

Daniel Loton.
OWIC Course Review

The OWIC course was a blistering, stimulating crash-course covering a variety of political topics and contemporary, yet long debated, global issues. It is structured similarly to higher education courses, with each week containing a lecture by Prof. Joseph Camilleri, of the La Trobe University Centre for Dialogue, and a tutorial within small groups to further thresh out issues. In addition, a guest speaker joined the group each week to present and be interviewed on their particular topic of expertise. Although guests may change with each new OWIC course session, in the past they have included figures that are prominent in politics, activism, academia and religion.

The issues addressed by the course are at the heart of the biggest debates and divides observable in our world today. These are hotly debated topics, theorised as central to the forces that shape human life across the globe, and with little easy answers. They include globalisation, the environment and climate change, global trade and economics (including the economic disparity between the developed and developing world), conflict, terrorism and the 'War on Terror', as well as religion, race and culture, how to achieve dialogue and Australia's place within it all. Considering the difficult political, philosophical and even ideological nature of these issues, the structure of the course, which included group discussions and exercises, debates, and guest speakers to grill, made for a satisfying base from which to engage with topics of mind-boggling complexity and scope.

The course provided a fertile space for intellectual exploration, with guidance from the most contemporary theories and political analyses presented by Prof. Camilleri, combined with guest speakers and experts in appropriate fields, as well as group discussion and debate. The course is ideal for those wishing to gain a greater understanding of global issues and politics, or who want to lead a more active political life, but who don't have a spare three years for an undergraduate politics degree. On top of that, each lesson was catered with an amazing array of homemade foods prepared by the course co-ordinators and dedicated volunteers, which was ridiculously generous and provided fuel for much-needed intellectual energy.

Thanks to Psychologists for Peace, and all other sponsor organisations in bringing together the 'Our World in Crisis' Course.

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