Abstract: In Myanmar (Burma) the partial democratization of governance over recent years has led to the emergence of employment relations actors (trade unions, employer associations) and institutions (dispute resolution bodies, labour law). The presentation will discuss findings from research conducted in Myanmar in 2012-2013. It will suggest that emerging labour institutions in Myanmar reflect both discontinuities and continuities with the past. With regard to the former, for instance, there are new freedom of association and labour rights; the formation of local trade unions and the entry of international trade union organisations; and greater tolerance of local civil society activism and worker-led strike action. Nonetheless, there is also the continuing legacy of authoritarian governance; institutional resistance to reform and limited state capacity; and the continuation of preferred enterprise-level labour management practices.

Presenter: Michael Gillan is an Associate Professor at the UWA Business School. He has published in a wide range of national and international journals including Economic Geography, Asian Studies Review, South Asia, Australian Journal of Labour Law and the Journal of Industrial Relations. His current research interests include the role of Global Union Federations in employment relations in India and Indonesia (ARC Discovery project); ‘labour geography’ in global production networks; labour movements in India; and employment relations in Myanmar.

Date: Friday 25 October 2013
Time: 12:00-1:00pm followed by Sandwich Reception
Venue: BUSN 142 Case Study Room
Registration: Siew.Wade@uwa.edu.au by 21/10/2013
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