

730-475 Public Interest Lawyering

Credit Points:	12.50
Level:	4 (Undergraduate)
Dates & Locations:	This subject is not offered in 2009. Students are expected to attend a one day conference at the end of semester in which students will present their research. In addition to seminars during regular teaching hours, additional seminars may be held outside regular class hours including lunchtime to allow for engagement with public interest practitioners. Off campus visits to courts may also be undertaken. Given the small group nature of the subject, participation is considered an essential feature of the course.
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: One 2-hour seminar per week Total Time Commitment: 44 hours.
Prerequisites:	Legal Method and Reasoning; Torts; Constitutional Law; Administrative Law; Dispute Resolution or in each case their equivalents.
Corequisites:	None
Recommended Background Knowledge:	None
Non Allowed Subjects:	None
Core Participation Requirements:	<p><p>For the purposes of considering request for Reasonable Adjustments under the Disability Standards for Education (Cwth 2005), and Student Support and Engagement Policy, academic requirements for this subject are articulated in the Subject Overview, Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Generic Skills sections of this entry.</p> <p>It is University policy to take all reasonable steps to minimise the impact of disability upon academic study, and reasonable adjustments will be made to enhance a student's participation in the University's programs. Students who feel their disability may impact on meeting the requirements of this subject are encouraged to discuss this matter with a Faculty Student Adviser and Student Equity and Disability Support: http://services.unimelb.edu.au/disability</p></p>
Subject Overview:	<p>This subject will introduce students to how law is used and practiced in the public interest and seeks to build the knowledge and competencies required of students who wish to work in this area. The seminars are based around 3 broad themes: (1) the relationship between the public interest and lawyering; (2) the various models available for the delivery of public interest lawyering services and their underlying theories such as a rights based approach to service delivery and (3) public interest lawyering skills and strategies such as communicating with clients, interviewing skills, general advocacy skills, submission writing and litigation in both domestic and international forums. Students will have the opportunity to interact with and to learn from a variety of lawyers and advocates who practice in the public interest arena. This subject will have an enrolment cap of 24 students</p> <p>Enrolment will be limited to a maximum of 24 students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the value to students of the group work dimension of the subject and; • Enhance the frequency and quality of interaction between students and lawyers and advocates who practice in the public interest arena. <p>Students will be required to complete a written application for admission to this subject. The application will address the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic performance • Relevant work experience including involvement in community based activities • Teamwork experience and skills • Relevance of student's career goals to the overall goals of Public Interest Lawyering <p>Interviews may also be conducted. Students who are closest to the completion of their degree will be given priority for admission to the subject. The subject will be available to all Melbourne Law School Students.</p>
Objectives:	<p>At the end of this subject, students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect critically on the role of law and the way in which law is practiced in the public interest and/or the public arena; • reflect critically on the nature of lawyers' ethical and professional responsibilities in public interest law practice;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate critically theories and models of legal service delivery; • identify and develop strategies to respond to and to address legal issues in a public interest context; and • advocate effectively in the public interest.
Assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two pieces of legal writing (the first 1,000 words and the second 4,000 words). The first paper will involve students writing up an interview which they are required to conduct with a lawyer who is or has practiced in the public interest. The course co-ordinator will assist with the identification of suitable interviewees. The second paper will be on a topic(s) set by coordinator or formulated by a student with the consent of the subject co-ordinator. It will be due at the end of the semester and presented to other students in the subject at a conference to conclude the semester. • The co-ordinator will provide students with the option of undertaking a range of styles of legal writing relevant to public interest lawyering which require engagement and consultation with the broader community and public interest practitioners on contemporary issues. The writing styles will include:- A letter or memorandum of advice;- A briefing note- A submission to a Government department, law reform commission, inquiry on a contemporary public interest legal issue;- An amicus curiae brief or submission to a court; - A research paper intended for submission to a journal for publication;- A draft speech;- A complaint to an international human rights mechanism.
Prescribed Texts:	Printed materials will be issued by Melbourne Law School.
Recommended Texts:	
Breadth Options:	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
Fees Information:	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees
Generic Skills:	<p>On completion of the subject, students should have developed the following generic skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # attitudes towards knowledge that include valuing diversity, openness to new ideas and ethics associated with knowledge creation and usage # the capacity for critical and independent thought and reflection # the capacity to solve problems, including through the collection and evaluation of information # the capacity to communicate, both orally and in writing # the capacity to plan and manage time # the capacity to participate as a member of a team # intercultural sensitivity and understanding <p>In addition, on completion of the subject, students should have developed the following additional specific skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # interviewing # communicating clearly and persuasively orally and in writing, for specific audiences and to achieve specific public interest objectives