



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Student Profiles Development Studies Graduate Craig Robinson

Graduate profile: Craig Robinson

After completing a Bachelor of Development Studies with Honours at UON in 2009, Craig has gone on to do some incredible work in the field of agriculture and food security for the Australian Federal Government.

Starting out in a graduate program for the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), gave Craig the opportunity to gain initial experience working for the Australian Government.

“My experience at FaHCSIA provided an introduction to the key competencies required to work in Government, including strong written and verbal communication skills and the ability to think strategically. I was able to specialise in the Indigenous Affairs Group, allowing me to build technical knowledge in the field of community development. This knowledge was crucial for my transition to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, where I provided policy advice to help implement the then Government’s Social Inclusion agenda”.

Craig then shifted his focus from domestic development to international development. As a Senior Policy Officer with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), he worked on global food security. Two-thirds of the global food insecure, or 490 million people, live in the Asia Pacific region. Craig was responsible for developing and advising on Australia’s position in key food security multilateral processes, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the G20, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the United Nation’s.

To further develop his technical skills and understanding of Development Issues, Craig completed a Masters of Asia Pacific Studies at The Australian National University. He received the Chancellor’s Commendation for a 7.00 Grade Point Average in a calendar year.

“The Master of Asia Pacific Studies provided me with in-depth knowledge of the social, economic and political backdrop that helped me understand where this region came from, where it is going, and how we can understand and start to address a problem like food insecurity. The program gives you the complete picture, which has been incredibly useful.”

Craig is currently employed at DFAT as the Senior Policy Officer in the Multilateral Aid for Trade section. Aid for Trade is about helping developing countries address their internal constraints to trade, such as cumbersome regulations, poor infrastructure and lack of workforce skills. Craig applies his expertise on issues such as trade finance, women’s economic empowerment and investment to develop development partnerships that promote inclusive trade.

He currently manages partnerships with the International Trade Centre, the International Labour Organisation, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, amongst others.





Craig has used his experience in the field of trade and development to represent Australia abroad in a number of countries including Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, Timor Leste and Switzerland. Craig represented Australia at the WTO Public Forum in 2016 and at the 6th Global Aid for Trade Review at the World Trade Organization in 2017. He recently completed a review mission for the World Bank Trade Development Facility in Laos, and has delivered presentations and commentary across several multilateral fora.

Craig is currently continuing his studies, undertaking a PhD in International, Political and Strategic Studies at The Australian National University. Craig hopes to drive innovative ideas throughout his career in academia and out in the field with development partners.

His research is examining the role of diplomacy in preventing food price crises by answering the question: 'What does a crisis diplomacy framework tell us when applied to the issue of food price shocks?' In this research, Craig is developing a new crisis diplomacy framework to deal with non-traditional security issues.



"The Bachelor of Development Studies provided a critical introduction to the issues I have worked on since graduating. Tackling an issue such as food insecurity requires a multi-disciplinary approach that considers environment, economic, political and social factors. The Bachelor of Development Studies provided a framework to implement this approach that I have relied upon in all of my roles during my career."

Craig's advice to current students is **"to look for any opportunities to strengthen your technical development knowledge. You can start building this in a wide variety of roles in Government, the Not-For-Profit Sector, Private Sector and International Organisations. Take any opportunities, even if they are short-term, to start building up your technical knowledge and experience"**.



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For more information visit: www.newcastle.edu.au/degrees/bachelor-of-development-studies