Unit Outline 2014
Faculty of Arts and Design

Journalism and Political Process
8127
This Unit Outline must be read in conjunction with:

a) *UC Student Guide to Policies*, which sets out University-wide policies and procedures, including information on matters such as plagiarism, grade descriptors, moderation, feedback and deferred exams, and is available at (*scroll to bottom of page*)
   http://www.canberra.edu.au/student-services

b) *UC Guide to Student Services*, and is available at (*scroll to bottom of page*)
   http://www.canberra.edu.au/student-services

c) Any additional information specified in section 6h.

1: General Information

1a Unit title
   Journalism and Political process

1b Unit number
   8127

1c Teaching Period and year offered
   Semester 2, 2014

1d Credit point value
   3

1e Unit level
   2

1f Name of Unit Convener and contact details (including telephone and email)
   Dr Greg Jericho, telephone TBA, email: greg.jericho@canberra.edu.au

1g Administrative contact details (including name, location, telephone and email)
   Administration Officer
   Location: 9C6
   Contact number: 6201 2475
   Email: FADadmin@canberra.edu.au
2: Academic Content

2a Unit description and learning outcomes
Syllabus

The unit investigates public understandings of politics and political processes as mediated information by exploring the role of contemporary journalism in shaping political knowledge in selected democracies, including the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, India and Japan. Topics include journalistic routines and values, newsroom cultures, news gathering and election campaigning, journalists and political elites, news and political parties, political movements, mediated popular culture and politics, and the role of emerging media technologies. Theories of political communication relating to the institutions and practice of journalism are explored: process approaches; diffusion of information; agenda-setting; news framing and priming; critical theory; and constructionist approaches. Students begin a study of the role of globalization by examining selected case studies of news coverage of supranational institutions.

Learning Outcomes
With the satisfactory completion of this unit, students will have:

1. acquired an understanding of the main elements of studies of journalism, news and political process; gained insight into the role of contemporary journalism in the political processes of international agencies and bodies, and in the political processes of selected nation states;
2. further developed their understanding of the main theoretical approaches to political communication research; gained introductory analytical skills necessary to analyse published political communication research in books, journals and government publications.

2b Generic skills
By the end of their course, graduates will have developed skills and attributes in:
1. Communication: The ability to present knowledge, ideas and opinions effectively and communicate within and across professional and cultural boundaries;
2. Analysis and inquiry: The ability to gather information, and to analyse and evaluate information and situations in a systematic, creative and insightful way;
3. Problem solving: The ability to apply problem-solving processes in novel situations; to identify and analyse problems then formulate and implement solutions;
4. Working independently and with others: The ability to plan their own work, be self-directed, and use interpersonal skills and attitudes to work collaboratively; and
5. Professionalism and social responsibility: The capacity and intention to use professional knowledge and skills ethically and responsibly, for the benefit of others and the environment.

2c Prerequisites and/or co-requisites

3: Delivery of Unit and Timetable

3a Delivery mode
Lectures: Weekly lectures (Thu 9:00-10:30, 05C58, weeks 1-7, 9-13) will be delivered in class, recorded and uploaded on Moodle.
Tutorials: Weekly 90-minute in-class tutorials on weeks 2-7, 10-13).


**Online activity:** Moodle will be open to provide students with guidelines on assessments, review of readings and lectures to prepare for the final exam. The Moodle URL: http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/course/view.php?id=12083

**3b Timetable of activities, such as lectures/ tutorials/ practicals/ field classes, showing key dates and topics** (Information might be provided in the form of a table)

The main part of this subject will be conducted in six two-week blocks, each of which approaches a key question in the subject. Each block will encompass.

- One lecture from the unit convenor (usually in the first week)
- Three to four set readings; recommendations for independent study.
- One seminar-style tutorial in the first week
- One guest lecture (usually in the second week)
- One independent writing task to be completed by the second week

In this way the subject will offer a mixture of formal lectures, discussion-based seminars, practitioner knowledge, and independent research tasks

**Week 1: 14 AUGUST– INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

Introductory lecture. No tutorials


**Weeks 2 and 3: 21 & 28 AUGUST – WHY IS POLITICAL JOURNALISM IMPORTANT?**

The 21 August Lecture will contain a guest component from Guardian Australia’s Katharine Murphy.

**Tutorials commence in Week 2**


Weeks 4 and 5: 4 & 11 SEPTEMBER – DOES POLITICAL JOURNALISM ILLUMINATE OR OBSCURE THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The 11 September lecture will contain a guest component from former Channel 10 producer and media advisor to Simon Crean, Stephen Spencer.


Weeks 6 and 7: 18 & 25 SEPTEMBER – DO JOURNALISTS SHAPE THE WAY THAT THE PUBLIC THINKS ABOUT POLITICS?

The 18 September lecture will contain a guest component by Fairfax radio press gallery journalist Frank Keany.


Entman, Robert M. “Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power” Journal of Communication 57.1
Week 8 – STUDY WEEK.

No Lectures this week

Weeks 9 and 10: 9 & 16 OCTOBER – IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOURNALISTS AND POLITICIANS COLLABORATIVE OR ADVERSARIAL?

The 9 October lecture will contain a guest component by the Member for Fraser, Dr Andrew Leigh.

Not tutorials will be held in the week beginning Monday 10 October.


Weeks 11 and 12: 23 & 30 OCTOBER- IS THE INTERNET MAKING POLITICAL JOURNALISM OBSOLETE?


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### 4: Unit Resources

**4a Lists of required texts/readings**

As above

For Unit readings and resources in the University of Canberra Library
- [Link to search page for Unit Readings](#) (print materials)
- [Link to search page for eReserve](#) (electronic materials)

**4b Materials and equipment**

Nil

**4c Unit website**

To find your unit site online, login to LearnOnline(Moodle) using your student ID. Note that your unit site has a profiles page that displays your name and email address for the benefit of other students. If you prefer to hide your email address, [click here for instructions](#).

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### 5: Assessment

**5a Assessment overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment item (including exams held in the exam period)</th>
<th>Due date of assignments</th>
<th>Weighting (total to equal 100%)</th>
<th>Addresses learning outcome(s)</th>
<th>Related generic skill(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tutorial Participation</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research essay</td>
<td>5 pm, 3 October.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dossier of responses to course questions</td>
<td>5pm, 14 November</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UC Generic Skills**

1. Communication
2. Analysis and Inquiry
3. Problem Solving
4. Working independently and with others
5. Professionalism and Social Responsibility

**5b Details of each assessment item**
1. Participation. Tutorial participation will be graded, and is worth 20% of your mark. It will be assessed on the following criteria.
   a. Consistency of participation
   b. Punctuality
   c. Quality of contribution to class discussion

Learning Outcomes:

This assessment item addresses all learning outcomes, and generic skill 1. In particular, students are building their skills in the art of debate, which is crucial to high-level communication ability and participation in media and policy environments.

Marking criteria and grade descriptors will be used in assessing participation in the unit:

**High Distinction:**
   You regularly made contributions to tutorials and online sessions that (i) kept discussions focussed, (ii) demonstrated an excellent understanding of the material, and (iii) showed evidence of reading the set text and/or the lecture and relevant additional reading **AND**
   You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating tutorials and online discussions.

**Distinction:**
   You regularly made contributions to tutorials and online sessions that (i) demonstrated a very good understanding of the material, and (ii) showed evidence of reading the set texts and/or the lecture **AND**
   You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating tutorials and any relevant online discussions.

**Credit:**
   You often made contributions to tutorials and online sessions that (i) demonstrated a good understanding of the material, and (ii) showed evidence of reading the set texts **AND**
   You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating tutorials and online discussions.

**Pass:**
   You made a number of relevant, informed contributions over the semester.

**Fail (NX):**
   You made little or no attempt to participate throughout the semester **OR** your contributions were almost always irrelevant and/or uninformed.

2. Research essay.

   Drawing on the readings throughout the first half of the semester write a 3,000-word essay discussing the question:

   **Does Political Journalism Represent the Public Interest?**

   You should answer the question with a focus on the contemporary Australian context.

Learning Outcomes:
This assessment item addresses Learning Outcomes 1 and 2, and generic skills 1 and 2. In particular, this assessment item is designed to assess your ability to construct a strong written argument based on academic and contemporary literature.

A **penalty of 10%** will be awarded for essays 10% under or over the word limit.

3. Dossier of responses to course questions.

The unit asks 5 questions:

   **WHY IS POLITICAL JOURNALISM IMPORTANT?**

   **DOES POLITICAL JOURNALISM ILLUMINATE OR OBSCURE THE POLITICAL PROCESS?**

   **DO JOURNALISTS SHAPE THE WAY THAT THE PUBLIC THINKS ABOUT POLITICS?**

   **IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOURNALISTS AND POLITICIANS COLLABORATIVE OR ADVERSARIAL?**

   **IS THE INTERNET MAKING POLITICAL JOURNALISM OBSOLETE?**

You are required to submit a dossier of a 500 word response to each question based on the readings and on the information provided by the guest lecturers (that is, five 500 word responses in total).

All material must be properly cited, but you will be allowed to cite the guest lectures.

**Learning Outcomes:**

This assessment item addresses Learning Outcomes 1 and 2, and generic skills 1 and 2. In particular, this assessment item is designed to assess your ability to construct a strong written argument based on academic and contemporary literature as well as contributions made by guest speakers.

For assessment items 2 and 3, the following assessment criteria will be applied:

- Essays must be typed and double-spaced and correctly referenced. Essays must be submitted by 5 pm on the due date. All essays should demonstrate knowledge of the relevant paper readings.
- Students are also encouraged to demonstrate evidence of extra and in-depth research.

Students should consult the Assessment Criteria List before the submission of each assignment. This will be used as the basis for the marking of your assignment.

5c **Submission of assessment items**

All assessment items will be submitted online via the unit Moodle site. The first page of each assessment submission should include the following information:

- Student Name:
- Student ID:
- Assessment Name:
Separate Cover sheets will no longer be required. Students will be required to confirm the following declaration (from the old cover sheet) online at the point of submission.

Student declaration:
I certify that:
• the attached assignment is my own work and no part of this work has been written for me by any other person except where such collaboration has been authorised by the lecturer/s concerned;
• material drawn from other sources has been fully acknowledged as to author/creator, source and other bibliographic details according to unit-specific requirements for referencing; and
• no part of this work has been submitted for assessment in any other unit in this or another Faculty except where authorised by the lecturer/s concerned.

5c.1. A reasonable attempt of ALL items of assessment must be made in order to be eligible to pass this unit.

5c.2. There are penalties for assessments submitted after the due time and date. See clause on Late Submissions below.

Students with special needs should contact the unit convenor at the beginning of the semester or the UC AccessAbility office.

5.c.3. Requests for Extensions
Requests for an extension will only be considered up to 3 days before the due time and date for that piece of assessment. Students are expected to have commenced work on their assessments before 3 days before it is due. Extensions will not be granted after the due time and date for a piece of assessment has passed and will be subject to the Late Submission clause below.

In the case of documented illness, misadventure or other extenuating circumstances, you will be granted an extension of time in which to complete the assessment. See Extension Request Policy on Moodle. Your request for an extension is made on the Extension Request Form (on unit Moodle site). Extensions are approved by the unit convenor or the assistant unit convenor and not by your tutor.

Requests for extensions due to work commitments, academic workload or lack of organisation will not be considered. Your attendance at university is no different to a professional workplace commitment and therefore such requests will not be considered.

Generally, the following are not grounds for an extension:
• Inability to have an assignment typed by the due date;
• Ordinary work and/or family commitments;
• Disk, drive, printer, internet or computer failure;
• Inability to submit on time due to parking or traffic/transport difficulties; and
• Time management issues (such as not having allowed sufficient time for the Plagiarism Self-Check to analyse and report on your work) and having more than one piece of assessment due (for other units).

Students registered with UC AccessAbility do not need to complete the extension request
form. Simply have AccessAbility email the unit convenor detailing when the assessment will be submitted.

Requests for extensions must be made in writing to a minimum of 3 days before the assessment due date.

If an extension is granted this approval must be attached to the assignment upon submission by the approved extended submission date.

Please see your tutor well before assessments are due to discuss any difficulties you may be having. We can assist in developing strategies for ensuring assessment work is submitted on time.

5c.4 Late submissions and penalties

This unit requires all assessment items to be submitted on Moodle.

Students should be aware that the assessment upload menu will be closed 5 minutes after the deadline and the system will not allow late submissions. No paper or email submissions will be accepted after the deadline without prior approval by the unit coordinator.

Assessment items submitted after the due time/date without an approved extension will be penalised 5% of the grade given, per day or part thereof, up to 1 week after the due date and marked without feedback.

Assessment items submitted more than one week after the due date will not be marked and no marks awarded.

5d Special assessment requirements

N/A

5e Supplementary assessment

Refer to the UC Supplementary Assessment Policy

5f Academic Integrity

Students have a responsibility to uphold University standards on ethical scholarship. Good scholarship involves building on the work of others and use of others’ work must be acknowledged with proper attribution made. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data are dishonest practices that contravene academic values. Please see UC's Academic Integrity Policy.

To enhance understanding of academic integrity, it is expected that all students will complete the LearnOnline Academic Integrity Module (AIM) at least once during their course of study. The module is automatically available as a listed site when students log into LearnOnline.

5g Use of text-matching software

The University of Canberra has available, through LearnOnline (Moodle), text-matching software that helps students and staff reduce plagiarism and improve understandings of academic integrity. Known as URKUND, the software matches submitted text in student assignments against material from various sources: the internet, published books and journals, and previously submitted student texts. Click here for further information on the URKUND text-matching software.
6: **Student Responsibility**

6a **Workload**
The amount of time you will need to spend on study in this unit will depend on a number of factors including your prior knowledge, learning skill level and learning style. Nevertheless, in planning your time commitments you should note that for a 3cp unit the total notional workload over the semester or term is assumed to be 150 hours. These hours include time spent in classes. The total workload for units of different credit point value should vary proportionally. For example, for a 6cp unit the total notional workload over a semester or term is assumed to be 300 hours.

6b **Inclusion and Welfare**
Students who need assistance in undertaking the unit because of disability or other circumstances should inform their Unit Convener or Inclusion and Welfare as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made.

6c **Participation requirements**
There is an expectation that students will attend and participate in all structured time; lectures and tutorials, both online and in-class. This is because participation through attendance is an important and significant component of learning design. Not only is this relevant to the gaining of knowledge and skills appropriate to this particular subject but it also applies to your degree as a whole.

From prior experience, there is a significant link between a student’s attendance/participation and the quality of their learning outcomes. To this end, attendance records are kept to guide and inform aspects of our grades and feedback.

6d **Withdrawal**
If you are planning to withdraw please discuss with your unit convenor. Please see Withdrawal of Units for further information on deadlines.

6e **Required IT skills**
Ability to access Moodle

6f **In-Unit Costs**
(Note: To calculate your unit fees see: How do I calculate my fees?. The online UC Co-op Textbook Search is available for purchasing text books.)

7: **Student Feedback**

All students enrolled in this unit will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the unit at the end of the Semester via the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) which you can access by logging into MyUC via the UC homepage: http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/. Your lecturer or tutor may also invite you to provide more detailed feedback on their teaching through an anonymous questionnaire.

8: **Authority of this Unit Outline**
Any change to the information contained in Section 2 (Academic content), and Section 5 (Assessment) of this document, will only be made by the Unit Convener if the written agreement of Head of Discipline and a majority of students has been obtained; and if written advice of the change is then provided on the unit site in the learning management system. If this is not possible, written advice of the change must be then forwarded to each student enrolled in the unit at their registered term address. Any individual student who believes him/herself to be disadvantaged by a change is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Unit Convener.