MECO210

Narrative Journalism

S1 Day 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Convenor/Lecturer/Tutor Willa McDonald willa.mcdonald@mq.edu.au Contact via willa.mcdonald@mq.edu.au Y3A 150 Wednesday 2.30-3.30
Credit points 3
Prerequisites 12cp at 100 level or above
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit introduces students to the practice of narrative journalism. Students discuss key readings in the field, at the same time learning the principles of this type of non-fiction writing: word usage, writing style, research skills including interviewing, narrative structure, ethical approaches (including issues in defamation), analysis and reflection.

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:

Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.

Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.

Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.

Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

General Assessment Information

MECO 210 – Assignment Submission

A high level of critical engagement with the set texts and active participation in the lectures and workshops is essential for passing this unit.

All Assignments must be submitted online via gradebook in iLearn. These will be assessed according to the student's overall ability to stimulate and engage the reader while adhering to professional standards.

Correct use of grammar, accurate spelling, demonstrated depth of research where appropriate and evidence that you have thought deeply about your subject matter are other important factors in assessing your work. Meeting the set deadline and presenting the work according to specifications will improve your mark. Group and individual feedback will be provided wherever possible.

While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

Assessment tasks are aligned to the unit Learning Outcomes. Timely submission of assessment tasks is a unit requirement or penalties apply. 10% per day (including weekends) will be deducted for all late

submissions unless Disruptions to Studies (including a request for an extension) is approved.'

You are required to attend all tutorials. As participation in the process of learning is linked to and underpins the unit Learning Outcomes, you will need to either apply for Disruptions to Studies to cover any missed tutorial (if the disruption is greater than three consecutive days) or supply appropriate documentation to your unit convenor for any missed tutorial (if less than three consecutive days).

Presenting work for assessment

In the Writing strand we work on the assumption that you are preparing all coursework as if you were presenting material to real editors in the real world. Editors are people who read for a living. They read a lot. They read thousands of words a day and make decisions about it. If your work is poorly presented, what they will decide is that you are wasting their time. Consequently, marks will be deducted for failing to present work in an appropriate manner that would not offend the eyes of a professional editor.

Use the following checklist before handing in any work:

1. typed, double spaced, with wide margins. 2. spelling checked, including proper names 3. word count done (where required) and printed at the end of the piece. 4. grammar correct 5. all book, film and other titles in italics.

Re-Mark Requests:

Use this link to download the application form to request a re-mark of your assignment. Note you

must meet the criteria stated on the form. http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of other peoples' work or ideas. It is a serious academic offence and attracts severe penalties. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it.

Permission Slips and Publication Wavier Forms

When a student interviews a real person face-to-face, over the telephone, via email or through any other means, they must provide that person with information about the interview and how the resulting information gathered will be used. Students must also obtain written or emailed confirmation that their interview subject has understood and agreed to such uses. A standard form for this purpose is available on the course iLearn site (Permission Slip). A relevant form must be completed and attached to all assignments for each interview done.

When students submit their work to a newspaper, magazine, website or other publication, whether seeking payment or not, they must obtain written agreement that the publisher will assume total responsibility for the publication of the story and indemnify the writer against any action arising from such publication. A standard form for this purpose is available from the course convenor (Publication Waiver).

Note: Your assignments will not be marked unless the required Permission Slip is completed and attached to the work for every interview completed. Students should keep copies of all completed forms.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Class Participation	20%	No	Throughout the semester
Research Assignment	25%	No	Week 7, Wed 12 April, 5pm
Narrative Journalism Article	30%	No	Week 9, Friday, 19 May, 5pm
SWF Article - 600 words	25%	No	Week 12, Friday 2 June, 5pm

Class Participation

Due: **Throughout the semester**
Weighting: **20%**

Students will receive a participation mark for the unit. This will be based on:

- Contribution to class discussion, including editing of other students' work.
- Completion and bringing to the appropriate class of four (4) copies of:
    - Exercises in Weeks 3, 4 and 6 for editing by and discussion with peers. These

exercises form the basis of the narrative article assignment and are compulsory.
  - The first 200 words of your narrative journalism assignment in Week 8 for workshopping with peers.
  - The first 300 words of the Sydney Writer's Festival article must be brought to class in Week 12 for workshopping with peers.

Note: This course has been designed to give students assignments that build on each other. This means it is essential that students do the set exercises and bring them to class on the dates specified in the course guide. Students will **not** be marked on the work they bring to class; however, each failure to do this work and bring it to class **in the required week** will automatically result in the loss of 5 marks from the final class participation mark, unless the student can provide a medical certificate or other evidence of misadventure. By failing to complete the requisite exercises on time, students may find the writing they submit for formal assessment is not competitive with their classmates' work.

Assessment Criteria:

Students will be assessed on their attendance and participation in class discussions, as well as on their role in the workshops as readers and editors of their own and their fellow students' work.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Research Assignment

Due: **Week 7, Wed 12 April, 5pm**
Weighting: **25%**

Students will submit a research assignment comprised of a 500-word report and at least 6 accompanying pages. The research should be original and should be conducted towards your narrative journalism article. The report should contain: *Tentative title; one paragraph outline of your article giving the angle you want to pursue; names and titles (if appropriate) of the people you want to interview with a short explanation of why you want to interview them; a short description of the field work you did and why; a reference list of the articles/multimedia you used in your background research; a reference list of archival material you may have used, e.g. birth certificate, photograph, memorabilia from the archives of the State Library, etc. And an explanation of why this research is necessary and how it will be used.*

Assessment Criteria: Please also see the appropriate rubric. Students will be assessed on the thoroughness of their research; their ability to draw out an angle or point around which the story can be based, and the clarity of writing contained in the report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Narrative Journalism Article

Due: **Week 9, Friday, 19 May, 5pm**
Weighting: **30%**

Submit a 1200-word original article based on the work you have done so far in this course, including the class exercises and the research assignment.

When writing your article, make sure you tell an interesting story that has a point. Your piece should include facts and information, anecdote, observation, and description and possibly quotes and/or dialogue. Remember to "show, not tell". Use concrete details. Write for the senses. Feel free to write passionately and to take risks with your content and expression. Work into the story any relevant insights gained from writing the reflection (see below).

While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

Append to the story a 300-word reflection on the process of writing the story. Consider:

- Why you chose this particular story/topic. Why is it important to you?
- What issues you faced in researching the story and in converting the research into a narrative.
- Whether you found it confronting to write - and if so, how you moved through that stage to complete the piece;
- Whether you faced ethical issues in the writing (what were these? how did they affect your approach? how did you ultimately resolve them?).
- Whether the types of literary techniques you used were well chosen and worked the way you wanted them to (e.g. dialogue, a seductive opening/lead; observation and description, reflection, anecdotes, structure, etc).
- What you learned from using those techniques.

- What you learned from writing this piece. Why do you think it helped you to learn this/ these thing/s?
- Other comments you would like to make.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

SWF Article - 600 words

Due: **Week 12, Friday 2 June, 5pm**
Weighting: **25%**

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold - to encourage participation in the Sydney Writer's Festival and to give students practice in getting to the nub of a factual story quickly, interestingly and succinctly.

Students are required to attend the Sydney Writers' Festival and write a 600-word article about the seminar that they attended.

Assessment Criteria: Please also see appropriate rubric. The article should give the reader enough information to get a solid impression of the content of the seminar. It should be written with an interesting lead. The article should answer all the reader's questions regarding the who, what, when, where and why of the seminar. It should contain quotes and/or dialogue. It should be written with flair, using some of the literary techniques discussed in the course. The clarity of the writing is important, including correct syntax, grammar and spelling. While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Delivery and Resources

Delivery: Day

This unit will use iLecture.

For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au.

Resources:

Each week during the course students will be asked to read articles relevant to the topic at hand. These will be listed each week in iLearn. The articles can either be sourced online or via the library.

Technology:

Lectures will be available on iLearn, where announcements, assignment tasks and other materials to be used in tutorials will be posted as needed.

Changes to the Unit since 2016.

Some of the lecture content has changed to improve the learning experience for the students. The assessments have also been altered slightly and paced more evenly throughout the semester. A greater emphasis has been placed on the formative nature of learning.

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_2016.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 (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

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.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Information is correct at the time of publication

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://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

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article

- SWF Article - 600 words

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work

with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Research Assignment
- Narrative Journalism Article
- SWF Article - 600 words