



POIR903

International Relations Research Project

S2 Day 2017

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Jonathan Symons

jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au

Contact via jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au

Hearing Hub, Level 2, South, W 66

Tuesdays 3-4 or by appointment

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	Hurdle	Due
Research Proposal	10%	Yes	14 Aug/ 21 Aug 2017
Dissertation (research paper)	90%	No	9 November 2017 5pm
Participation in peer review	0%	Yes	Week 3

Research Proposal

Due: **14 Aug/ 21 Aug 2017**

Weighting: **10%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

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.

You will initially submit the proposal for peer review, and then submit a revised proposal for

grading 1 week later (21 August)

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Dissertation (research paper)

Due: **9 November 2017 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.

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

On successful completion 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

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- The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesise scholarly evidence
- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Participation in peer review

Due: **Week 3**

Weighting: **0%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Provide a review of another student's proposal and respond to feedback on your own review. Feedback will initially be provided online (feedback should be provided by 10am on Thursday in Week 3). Internal students will also discuss proposals in person in the Week 3 class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesise scholarly evidence
- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Delivery and Resources

Group meetings and individual supervisions will be scheduled with the Convenor on Thursdays 12-2pm in Tutorial Room 210 in Y3A (individual consultations may be scheduled at other time by arrangement). External students are welcome to in-class meetings. The convenor will also set up a discussion board for all students (especially external students) where research proposals 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 group sessions:

Meeting 1 Thursday Week 1

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.

Group Session 2 - Week 3

A second group discussion will allow time for peer review of draft essay proposals. A final version of the proposal will be submitted for grading after this class.

Group Session 3 - Week 7

A third 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 500-800 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 1 - Thursday 3 August - First on-campus group class: course expectations and discussion of how to construct a research proposal

Week 2 - Thursday 10 August - Optional unscheduled drop-in session for discussion of topic with convenor/supervisor.

** Assessment Task 1: Submit Research Proposal for Peer Review (initial submission via ilearn peer review tool by 5pm Monday 14 August)

Week 3 - Thursday 17 August - Class devoted to peer review - if you are unable to attend you must let your review partner(s) know.

** Assessment Task 1: Final submission of Research Proposal via ilearn turnitin link by 5pm Monday 21 August.

Weeks 4 - 6 - One-on-one supervisions with unit convenor (to be scheduled in earlier classes or via email)

Week 7 - Thursday 14 September - Third group sessions: student presentations of literature review & preliminary argument; discussion of any problems encountered.

Weeks 8 - 12 One-on-one supervisions with unit convenor (to be scheduled in earlier classes or via email)

Week 13 - Thursday 9 November - Dissertation due by 5pm. (submission via ilearn turnitin link)

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.

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://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

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
- The extension and enhancement of knowledge and skills in the application of relevant concepts, theories and methodologies
- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)
- Participation in peer review

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)
- Participation in peer review

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
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Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)
- Participation in peer review

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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- The extension and enhancement of knowledge and skills in the application of relevant concepts, theories and methodologies
- The capacity to analyse, evaluate and synthesise scholarly evidence
- The ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)
- Participation in peer review

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

- 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 ability to effectively communicate academic arguments

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Dissertation (research paper)
- Participation in peer review

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
28/07/2017	Typo fixed
25/07/2017	Inaccurate dates corrected

