



# PHIL706

## Research Topics in Ethics

S2 Day 2014

*Philosophy*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Paul Formosa <a href="mailto:paul.formosa@mq.edu.au">paul.formosa@mq.edu.au</a>
Credit points 4
Prerequisites Admission to MRes
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit will examine contemporary research in ethics, moral psychology, applied ethics or political philosophy. The unit will focus on a current 'hot' topic of research in one of these sub-disciplinary fields. The topics chosen will align with the research projects and expertise of faculty members. Examples of areas that might be explored include, the philosophy and psychology of emotions: the nature of moral cognition: justice and public health ethics. Students will develop an in-depth knowledge of the major debates relevant to the topic, and acquire the necessary research skills for pursuing their own research project.

## 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:

- Become aware of a number of different recent research topics in ethics.
- Develop your research skills.
- Develop your presentation skills.
- Develop your communication skills.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">In-class Participation</a>	10%	Ongoing

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#"><u>Short Reading Exercise</u></a>	15%	29/08/2014 or 19/09/2014
<a href="#"><u>In-class Presentation</u></a>	15%	Various
<a href="#"><u>Research Essay Plan</u></a>	10%	17/10/2014
<a href="#"><u>Research Essay</u></a>	50%	17/11/2014

## In-class Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

You will be expected to attend class every week and participate in discussions. You will receive 10% of your grade for the quality of your participation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Become aware of a number of different recent research topics in ethics.
- Develop your presentation skills.
- Develop your communication skills.

## Short Reading Exercise

Due: **29/08/2014 or 19/09/2014**

Weighting: **15%**

A short writing task (1000 words) will be set for Topics 1 and 2. You must pick ONE topic ONLY and complete the short writing task for that topic. The due date for this assessment will depend on which topic you choose to write on. Note: the topic you select for your short reading exercise should be different to the topic that you choose to work on for your research essay. If choosing Topic 1 then due Friday August 29. If choosing Topic 2 then due Friday September 19.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop your communication skills.

## In-class Presentation

Due: **Various**

Weighting: **15%**

You will be expected to present a seminar-style presentation on your research topic. You will also be expected to lead an in-class discussion of your research topic. And you will also need to select one extra reading for other students to read beforehand. Depending on student numbers, presentations (including discussion and questions) should go for about 1 hour. Dates: 28/10/2014, or 4/11/2014, or 11/11/2014

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop your presentation skills.
- Develop your communication skills.

## Research Essay Plan

Due: **17/10/2014**

Weighting: **10%**

Develop an essay plan of 500-750 words for your research essay. You can use dot points.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop your research skills.

## Research Essay

Due: **17/11/2014**

Weighting: **50%**

Write a research essay (3500 words).

**Note:** for the following three items (In-class Presentation, Research Essay Plan and Research Essay) students will select a topic presented in the unit for in depth study. They will arrange a supervision meeting with the relevant staff member to discuss further readings, research question, and plan.

**Alternative:** depending on the availability of supervisors and the gaining of prior approval, it may be possible to complete the following three items on another research topic of your choice in the field of ethics broadly understood. The essay could then take the form of a research proposal (or be the basis for one) for the second year of the MRes.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop your research skills.
- Develop your communication skills.

## Delivery and Resources

**Class time and location:** Tuesday, 11am-1pm in Y3A, 210.

All readings will be made available for download via iLearn or emailed to students.

## Unit Schedule

### Introduction

W1 August 4: August 5. Dr Paul Formosa. Introduction. Unit outline. Introduction to supervision. Research proposals.

No reading.

### Topic 1: Dignity

W2 August 12: August 13. Dr Paul Formosa. Seminar: Treating someone with Dignity

Reading: Paul Formosa, "Treating People with Dignity and Respect: How to Apply the Formula of Humanity to Vulnerable Humans", draft manuscript. Updated version of: Paul Formosa, "Dignity and Respect: How to Apply Kant's Formula of Humanity", *Philosophical Forum* 45, no. 1 (2014): 49-68.

W3 August 18: August 19. Dr Paul Formosa. Seminar: Who has Dignity?

Reading: 1. Edited selection from: Paul Formosa, "Who has Dignity? Rational Agency and the Limits of the Formula of Humanity, draft manuscript.

2. Doris Schroder, "Dignity: Two Riddles and Four Concepts", *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics* 2009, 17, pp. 230-238.

W4 August 25: August 26. Dr Paul Formosa. Seminar: Applied Dignity: Bioethics and the Law

1. Rosen. Michael Rosen, 'The Legalization of Dignity', chapter 2 in *Dignity: Its History and Meaning*, Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 2012, pp. 63-128.

2. Ruth Macklin, 'Dignity Is A Useless Concept: It Means No More Than Respect For Persons Or Their Autonomy', *British Medical Journal*, Vol. 327, No. 7429 (Dec. 20 - 27, 2003), pp. 1419-1420.

### Topic 2: Cinema and Ethics

W5 September 1: September 2. Dr Robert Sinnerbrink.

Reading: TBA

W6 September 8: September 9. Dr Robert Sinnerbrink.

Reading: TBA

W7 September 15: September 16. Dr Robert Sinnerbrink.

Reading: TBA

### Topic 3: The Ethics of Overdiagnosis

W8 October 6: October 7. Professor Wendy Rogers.

Reading: TBA

W9 October 13: October 14. Professor Wendy Rogers.

Reading: TBA

### **Supervision Week**

W10 October 20: October 21. Supervision week. No class.

No reading.

### **Student Presentations**

W11 October 27: October 28. Presentations.

Reading: student-set reading.

W12 November 3: November 4. Presentations.

Reading: student-set reading.

W13 November 10: November 11. Presentations.

Reading: student-set reading.

## **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](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](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](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/](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](http://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](http://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

- Become aware of a number of different recent research topics in ethics.
- Develop your communication skills.

## Assessment tasks

- In-class Participation
- Short Reading Exercise
- Research Essay

## 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 outcome

- Develop your research skills.

### Assessment tasks

- In-class Participation
- Research Essay

## 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 outcome

- Develop your research skills.

### Assessment tasks

- Research Essay Plan
- Research Essay

## 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**

- Develop your research skills.
- Develop your presentation skills.
- Develop your communication skills.

### **Assessment tasks**

- In-class Participation
- Short Reading Exercise
- In-class Presentation
- Research Essay

## **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 outcome**

- Become aware of a number of different recent research topics in ethics.

### **Assessment task**

- In-class Participation

## **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 outcome**

- Become aware of a number of different recent research topics in ethics.

## Assessment tasks

- In-class Participation
- Research Essay