

HANGING BY A THREAD

By Rachel Loveday

The result of a hung parliament at the 2010 federal election has left voters hung at who should lead the country and what needs to be changed to ensure a democracy.

Voters at the University of Wollongong were not afraid to voice their concerns of not having a current leader and who the next one might be.

They were also not afraid to voice their opinions on what messages the parties were sending to them, which heavily influenced their vote.

“The way that they handled the refugee situation is on the borderline of racism,” Jaymie Hooper, 18, of Camden said.

“They shouldn’t be worrying about trying to outbid each other, they should be worrying about how this affects the people,” Victoria Lee, 19, of Harrington Park said.

The hung result, the first in 70 years, means that both Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Coalition leader; Tony Abbott have to form a minority government and are currently negotiating with the three Independents and one Greens MP to convince them to support their party.

Some voters believe this would be a good strategy.

“They (the two major parties) need to be able to compromise so the government will work better. It doesn’t matter if you have the Labor party or the Liberals in, either way, half of the population isn’t going to be happy,” Katie Barnett, 18 of Newcastle said.

“They (the two major parties) should negotiate with the Independents,” Stef Greenshield, 20, of Wollongong said.

Brendan Cook, a law and politic students and a Green’s supporter, believes that a hung parliament isn’t necessarily a bad thing.

“Any result that encourages parties to cooperate is a good thing,” he said.

“I think that from a Green’s perspective, if one of the major parties is willing to do something about what we (the Greens) have identified as voters’ concerns than we would be willing to cooperate with them,” he said.

The negotiations between Ms Gillard, Mr Abbott and the three Independents will continue over the next few weeks.

In the meantime, Ms Gillard will remain as “caretaker Prime Minister.”