public affairs.

Course Learning Outcomes　**On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**
1. Identify and describe the major components and responsibilities of local, regional and national systems of government, and key forces involved in contemporary public affairs;

2. Effectively communicate how these components, responsibilities and forces inter-relate;

3. Identify and explain the role and contribution of professional public affairs communication in contemporary policy formation;

4. Analyse and interpret current events and issues in the light of this understanding; and,

5. Outline and explain the role of communication professionals in public affairs.

Course Materials　Recommended Reading (Refer to Course Site)
- The Constitution of Australia and that of your respective countries.
- Journal and media articles that will be uploaded from time to time.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	5 Sep	Introductions & Course Overview.	Briefing on Assessments.	
2	12 Sep	Evolution of Political Systems.	Formation of groups.	
3	19 Sep	Political Parties and the Party System.	Confirmation of topic for Essay (Assignment 1).	Journal Post 1.
4	26 Sep	The Making of Public Policy.	Confirmation of topic for Group Written Report.	Journal Post 2.
5	3 Oct	Interest groups – powers and players.	Preparation for Group Written Report.	Journal Post 3. Assignment 1 (Essay).
6	10 Oct	Electoral Systems.		Journal Post 4.
		Mid term break		
7	24 Oct	Role of Government and Separation of Powers.	Confirmation of topics for Individual Presentations.	Journal Post 5.
8	31 Oct	Spheres of Government and Division of Powers.	Preparation for Group Written Report.	Journal Post 6.
9	7 Nov	Lobbying, Activism and Advocacy.	Preparation for Group Written Report.	Journal Post 7.
10	21 Nov	Role of the PR/Communication Professional in Public Affairs.	Preparation for Class Presentations (Assignment 3).	Journal Post 8. Assignment 2 (Group Written Report).
11	27 Nov	No lecture.	Class Presentation (Assignment 3).	Journal Post 9.
12	1 Dec	No lecture.	Class Presentation (Assignment 3).	Journal Post 10.
13	TBD		Additional presentation sessions to be arranged if needed	
		Examination Period		
		Examination Period		

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date and Time	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Assessment 1 - Essay	Thursday, 5 October 2023 @ 2359hrs	Individual	20%	3, 4, 5
2	Assessment 2 - Written Submission	Thursday, 23 November @ 2359hrs	Group	40%	3, 4, 5
3	Assignment 3 - Class Presentation	Presentations will be between Weeks 10 and 13.	Individual	20%	2, 3, 4
4	Assignment 4 - Canvas Postings	Weekly posts between Weeks 3 and 12.	Individual	20%	1, 2, 4

Late Submissions   The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Essay

Assessment Type	Essay
Description	This individual assignment will require students to select a country of their choice (preferably their homeland or Australia) and to describe, examine and analyse the current political system and how it meets the national needs. The individual submission will be according to the terms of reference provided
Weighting	20%
Length	1500 words
Due Date	Thursday, 5 October 2023 @ 2359hrs
Submission Method	Via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubric in course site
Return Method	Via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Via Canvas

Assessment 2 - Written Submission

Assessment Type	Case Study / Problem Based Learning
Description	This project requires students to work in groups, comprising no less than five and no more than six students, on a submission to a public policy problem that will be provided to each group. The group submission will be according to the terms of reference provided
Weighting	40%
Length	3000 words
Due Date	Thursday, 23 November @ 2359hrs
Submission Method	Via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubic in course site
Return Method	Via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Via Canvas

Assessment 3 - Class Presentation

Assessment Type	Presentation
Description	The lecturer will provide a list of topics for Assignment 3. Students are to select one topic in the list to present on. Students will be allocated a slot during tutorials between Weeks 10 and 13 to a do 10-minute presentation. This will be followed by a 5-min Q&A session
Weighting	20%
Length	5 minutes
Due Date	Presentations will be between Weeks 10 and 13
Submission Method	Power-point slides to be emailed to the Lecturer prior to the presentation
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubric in course site
Return Method	Not Returned
Feedback Provided	Feedback will be provided in class following completion of the presentation

Assessment 4 - Canvas Postings

Assessment Type	Log / Workbook
Description	Each student will be required to submit a weekly post (300 word maximum) on a given topic based on the lectures in the course schedule. In total, each student has to submit 10 posts for the course
Weighting	20%
Length	4 x 400 words
Due Date	Weekly posts between Weeks 3 and 12
Submission Method	Via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubric in course site.
Return Method	Via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Via Canvas

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:
- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination (viva) Procedure. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:
1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has

specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;

3.   you are requesting a change of placement; or

4.   the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/no-room-for/policies-and-procedures that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.