

MECM50001 Political Economy of the Network Society

Credit Points:	12.50
Level:	5 (Graduate/Postgraduate)
Dates & Locations:	2011, Parkville This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 2, Parkville - Taught on campus.
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: 2 Total Time Commitment: Not available
Prerequisites:	Admission to the Bachelor of Arts Honours, Postgraduate Certificate in Arts, Postgraduate Diploma in Arts, or the Master of Global Media Communication.
Corequisites:	None
Recommended Background Knowledge:	None
Non Allowed Subjects:	None
Core Participation Requirements:	For the purposes of considering request for Reasonable Adjustments under the disability Standards for Education (Cwth 2005), and Students Experiencing Academic Disadvantage Policy, academic requirements for this subject are articulated in the Subject Description, Subject Objectives, Generic Skills and Assessment Requirements of this entry. The University is dedicated to provide support to those with special requirements. Further details on the disability support scheme can be found at the Disability Liaison Unit website: http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/disability/
Coordinator:	Dr Robert Hassan
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Subject Overview:	Since the end of the 1970s the world has undergone dramatic transformations that have in many ways deeply integrated the spheres of economy, culture, polity and society to an unprecedented degree. The world today is unrecognisable from that of the 1970s. This has been made possible largely through the development of information and communication technologies set upon a definable trajectory through identifiable political and economic choices made at critical periods. The subject will develop an understanding and approach to the network society that will be informed through a political economy perspective. Using the dynamics of neoliberal globalisation as the underlying foundation of the network society, it will show why the ICT revolution occurred when it did, and why it has taken the particular developmental trajectory that it has. Neoliberalism and the salience of market forces as the driver of the ICT revolution will be of particular interest in the development of the approach. The other critical dimension of the subject is that it will develop the political economy approach from a temporal perspective. That is to say, it will concentrate on the nature of speed (social, cultural, political and economic) that has undergone profound transformations since the late 1970s. What will be particularly important about this perspective is that students will gain insights into something they already recognise at some level of articulation, i.e. 'things speed up', but find difficulty in expressing intellectually why this is the case - and what the social, cultural, and personal consequences of speed are. Consequently an introduction to the concepts of social time - as opposed to the unreflective time of the clock - will form a critical element to the political economy perspective.
Objectives:	Students who complete this subject will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # develop a critical appraisal of the key transformation of this period; # consider the rise of the so-called 'network society', the imperatives for its being and the effects of its continuing development across all registers of life; and # gain a critical perspective on the cause and possible consequences of the digital logic that has brought us the communicative forms from Twitter to Wikipedia and other emergent platforms.

Assessment:	Class presentation equivalent to 500 words (10%), essay of 2000 words (40%) due mid-semester, essay of 2500 words (50%) due at the end of the semester. Students are required to attend a minimum of 80% of classes in order to qualify to have their written work assessed. All required written work must be submitted in order to pass the subject.
Prescribed Texts:	A subject reader will be available from the University Bookshop.
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:	Students who successfully complete this subject will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # be able to demonstrate competence in advanced library searches and information retrieval; # be able to demonstrate proficiency in the application of selected methods of media analysis; and # be able to demonstrate conformity to academic and professional protocols for presentation and research procedures.
Related Course(s):	Master of Global Media Communication