Sir Walter Murdoch School of Public Policy and International Affairs invites you to a Policy Seminar with

**Professor Rod Rhodes**

*Professor of Government, University of Southampton & Griffith University*

Professor Rod Rhodes has a joint appointment as Professor of Government at the University of Southampton (UK) and Griffith University (Brisbane). Previously, he was Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the Australian National University (2006-11); and Director of the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University (2007-8). He is the author or editor of some 35 books including recently: *Lessons of Governing: A Profile of Prime Ministers’ Chiefs of Staff* (with Anne Tiernan, Melbourne University Press, 2014); *The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership* (with Paul ‘t Hart, Oxford University Press, 2014); *The Craft of Governing* (joint editor with Glyn Davis, Allen & Unwin, 2014); and *Everyday Life in British Government* (Oxford University Press 2011).

**The Gatekeepers: Studying Prime Ministers’ Chiefs of Staff**

How do we find out what Chiefs of Staff do and how they do it? What are the pros and cons of using focus groups in elite ethnography?

Prof Rhodes will outline the current state of political and administrative ethnography in political science and public administration. He describes the job of prime ministers’ chiefs of staff before explaining the research design, the preparations for the focus group sessions, and the strategies used to manage the dynamics of a diverse group that included former political enemies and factional rivals. Prof Rhodes summarises the main findings of the work under the headings: know the boss; coping and surviving; policy coordination; and political management. Then he reviews the strengths and weaknesses of focus groups for research into political and administrative elites.

**Discussant**

*Professor Benjamin Reilly*

Dean of Sir Walter Murdoch School of Public Policy and International Affairs

**Tuesday 28 October 2014**

**Building 513 Learning Link LL 1.004 Level 1 Room 4 (next to Murdoch Business School)**

12.30pm to 1.45pm

Light lunch will be provided. Please advise dietary requirements.

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