MECX350

Cultural Contexts: Communities and Cultures in Action

S2 OUA 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Co-ordinator
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Convenor
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Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit explores student participation in the representation of diverse communities and cultures. Students place their study experiences in a relationship with community and cultural contexts they have an interest in, or engagement with. These include but are not limited to: social and support groups, sporting communities, interest groups, charities, fan clubs and cultures, traditional cultural practices, volunteer projects, collectives, or other social networks. This focus extends to engagement with media and performance production, archival and curatorial cultures, in addition to social service providers and policy makers. Students actively investigate 'real world' situations and problems, evaluating cultural experience beyond the university. Activities in the course include: testing theoretical debates and methods against community standards and policies; debating key issues with reference to cultural productions and performances; and developing innovative ways of applying methodologies with a view to potential actions, humanitarian interventions. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.

Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context

Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

General Assessment Information

In this unit, students must submit original work. If you have previously been enrolled in this unit, please note that you cannot submit the same piece of work. Please contact your convenor for an alternative task.

If students require assistance with their assessments, they should contact their tutor and consult the resources on referencing and essay writing in the 'Assessments' section on ilearn. Students can also contact the Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) team for advice on academic writing, study strategies and planning. Additional support services are listed here: http://students.mq.edu.au/support/.

Late Submissions:

Tasks 10% or less: No extensions will be granted. Students who have not submitted the task prior to the decline will be awarded a mark of 0 for the task, except for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

Tasks above 10%: No extensions will be granted. Students who submit late work without an extension **will receive a penalty of 10% per day.** This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Contribution & Collaboration	30%	No	Ongoing
Research Proposal	30%	No	26 September 11:59pm (AEST)
Research Essay	40%	No	7 November 11:59pm (AEST)

Contribution & Collaboration

Due: **Ongoing**
Weighting: **30%**

As this is a capstone unit, MECX350 aims to consolidate your understanding of key cultural studies concepts and approaches and prepare you to take your knowledge and analytical skills beyond undergraduate study -- whether in paid work, family life, creative pursuits or further study. Each week, we will engage with ideas, approaches and concepts that you will be familiar with from your previous studies in order to reflect upon their use and identify their implications. As such, this unit requires consistent engagement and reflection on the material so that you're able to develop your own research project (see Assessments Two and Three) and outline how you might use cultural studies in the future.

You are required to contribute to the weekly activities and collaborate with their peers on a weekly basis in two ways. First, students must post a 200-300 word response to the weekly activity within the defined time frame. Second, students must also encourage engagement and peer learning by commenting on one other post in the weekly forum. The forum will be open from the Tuesday of each week until the following Tuesday.

Your Contribution and Collaboration will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Completion of weekly activities in the forum within the designated time frame
2. Completion of weekly comment within the forum within the designated time frame
3. Activities demonstrates a clear grasp of relevant key theoretical concepts and their context
4. Demonstrates the ability to identify the significance and implications of relevant key concepts
5. Demonstrates a critical engagement with relevant unit readings, cultural studies scholarship and debates
6. Stages a thoughtful reflection on the process of learning and engaging with cultural studies scholarship

Submission: Students will submit their weekly posts and comments in the relevant ilearn forums.

Late Penalty: If you are unable to post your activity or comment within the designated time frame, please contact your tutor. As this assessment is designed to encourage timely collaboration and discussion, activities and comments will not be accepted after the closure of the forum and will receive a mark of zero unless a disruption to studies notification has been approved.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Research Proposal

Due: **26 September 11:59pm (AEST)**
Weighting: **30%**

Over the course of this unit, students are required to write a 3,000-4,000 word research essay. In this final essay, students must identify a specific cultural context or problematic that they have encountered throughout the unit and would like to explore further. They should develop their own research question and draw on the concepts and methods that we have discussed to engage with this topic, both critically and imaginatively. For example, students may consider using the concepts and methods discussed in this unit in order to engage with cultural contexts and problematics they encounter in everyday life.

For this assessment, students are required to use VoiceThread to post a 10 minute research proposal for the class to view. This proposal should introduce your research question, outline the aims of your project, put forward a proposed methodology and outline a provisional theoretical framework. Further details about VoiceThread and the proposal will be posted in ilearn workshops.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Demonstrates analytical skills in order to develop a scholarly research question
2. Demonstrates a grasp of relevant aims of the project
3. Identifies a relevant and effective methodology
4. Demonstrates critical and sustained engagement with the unit readings and questions of cultural studies research to develop a theoretical framework
5. Demonstrates knowledge and analysis of key cultural studies methodologies and principles

Submission: Students will submit this task into the designated forum in ilearn.

Late Penalty: Students who submit late work without an extension will receive a penalty of 10% per day. This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email

your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context

- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Research Essay

Due: **7 November 11:59pm (AEST)**
Weighting: **40%**

Building on their research proposal, students are required to write a 3,000 - 4,000 word research essay. In this final essay, students are required to identify a specific cultural context or problematic that they have encountered throughout the unit and would like to explore further. They must draw on the concepts and methods developed in a relevant field of cultural studies research that we have discussed over the course of the unit and engage with this topic, both critically and imaginatively.

Students will have the opportunity to discuss their chosen topics on the discussion boards and during essay preparation workshops that will take place.

This assessment task will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstrates the ability to deploy analytical skills in order to develop a scholarly research question

2. Demonstrates a clear and effective grasp of relevant key concepts

3. Demonstrates critical and sustained engagement with the unit readings and questions of cultural studies research

4. Demonstrates knowledge and analysis of key cultural studies methodologies and principles

5. Demonstrates thorough engagement with feedback provided

6. Demonstrates engagement with the learning process

7. Ability to stage a well-supported analysis and develop a strong and well-supported argument

8. Effective use of writing skills to present academic research, including consistent and accurate use of in-text referencing.

Submission: Students will submit this task via the Turnitin link on the unit iLearn Site.

Late Penalty: Students who submit late work without an extension will receive a penalty of 10% per day. This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Delivery and Resources

Students will complete this unit online. At the beginning of the study period, they will find the weekly schedule listed sequentially down the ilearn page from week 1 to week 13. Listed underneath each week, they will find details about the content and a link to the unit readings and a link to the weekly activity and discussion forum.

Unit Readings: The readings for each week are available via online 'Unit Readings,' a service provided by the Macquarie University Library. A link to the readings is provided in the listing for each week. If you have trouble finding and/or accessing the readings, please search the library's online database and consult your tutor.

Weekly Activities and Discussion: At the beginning of each week, your tutor will send an announcement that introduces the weekly topic and highlights any upcoming tasks. Following the announcement, they will also post an activity for you to complete in the weekly listing. These activities are designed to help you develop your understanding of the unit content. They also aim to provide a space to ask questions and interact with your peers.

The General Discussion Forum: If you have any general questions about the unit or an assessment, and would like to share them with your peers, please start a conversation in the general discussion forum. This forum is open for everyone to start discussions, share resources and ask questions.

The Dialogue Module: This module is available for students who would like to have private conversations with their tutor.

Planning the study period: The OUA Weekly Calendar can be used to plan both your

assessment tasks and weekly activities. It can be found here: http://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/weekly-calendars

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit Ask MQ and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents

4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures
Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to the census date (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to apply for Special Circumstances. If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can apply online.

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to apply directly to Macquarie University.

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.

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

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of

information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of

information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Contribution & Collaboration
- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Contribution & Collaboration
- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Contribution & Collaboration
- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Apply cultural studies research questions and methods to chosen contexts, including cultural representations, policies and relevant texts of associated community groups.
- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Contribution & Collaboration
- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of

information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Research Essay

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

- Develop critical and analytical skills that enable students to identify key problems or issues within a field, research the chosen field and gather relevant information and propose strategies for creative solutions using culturally appropriate methods of communication suited to that context
- Reflect critically on their own experiences and use those experiences as a source of information for further cultural studies research.

Assessment tasks

- Contribution & Collaboration
- Research Proposal
- Research Essay