POLITICS FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS: A Comparative Introduction

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 2006 we published *Foundations of Australian Politics* in response to the need for a clear and concise introduction to the Australian political system which would be suitable for business students. While *Foundations of Australian Politics* exceeded our expectations, our students suggested that we provide more comparative analysis and perspectives in the second edition of the text. *Politics for Business Students* aims to provide this perspective by outlining the central features of the Australian political system before comparing the Australian practice of democracy with that of other advanced economies. Having provided this comparative analysis each of the chapters assess the implications of different political systems for business.

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PREFACE

POLITICS FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS

The global financial crisis of 2008 clearly demonstrates the important links between politics and business. With the collapse of communism and the rise of globalisation, some experts argued that the ideological debates around the role of government and approaches to economic management had been resolved. However, as the financial crisis has demonstrated, politics remains important and as pervasive as ever.

Business has to deal with new and increasingly complex regulations concerning competition laws, taxation, consumer and environmental protection to name but a few issues. While it is true that governments in Australia and around the world have largely reduced their direct role both in the economy and in the provision of public services, the companies and other organisations which have assumed these roles operate in highly regulated and politically sensitive markets. Finally, debates concerning economic policy and business regulation have become much more politicised with stakeholders, be they business or community groups, increasingly being forced to defend and justify their political interests. As a consequence of these political challenges business managers, particularly at higher levels, need to develop a detailed understanding of the political environment in which they operate and the power, processes and priorities of government.

Given the inherently political nature of business management, increasing numbers of business students are studying politics and government-business relations as part of their broader degree programs. *Politics for Business Students* has been written with such students in mind. It offers a clear and concise explanation of the central ideas, institutions and actors which constitute the Australian political system and then compares the Australian practice of democracy with that of other advanced economies. The aim here is to provide students with the necessary tools and knowledge to study and analyse many of the political issues confronting business in Australian and abroad.

The book is not designed as an alternative to the many excellent undergraduate Australian politics texts on which it draws. Indeed it deliberately seeks to describe the key features of Australia’s political system in simplified, practical terms without offering the detail and theoretical perspectives associated with more specialised texts. While there are inevitably risks and compromises when presenting simplified accounts of complex and contested issues, our goal is to provide foundational knowledge on which students can build during their subsequent studies and professional careers. It is specifically written for undergraduate
business or senior college students and is designed as a companion volume for either
*Globalising Government Business Relation* (Curran and van Acker 2007, Pearson Education)
Politics for Business Students offers a clear and concise account of how political institutions and practices in both Australia and abroad influence business in the 21st century.

The book provides an overview of the substantive features of the Australian political system before comparing Australian practice with that of other advanced economies. The emphasis is on assessing the implications of political systems on business and society more generally. The comparative analysis presented in the book highlights distinctive features of the Australian political system as well as providing insights into political systems and issues on the international scene.

The book is aimed at university or college business students and will provide them with the necessary tools and knowledge to study and analyse many of the political issues confronting business in Australian and abroad.