



FOAR701

Research Paradigms

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Anthropology

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Co-convenor

Greg Downey

greg.downey@mq.edu.au

Co-convenor

Nicole Anderson

nicole.anderson@mq.edu.au

Co-convenor

Noah Bassil

noah.bassil@mq.edu.au

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides a broad overview of the research paradigms that characterize the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Through this unit, the Faculty of Arts seeks to provide students with a constructive framework to recognise the possible contribution of diverse theoretical and disciplinary approaches. By concentrating on a core problem that crosses disciplinary boundaries, demonstrating how that problem might be confronted under different paradigms, students will become conversant in a range of analytical techniques and theoretical perspectives. Students will learn to better recognise the assumptions that underwrite diverse approaches, their strengths, and their relations to each other, especially to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas. The unit is taught by a dedicated core of Arts staff, including guest lecturers from a range of Departments. By the end of the unit, students will have a strong grasp of the intellectual terrain across Arts disciplines, having become familiar with some of the core paradigms that have persisted in our fields, including through multiple variants over time.

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:

Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.

Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.

Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.

Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.

Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.

Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

General Assessment Information

Please note that all assignments must be submitted electronically through the iLearn unit for FOAR 701. Marking, comments and return of submissions will be handled electronically in as timely a fashion as possible given the marking load involved.

Students can format documents using standards from their own disciplines, but need to provide clear references, a consistent format, and an accessible text. Essays will be marked primarily on content, argument, evidence, analytical originality and strength, and demonstrated command of the material, not on stylistic adherence to document formatting or other similar issues. Students are encouraged to engage thoroughly with the material and to err on the side of providing extra evidence and references to the texts, rather than to focus on superficial elements of the work (in simple terms, our preferred model is the legal brief, not creative non-fiction).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Textual Analysis Essay	40%	No	Week 8
Research Design Paper	60%	No	Week 14

Textual Analysis Essay

Due: **Week 8**

Weighting: **40%**

The co-convenors will distribute a small number of target texts in Weeks 6 and 7. Students are

responsible for a 2000 word analysis detailing where at least two (preferably three or more) of the research paradigms discussed in the class have been employed. Students should be able to cite specific passages, concepts and terminology from the target text to demonstrate where and how a paradigm is being used.

The essay should then explain any peculiarities to the author's use of the perspective, suggest the purpose for which it is deployed, and suggest any limitations to this use that the student can perceive.

Finally, the student should write a conclusion which discusses the effectiveness of the synthesis of these perspectives, and the relation among them (for example, how did the author resolve or fail to resolve key points of disagreement amongst the paradigms).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.
- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Research Design Paper

Due: **Week 14**

Weighting: **60%**

The final project for FOAR 701 will be an essay in which the student will lay out the initial proposal for three different projects, all on a single topic, demonstrating how the project would be articulated under three different research paradigms. These paradigms need to be clearly identified, but they can be hybrid paradigms. Students should choose a unifying topic from their own research interests or disciplines and can very much articulate their three approaches within a disciplinary framework, if they choose (but also may reach outside their discipline for one or more of the proposals).

Each proposal should give a clear sense of how the research question would be posed, what sorts of data would be sought, and what the expected outcome of the proposal would be, given the research paradigm. In a concluding analysis, the author should identify the relative strengths of each project, how they relate to each other (complementary, opposed, asking incompatible questions, etc.), and -- if possible -- the potential weaknesses of each approach. The goal is to demonstrate a grasp of the way that research paradigms shape fundamental research questions into diverse types of projects.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Delivery and Resources

All resources, including readings and lecture recordings, will be made available through the unit's iLearn site and the Library Reserve (which is online). Please refer to this site for specific due dates, procedures, and other materials, including the schedule of topics and reading. The unit is offered both externally and internally, and students are encouraged to establish reading groups (like tutorials), but these are not required.

Discussion boards will be provided online, and students are encouraged to engage with the texts and assessment tasks, although all students must produce their own work on the two assessment tasks. Discussion of these tasks is permitted and encouraged.

PLEASE NOTE: Students do not need to purchase texts for this unit. All materials will be available through electronic reserves.

As of 2017, a new optional tutorial program has been added for students to provide an opportunity to explore the paradigms in a more interactive, peer-to-peer fashion. These tutorials are headed by highly qualified recent PhDs and late-career PhD students (as well as the unit convenors, on occasion). Although they are not required or assessed, attendance will be recorded and they are strongly encouraged. External students will have an analogue activity available online.

Unit Schedule

Unit schedule for 2016.

Week 1, 28 Feb: Introduction to Research Paradigms Overview: **Greg**

Week 2, 7 March Functionalism, Structural Functionalism, et al. Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Adela Sobotkova (Ancient History)**

Week 3, 14 March Marxisms Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Jean-Philippe Deranty (Philosophy)**

Week 4, 21 March Rational Choice Theory Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Adam Lockyer (Security Studies and Criminology)**

Week 5, 28 Mar Modernisation theory, Weber and the use of 'ideal types' Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Greg Downey (Anthropology)**

Week 6, 4 April Hermeneutics and symbolic approaches Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Clare Monagle (Modern History, Politics and International Relations)**

Week 7, 11 April Psychoanalysis and psychodynamics Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Kevin Groark (Anthropology)**

Midsemester break

Week 8, 2 May Narrative theory Overview & Guest lecturer: **Paul Sheehan (English)**

Week 9, 9 May Structuralism, Semiotics, and Cognitive Approaches Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Anthony Lambert (Media, Music, Communication, and Cultural Studies)**

Week 10, 19 May Poststructuralism Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Noah Basil (Modern History, Politics and International Relations)**

Week 11, 26 May Post-humanism and the Anthropocene Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Ian Collinson (Media, Music, Communication, and Cultural Studies)**

Week 12, 2 June Microsociology or Interactionism Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **?? (Sociology?)**

Week 13, 9 June Concluding Thoughts (Note: Nicole overseas) Panel and short lectures: **Noah and Greg**

Learning and Teaching Activities

Tutorial discussions

Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling.

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.

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

- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

Learning and teaching activities

- Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling.

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

- Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.
- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.
- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
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Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

Learning and teaching activities

- Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling.

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

- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a

particular research topic and the related field of research.

- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

Learning and teaching activities

- Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling.

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

- Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

Learning and teaching activities

- Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling.

Changes from Previous Offering

In 2017, a tutorial program has been added to the unit to help students prepare for the

assessments and to provide a forum for greater interaction, students' questions, and other issues that may arise.

In 2017, several lectures were updated and new lecturers brought in where necessary or appropriate.