



MECO800

International Discourse

S2 External 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Maya Ranganathan

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Contact via maya.ranganathan@mq.edu.au

Y3A 156

Mondays noon-1 p.m (email prior for appointment, please)

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MIntComm or MIntRel or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntComm or MA in Media Law and Culture or MIntPubDip

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Transnational Communication is a pre-requisite for this unit. Students may be enrolled in both the units in the same semester.

Unit description

This unit provides students with an overview of the theoretical framework that informs research in the discipline of International Communication. It takes them through discourse analytical methods that are employed to understand contemporary communication and to make projections of future trends. It aims to provide hands-on experience in research methodologies to enable students to take a scientific and analytical approach to Communication during the course of their study and in future career paths. Analysing various discourse scenarios from across the world will draw upon established theories and methods propounded by Norman Fairclough, Jacques Derrida and Frederick Jameson.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks

Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects

Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings

Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Due |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| <u>Research proposal</u> | 30% | October 13, 2014 |
| <u>Project study</u> | 40% | Nov 3, 2014 |
| <u>Critique a method</u> | 30% | September 1, 2014 |

Research proposal

Due: **October 13, 2014**

Weighting: **30%**

In week 10, students are to come up with a 1000-word research project proposal on a topic of their choice. The topic must be related to contemporary issues in international communication (Note: international communication, not political science or sociology). Discussions may be held on the suitability of the topic with the convenor by email. The convenor's approval must be secured prior to working on the project proposal. And once approved, the topic must not be changed. You may want to start identifying issues well in advance as choosing a significant and appropriate topic requires a lot of reading and consideration.

The proposal must contain 1. Background 2. Significance 3. Aims and 4. Method. It is an academic research proposal and must meet the requirements in structure and content.

Method must be qualitative and chosen from one of the methods learnt in the unit.

This assessment does not require employment of the method. In other words, no application or analysis of data is expected at this stage. But methodology must contain all details, including details of the proposed method and period of data collection and parameters of analysis.

Changing the topic yet again for the final research essay will not be considered favourably. Please think through the topic before attempting this assessment.

Marking rubrics will be available on ilearn. The following criteria will be used for marking the assessment:

1. A significant and interesting issue of study in international communication.
2. Identification of appropriate conceptual and theoretical framework.

3. Data selection and discussion of appropriate analytical method.
4. Use of comprehensive and accurate content.
5. Awareness of grammar and academic conventions.

Late penalty will be calculated at the rate of 2 per cent per day late, including weekend and holidays unless special consideration is sought prior to submission date with supporting documentation and as per the procedure prescribed by the University.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
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Project study

Due: **Nov 3, 2014**

Weighting: **40%**

This major essay due in week 13 is a project of 4000 words. Students are expected to build on the project proposal submitted in week 10. This is to be regarded as Part 2 of the project study.

Taking into account the feedback provided, students are required to refine methodology, address deficiencies in the method if any and then apply the method to analyse the issue already detailed in the project proposal. No change can be made at this time in the topic without penalty. The essay is required to display a critical evaluation of the issue taken up for research and show evidence of wider reading, methodological rigour and sophisticated argumentation and interpretation. Students are expected to also take on board feedback provided for the research proposal. Students may consult the convenor on content, format and methodology, but please refrain from sending complete drafts for comments.

A rubrics will be made available on ilearn. The assessment will be graded on the following criteria:

1. Argument and substantiation: a significant argument, clearly substantiated, methodological rigour.
2. Organisation: clear structure, particularly coherence - an effort to tie the conceptual, theoretical and analytical aspects together
3. Attribution: Evidence of extensive reading and clear attribution of sources
4. Presentation: Good grammar devoid of spelling mistakes or errors that make understanding difficult.

Late penalty will be applied at the rate of 2 per cent per day late, including weekend and holidays, unless special consideration is applied for prior to the due date, with supporting documentation and as per University procedure.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings
- Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Critique a method

Due: **September 1, 2014**

Weighting: **30%**

Students will choose one of the methods from the unit schedule and within the framework of the readings, critique the method. Students are encouraged to read outside the reader to have a thorough understanding of the qualitative method. In a commentary consisting of not more than 1500 words, students are to list the ways in which the method chosen can be applied in international communication research and its effectiveness and inadequacies. The commentary must be in an essay format and not in dot points. Students will be required to choose another method for the project proposal and major essay.

The following criteria will be used in grading the assessment:

1. Demonstrated understanding of key ideas from the readings identifying the features of the method.
2. Own Research: Critiquing the method displaying knowledge of readings outside the Reader.
3. Good grammar, spelling, clear expression and proper referencing.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings

Delivery and Resources

1 hour lecture recorded and available on ilearn. Students to check ilearn regularly for announcements and notes and instructions. This unit has an online presence. Login is via: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/> Students are required to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Mobile devices alone are not sufficient. - For technical support go to: <http://mq.edu.au/a>

[bout_us/offices_and_units/informatics/help](#)

MECO 800 Reader is the essential reading for the unit.

Suggested reading:

Bell, J. (1999): *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education & Social Science*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford).

Baxter, L, Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2001): *How to Research*, (Open University Press, Milton Keynes).

Cryer, P. (2000): *The Research Student's Guide to Success*, (Open University, Milton Keynes).

Unit Schedule

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|---------------|--|
| Week 1 | Introduction to the Unit |
| Week 2 | Introduction to research methods in communication and media studies |
| Week 3 | Discourse analysis: politics, discourse and society Library orientation is a must for the unit. Please familiarise yourself with databases. |
| Week 4 | Semiotics and Van Leeuan Think about semiotics as a research method. Come up with examples of application in communication research; attempt exercises in semiotics; evaluate merits and assess inadequacies in different scenarios. |
| Week 5 | Fairclough and analysing media texts Critique of Fairclough's discourse analysis. Examples of application in communication research; attempt exercises; evaluate merits and assess inadequacies. |
| Week 6 | Marxist analysis Jameson, Frederic (1991) <i>Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism</i> . Verso (excerpt) Jameson's Marxist analysis. Refer to examples of application in communication research; attempt application of the method; evaluate merits and assess inadequacies. |

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|----------------|---|
| Week 7 | Jacques Derrida's 'deconstruction' Critique Derrida's deconstruction. Read and refer to applications in communication research; attempt application to understand different issues; evaluate merits and assess inadequacies. |
| | RECESS |
| Week 8 | Multimodal discourse analysis: talk and sound Critique multimodal discourse analytical method based on the readings. |
| Week 9 | Multimodal discourse analysis: images Tutorial activity: Critique multimodal discourse analytical method based on the readings. |
| Week 10 | Time allotted to come up with a project proposal |
| Week 11 | No lectures or tutorials Time to work on research essay. Appointments may be sought with convenor to discuss project |
| Week 12 | No lectures or tutorials Working on research essay. Appointments may be sought with convenor to discuss project |
| Week 13 | No lectures or tutorials. Research essay due |

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of

knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings
- Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Assessment tasks

- Research proposal
- Project study
- Critique a method

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings
- Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Assessment tasks

- Research proposal

- Project study
- Critique a method

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings
- Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Assessment tasks

- Research proposal
- Project study
- Critique a method

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings

Assessment tasks

- Research proposal
- Project study

- Critique a method

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Create and design project proposals relating to contemporary media within relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks
- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects

Assessment tasks

- Research proposal
- Project study

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate qualitative research methodologies and judge appropriate methods for research projects
- Explore, examine and investigate significant issues in the context of international communication and justify findings
- Organise contemporary issues in historical, sociological and political contexts and distinguish by an application of discipline knowledge and research skills

Assessment tasks

- Project study
- Critique a method