



# MECO340

## Natures-Cultures

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

Co-ordinator, Lecturer and Tutor

Undine Sellbach

[undine.sellbach@mq.edu.au](mailto:undine.sellbach@mq.edu.au)

Contact via Phone extension: 2118. The best way to contact me is by email.

Y3A 149

TBC

Lecturer

Ian Collinson

[ian.collinson@mq.edu.au](mailto:ian.collinson@mq.edu.au)

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

6cp in CUL or MAS or MUS or ENGL or PHIL or GEOP units at 200 level

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

While we often think of culture as something that distinguishes humans from the natural world, today the lines between nature and culture, human and animal, self and environment, biology and technology are increasingly difficult to draw. Bringing together work from media and cultural studies, philosophy, and the creative arts we will ask how these entanglements come to matter - ethically, imaginatively and ecologically. How do we represent other species and the environment in the media, in ethics, in the arts, and before the law?

## 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:

Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.

Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to

contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.

Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.

Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.

Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## General Assessment Information

### Where can I find out more general information about assignments?

The assessment information provided in the unit outline gives a general overview of the assessment tasks.

Please consult the folder labelled 'Assignments' on the unit ilearn site, for the full assignment question and a more detailed breakdown of the tasks. The 'Assignments' folder will also contain information about what is due and when, and information about how we will mark your assignments (criteria and marking rubrics).

Your assignments will be discussed in detail in class, where there will be time for you to ask questions, and to workshop your approach with your peers and lecturer/tutor.

### Handing in your assignments

The Short Essay (Assignment 2) and the Reflective Task (Assessment 3) should be uploaded through turn-it-in on the i-learn site.

Active Participation (Assessment 1) is ongoing and will be assessed by your lecturers and tutor throughout the semester.

**Important:** Be sure to keep a copy of all your work submitted. Keep copies on disk or USB until the unit is over and you have received your final grade from the University.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#"><u>Active Participation</u></a>	20%	No	Ongoing
<a href="#"><u>Nature-Culture Entanglements</u></a>	30%	No	Sunday, 30th April
<a href="#"><u>Ecological Companions</u></a>	50%	No	Sunday, 11th June

### Active Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

## Active Participation

You will be assessed on your active and ongoing contribution to class discussions and activities. This includes: engaging with the weekly readings and lectures, listening to your peers and collaborating with them, and undertaking class activities designed to help you prepare for your other two assignments.

*A full account of this assignment will be provided in the Assignment Folder in ilearn. Active Participation will be assessed according to criteria including:*

## Marking Criteria

1. The quality of your ongoing engagement with the weekly readings and lectures during class discussions.
2. Listening to your peers and collaborating with them during class activities and discussions.
3. Active contribution to class activities.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## Nature-Culture Entanglements

Due: **Sunday, 30th April**

Weighting: **30%**

### Short Essay: (1, 500 words)

In this Essay, you will be asked to identify a particular entanglement between nature and culture which matters to you, and is explored in the course. Why is this entanglement important, and what new ways of thinking, acting and imagining ecologically are needed in response?

*A full account of the Short Essay will be provided in the Assignment Folder in ilearn. The Short Essay will be assessed according to criteria including:*

## Marking Criteria

1. Your understanding of general concepts and theories explored in the course, in the context of your chosen topic.
2. Your demonstration of reflective, analytic and evaluative skills.
3. Your fluency on the nature-culture entanglement on which you have chosen to write.
4. The structure of your essay: a clear statement of its aims (in the introduction); clear organization (in a logical order and with a clearly flowing discussion); distinctive and clear argument, and a well-stated conclusion.
5. The use of appropriate theory and evidence to support your analysis and arguments, drawn from the unit's required and recommended readings and media and relevant independent research.
6. Use of scholarly referencing and bibliography, as well as the clear presentation of your paper in terms of format, spelling, syntax, grammar and expression.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## Ecological Companions

Due: **Sunday, 11th June**

Weighting: **50%**

### Reflective Task (2, 500 words)

In this assignment you will be asked to find an ecological companion to think with, it may be living or non-living – a plant, a water way, an insect, a microbe, a machine, a mountain, a weather event, a physical phenomenon such as electricity, a geologic process, a familiar walk way, a new technology, or an urban environment. Throughout the semester, you will keep a journal, where you research your ecological companion, and experiment to find ways to think and write in their company.

In your final submission you should:

- Introduce you companion.

- Select two accounts of your companion, drawn from scientific literature, the arts or the media, and critically reflect on them, in light of key arguments and approaches from the readings and lectures.
- Provide creative documentation of two (or more) encounters with your ecological companion drawn from your Journal. For example, this could take the form of numbered observations, a first person reflection, a story, a menu, annotated photographs etc.
- Write a scholarly reflection on what living and thinking in the company of your ecological companion can teach us.

*A full account of the assignment will be provided in the Assignments Folder on ilearn. The Reflective Task will be assessed according to criteria including:*

### **Marking Criteria**

1. All parts of the task are addressed in a well-structured way.
2. Your understanding of key concepts, approaches and theories from the unit, in the context of your chosen topic.
3. The analysis of two well selected accounts of your ecological companion (chosen from scientific literature, the arts or the media), which you connect to relevant concepts and arguments from the course.
4. Attention to the relationship between form and meaning. Choice of a style of writing and that is appropriate to documenting encounters with your companion, and the quality of your written accounts of your companion.
5. Your ability to communicate complex ideas about the relationship between yourself and your ecological companion clearly and to evaluate different ways of conceptualising, narrating and/or imagining encounters with non-human others.
6. The use of relevant concepts, evidence and arguments in support of your scholarly reflection, drawn from the required and recommended readings and media, and from independent research.
7. Use of scholarly referencing and bibliography, as well as the clear presentation of your assignment in terms of format, spelling, syntax, grammar and expression.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.

- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## Delivery and Resources

### Unit Delivery

MECO340 is available in internal study mode only.

The unit will run as a weekly one-hour lecture and one-hour tutorial. **Lectures and tutorials start in week 1 and continue until week 13.**

LECTURE	Time	Place	TUTORIALS	Time	Place
Tuesdays	12 – 1pm	9 Wallys Walk (E6A) 133 Tutorial Rm			
			Tuesdays	2p-3pm	11 Wallys Walk (E5A) 140 Tutorial Rm
			Tuesdays (only if student numbers require to two tutorials to be run)	3-4pm	11 Wallys Walk (E5A) 140 Tutorial Rm

Remember to check the MQ 2017 timetable on the day of the first class to make sure that there are no last minute room changes to the lecture venue! Tutorials can also be subject to change - so please check your email or iLearn in Week One to ensure that you are on top of any unanticipated changes.

### Class Attendance

Listening to different perspectives and actively discussing important and provocative issues and ideas is an essential component of MECO340. It is something we value highly and we think you will get a lot out of it too. **For this reason, regular ongoing face-to-face attendance of weekly lectures and tutorials is an essential requirement of the unit.**

Keep in mind, that in 'Active Participation' (assignment 1), you will be assessed on the quality of your ongoing contributions to class discussion and activities. So attending regularly throughout the semester, will give you the opportunity to undertake this assignment task.

If there is a good reason why you are unable to attend a particular week, please email your lecturer Undine Sellbach in advance to find out if there is material you need to catch up on, and listen to the lecture recording on ilearn. Students who miss more than 2 tutorials without proper documentation (see 'Disruption to Studies' policy in the 'Policies and Procedures' section below) will most likely be significantly disadvantaged in the completion of their Active Participation assignment task.

### Required and Recommended Readings

It is essential that all enrolled students come to class prepared (by having done the readings) and ready to participate in class activities and discussions.

A list of Required and Recommended Readings will be provided on the ilearn site.

Every week in preparation for your lecture and tutorials you should read all of the Required Readings and at least one of the Recommended Readings.

The readings are chosen to be engaging and challenging. If you find some sections tricky, when you first do the reading don't worry, there will be lots of opportunity in the lectures and tutorials to unpack things further. Often it is helpful to reread pieces you find particularly interesting, difficult or provocative after the weekly tutorial and lecture, to gain a deeper understanding.

### Accessing Readings and Resources

All students should purchase a printed Unit Reader and bring it with them to class each week.

The Unit Reader contains the Required Readings and some of the Recommended Readings. Further Readings and Resources are available via the Multisearch tool on the Library Website (type in the unit code), or will be provided via the ilearn site.

### Unit Webpage:

There is a MECO340 i-learn webpage, which can be accessed at: <http://learn.mq.edu.au/>

The i-learn site will contain important information including: Unit Guide, announcements, weekly schedule of lecture topics, assessment details, essay writing tips, required and recommended reading information.

On the i-learn site you will be able to access ECHO and Turn-It-In, through which you will submit: Assessment 2 and 3.

MECO340 requires that students follow the unit each week on iLearn and stay informed of special announcements and additional information posted there, by regularly checking your student emails.

ALL questions and concerns about MECO340 should be emailed to the convenor Dr. Undine Sellbach.

## Unit Schedule

Week	Topic	Lecturer
	<i>Please note that speaker availability might mean some minor alterations to the order of weekly topics. A detailed version of this schedule is available on iLearn - this includes information about the weekly readings, supplemental material, questions for discussion, etc.</i>	
1	Introduction: why are nature-culture entanglements important? Why not nature vs culture?	Undine Sellbach



2	Thinking with and 'becoming with'	Undine Sellbach
3	Kinship, connectivity, Indigenous Perspectives	Sandie Suchet-Pearson
4	Material agencies, queer natures	Undine Sellbach
5	Into the woods: nature-culture knots in Romantic Nature writing.	Ian Collinson
6	Walking: psycho-geography in a more than human world.	Ian Collinson
7	'A Picture Book of Invisible Worlds': how do other living things feel, interpret and make worlds.	Undine Sellbach
MID SEMESTER BREAK		
8	What would animals say if we asked the right questions?	Undine Sellbach
9	Is Birdsong Music?	Hollis Taylor
10	Can we imagine climate change?	Undine Sellbach
11	Dark music, dark times	Ian Collinson
12	Eco horror: malevolent natures	Ian Collinson
13	Staying with the trouble: speculative worlds	Undine Sellbach

## 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\\_2016.html](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](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](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/](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](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## 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://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](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

- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.

#### Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Ecological Companions

### 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

- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

#### Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Nature-Culture Entanglements
- Ecological Companions

## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.

### Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Ecological Companions

## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Nature-Culture Entanglements
- Ecological Companions

## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
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- Ecological Companions

## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
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## Assessment tasks

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## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.

## Assessment tasks

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- Nature-Culture Entanglements
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## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
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### Assessment tasks

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- Nature-Culture Entanglements
- Ecological Companions

## 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of environmental humanities and cultural studies to their programs of study, and their wider lives.
- Apply key concepts, methods and arguments from the environmental humanities to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.

- Express and discuss complex ideas about the relationship between themselves and the non-human world around them clearly.
- Identify and reflect on different ways of relating to, conceptualising, narrating and imagining nature-culture entanglements.
- Critically reflect on ethical issues in human-environment relations and articulate a position on environmental justice.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Active Participation
- Nature-Culture Entanglements
- Ecological Companions