Inaugural Colloquium for Research Higher Degree Students

.... Special Guest speaker ....
Professor Ric Uslaner, University of Maryland, USA

Trust, Diversity, and Segregation

5.30–7.30pm Thursday 11 November 2010
at
Queensland College of Art, QCA lecture theatre (S05, 2.04)
Grey Street, South Bank

The Griffith Institute for Social and Behavioural Research (GISBR) was formally launched in February 2009 as a collaborative institute to bring together academic researchers from 8 of Griffith’s research centres:

- Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security
- Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance
- Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing
- Griffith Centre for Cultural Research
- Griffith Institute for Educational Research
- Urban Research Program
- Socio Legal Research Centre
- Institute for Ethics, Governance and Law

This year GISBR will be opening up its activities to postgraduate students whose supervisors are members of these centres. As one of GISBR’s junior research members, we invite you to join staff and students from GISBR centres to learn more about our combined work and a range of training and development activities that will be taking place in 2011 to support students to excel in their own research projects.

This event will feature Professor Ric Uslaner, one of the world’s leading academics in the field of trust as our guest speaker. His research focuses upon why people trust each other and the impacts of lack of trust on countries, governments and communities. He has lectured widely on corruption and trust and his work resonates with the interests in many of our constituent centres. Following Professor Uslaner’s presentation there will be an opportunity to network with colleagues over drinks and find out more about GISBR and its constituent centres. RSVP is essential to secure your place.

Please RSVP to Susan Lockwood-Lee by Friday 29 October, 3735 6996 or s.lockwood-lee@griffith.edu.au
Guest Speaker: Professor Ric Uslaner  
Department of Government and Politics  
University of Maryland

Eric M. Uslaner is Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland—College Park and is Senior Research Fellow, Center for American Law and Political Science, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, China. He is the author of seven books, including The Moral Foundations of Trust (Cambridge University Press, 2002), Corruption, Inequality, and the Rule of Law: The Bulging Pocket Makes the Easy Life (Cambridge University Press, 2008; translation into Chinese forthcoming from Chinese Social Sciences Press, 2011 and Japanese translation in progress), and Segregation and Mistrust (under contract to Cambridge University Press). and approximately 120 articles and has received grants from the National Science Foundation and the Russell Sage and C.V. Starr Foundations. He has lectured widely on corruption and trust throughout the world, including a keynote address to the Conference on Curbing Corruption in South Asia: A Workshop for Parliamentarians, Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption, organized by the World Bank and the National Democracy Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh (for the United States Department of State), July 11-12, 2007. He currently holds the US Fulbright Commission Distinguished Chair in American Political Science at Australian National University.


**In a recent interview he explained how trust leads to many positive outcomes:**

...trusting societies are less corrupt, have lower crime rates, are more open to trade, and have higher levels of economic growth. They are more open to globalization and new technologies. Such societies also have higher levels of internet usage and scientific innovation. Trusting people are more accepting of risk. They may be more vulnerable to risky situations, but they are also in the best position to profit from taking greater risks. Mistrusting people may protect themselves by avoiding risk, but trusting people are the ones who will reap the biggest profits.

Professor Uslaner argues that the gap between the rich and the poor is the single biggest factor in whether societies are more or less trusting:

**People don’t see a common fate with each other when inequality is high. Business can take a small step in the right direction by limiting the huge disparities in salaries. The huge bonuses investment houses have been giving their employees after getting government bailouts bring inequality to the forefront of people’s attention. These firms are creating social tensions that may come back to bite them.

Government needs to focus more on inequality. Education is the single biggest individual factor leading to greater trust for two reasons. First, higher education brings us in contact with people of different backgrounds and exposes us to the roots of different cultures. So more highly educated people are more willing to accept people of different backgrounds because they understand cultural differences.**