

166-407 Contemporary Political and Social Theory

Credit Points:	12.50
Level:	4 (Undergraduate)
Dates & Locations:	2009, This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 1, - Taught on campus.
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: A 2-hour seminar per week Total Time Commitment: 2 contact hours/week , 8 additional hours/week. Total of 10 hours per week.
Prerequisites:	Admission to the Postgraduate Certificate/ Diploma in Political Science or International Politics, or Fourth-year Honours in Political Science or International Studies, or the Master of International Politics.
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>
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Subject Overview:	This subject examines contemporary debates in political and social theory with a particular focus on developments within and challenges to liberal democracy. Initially the difficulties of liberalism in the face of social change will be analysed in the light of theories of postmodernism, postindustrialism and McDonaldisation. From this basis recent theories of democratic renewal are discussed including those concerned with the 'Third Way', social capital and civil society. Alternative theories of political renewal in complex, pluralistic societies will then be examined focusing in particular on the way that they understand violence, disagreement and incivility. The subject concludes by evaluating recent radical democratic theories which are concerned with establishing a new ethical framework through which we can rethink political disagreement.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # understand the major challenges to liberal democracy in contemporary political theory; # be able to explain the implications for political theory of recent social and cultural phenomena such as postmodernism and McDonaldisation; # grasp theories of democratic renewal such as those associated with risk society, the Third Way and social capital; # be able to articulate the reasons why there has been a shift towards deliberative politics in recent theory; # understand the relationship between civility and incivility and their implications for understanding democracy; # comprehend the growth of pluralistic interpretations of complex societies in relation to political conflict and disagreement; # be able to explain the reasons behind the emergence of radical theories of democracy and their implications for political ethics.
Assessment:	An essay of 5000 words 100% (due at the end of semester).

Prescribed Texts:	A subject reader will be available.
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:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # possess the ability to explain and analyse complex ideas in a lucid fashion; # be capable of organising their work into a coherent structured argument; # be able to identify and access relevant research to the topic; # display evidence of an analytical approach to theoretical debates; # be able to explain the implications of theories for practical politics; # demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the literature relevant to the topic.
Notes:	<i>Formerly available as 166-407. Students who have completed 166-407 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.</i>
Related Course(s):	Master of International Politics
Related Majors/Minors/ Specialisations:	International Politics International Politics International Studies Political Science Political Science Political Science Sociology Sociology Sociology