POIR903

International Relations Research Project

S2 External 2016

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

Contents

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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431 W6A
Thursday 10-11 am

Jonathan Symons
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Credit points
4

Prerequisites
POIR901 and IRPG841 and admission to (MIntRel or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntRel or MTransInterMIntRel)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This research-based unit requires the completion of a dissertation of approximately 7500 words in one semester on a topic within the scope of international relations. The research topic is chosen by the student but must be approved by the convenor as suitable for an MIR dissertation and for which supervision is available within the Department.

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:

Acquisition of the abilities to plan, design and execute self-directed research on a topic in the field of International Relations

The extension and enhancement of knowledge and skills in the application of relevant concepts, theories and methodologies

The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesize scholarly evidence

The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Research Proposal	10%	25 August 2016
Dissertation (research paper)	90%	11 November 2016 5pm

Research Proposal

Due: **25 August 2016**
Weighting: **10%**

An 800 word project proposal (including title). The proposal should include:

- A specific core research question, and sub-questions that need to be answered
- A preliminary argument/hypothesis in relation to the problems/issues you intend to address (i.e. the anticipated answers to the research questions you have identified above)
- A justification of the research question: why is this question important or significant?
- Research Methodology: How do you intend to address the research problem? What kinds of source material will you rely upon?
- Sources: Identify at least four sources that appear key to your research and identify why the author's approach/analysis is significant to your research
- A provisional chapter outline, including a few sentences on what you envisage will be included.
- A schedule of dates by which components of your research will be completed (based on your chapter outline). You should be working towards having a complete first draft of your thesis at least two weeks before the due date.
- Bibliography: A list of at least 10 sources that you intend to rely upon (not included in the word count).

Your chosen topic can be drawn from a unit you have studied before and may represent your continuing concern with issues that you feel you did not address to a satisfactory conclusion in that unit. However, your essay must be new and original and cannot reproduce work done before. Significant penalties up to and including failure in the unit will result from the resubmission of previous work.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Dissertation (research paper)

Due: **11 November 2016 5pm**
Weighting: **90%**

This unit is principally an exercise in *independent research*. The main substantive task is to complete a piece of formal academic writing of **5000 words (including footnotes but excluding the bibliography)** - a research paper or 'dissertation'. It should specify a clear research question, demonstrate command of the topic, provide some originality in its analysis, and present a coherent and supported scholarly argument.

Your dissertation should include:

- title page
- plagiarism (academic honesty) declaration
- abstract (excluded from the word count)
- table of contents indicating section or chapter headings
- A central research question
- main text
- bibliography
- page numbers

All assignments should be submitted electronically using the Turnitin assignment link on the unit's ilearn website by 5 pm on 11 November 2016 (the last teaching day of semester 2).

A grade criteria and marking rubric can be found on the ilearn website for the unit. Read this carefully before completing your essay.

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Delivery and Resources

There are no timetabled classes for this unit however it is suggested that meetings occur with the Convenor on the dates noted below (a room will be specified). External students are welcome to attend these meetings. The convenor will also set up a discussion board for external students where research proposals/literature reviews can be uploaded and students and the convenor can comment and make suggestions.

Each student will also be allocated an academic supervisor who may be consulted over the course of the semester for advice on forming a question, writing a research proposal and other questions related to your project as they arise.

On campus sessions:

Date suggested – Week 2 Monday 8 August 2016 or Tuesday 9 August

A group discussion and consultation session in which the Convenor will elaborate on how to approach writing your research proposal. Before this meeting, students should attempt to draft aspects of their research proposal, including:

• formulation and refining of your general topic area so that it addresses a specific problem.

• defining one or more research questions (max 3) which your project will answer

• a preliminary argument/hypothesis in relation to the problems/issues you intend to address

• some indication of the relevant research literature in your chosen area

• methodology which you intend to use in conducting your research.

Date suggested - Week 8 Tuesday 4 October 2016

A second group discussion and consultation session on the next stage in your research: the identification and evaluation of a broader range of relevant scholarly literature. A substantial amount of searching and reading will be required (some will already have occurred) to complete a literature review. Students need to come to this session having drafted a literature review of 600-800 words. Students should begin on this task immediately after completing their research proposal. A good literature review will:

- provide a theoretical context for the project
- demonstrate where the research project fits in the existing body scholarship
- identify gaps or areas of dispute in the existing literature
- further assist in justifying the question/s and approach of the project

The literature review may form part of your final essay, subject to revisions, though not all needs to be included.

Unit Schedule

Week 2 - 8 or 9 August 2016 - First on-campus consultation session: course expectations and discussion of how to construct a research proposal

Week 4 - 25 August 2016 - Assessment Task 1: Research Proposal due

Week 8 - 4 October 2016 - Second on-campus consultation session: student presentations of their literature review; discussion of any problems encountered.

 Week 13 - 11 November 2016 - Dissertation due 11 November 2016, by 5pm.

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

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism has become an increasing problem in universities. The convenor of this course finds plagiarism in all its forms offensive and will pursue any plagiarism committed by students in this course and will apply appropriate penalties. Plagiarism is essentially a form of cheating, which provides those students with an unfair advantage to the rest of the student body, and devalues the MIR degree. The Department and the Faculty take plagiarism very seriously, with penalties escalating from mark deductions, zero grades for particular assignments, zero grades for the course as a whole, and in serious cases, expulsion from the degree and the university.

Both the research proposal and final dissertation paper will be automatically screened through Turnitin (anti-plagiarism software).

Extensions

Any student seeking an extension of time to submit their dissertation or research proposal must, except in extraordinary circumstances, submit to the Convenor (or have submitted on their behalf) a request in writing and supportive documentary evidence prior to the due date. Extensions will not be given other than in exceptional cases of illness. In such cases, a certificate signed by a medical practitioner must be submitted as supportive documentary evidence.

In extraordinary circumstances where a written request for an extension cannot be submitted, an application for an extension can be sought verbally. However, in such cases, any extension granted will be subject to the student subsequently submitting such documentary evidence as is deemed appropriate by the Convenor. If an extension is sought due to the death of a family member, proof must be provided in the form of a death certificate.

Extensions beyond one week are subject to special consideration. The policy for this is detailed under Policy and Procedures under 'Disruption to Studies Policy'.

Whilst we do understand that many or most students support themselves through paid employment, extensions cannot be granted on this basis alone. Students must manage their time and workloads accordingly. Essay topics will be given to students by the second week of semester leaving ample time for essay preparation. Meeting deadlines for assignments is an important skill, and is expected in most jobs. Accordingly, the penalties for late submission are high.

Penalties for Late Submission

Any research paper that is submitted after the due date and without having obtained an extension will be penalised at a rate of 2% per day. For example:

- a 6% penalty will be applied to an assignment that is 3 days late. If the paper receives an original mark of 70/100, after a 6% penalty is applied, the final mark for the essay would be 66/100

Any paper that is submitted 10 days after the due date will not be marked and the student submitting such a paper will be deemed not to have completed and submitted the paper.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://stu

dents.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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

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

- Acquisition of the abilities to plan, design and execute self-directed research on a topic in the field of International Relations
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- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)

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

- Acquisition of the abilities to plan, design and execute self-directed research on a topic in the field of International Relations
- The extension and enhancement of knowledge and skills in the application of relevant concepts, theories and methodologies
- The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesize scholarly evidence
- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)

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

- Acquisition of the abilities to plan, design and execute self-directed research on a topic in the field of International Relations
- The extension and enhancement of knowledge and skills in the application of relevant concepts, theories and methodologies
- The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesize scholarly evidence
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Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)

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

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Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)

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

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Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal

- Dissertation (research paper)