



PHIL707

Research Topics in Philosophy and Cognitive Science

S1 External 2014

Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Colin Klein

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Contact via colin.klein@mq.edu.au

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit explores some of the cutting edge research questions at the forefront of cognitive science and the philosophy of cognition. The unit explores philosophical problems that arise from the core disciplines of cognitive psychology, cognitive neuropsychology, linguistics, neuroscience and AI and robotics. Topics to be covered may include: embodied and distributed cognition; disorders of the mind; folk psychology and theory of mind; the use of fMRI to understand brain function; is the brain massively modular; can cognitive science explain consciousness, or the self?

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:

Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge of the methodology, concepts and arguments of cognitive science and philosophy.

Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources concerning foundational concepts and arguments in cognitive science and philosophy

Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments in written and oral form to a variety of audiences

Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.

Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical and cognitive science scholarship

Work in cooperation with others and reflect on individual and group performance to identify opportunities for improvement.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Weekly Participation</u>	20%	13/6/14
<u>Presentations</u>	20%	4/6/14
<u>Summaries of Reading</u>	15%	13/6/14
<u>Research Essay</u>	45%	3/7/14

Weekly Participation

Due: **13/6/14**

Weighting: **20%**

External students and internal students who cannot attend seminar should listen to the recordings of seminar discussions each week. They will participate in online discussion forums (if there is more than 1 external student) or email the lecturer directly with a short (1-2 page) discussion of the issues raised in the discussion.

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Presentations

Due: **4/6/14**

Weighting: **20%**

At the end of the course each student will give a 20-30 minute presentation on their essay indicating: This assessment task requires each student to write a full thesis proposal that:

1. Identifies the philosophical problem that the essay will address
2. Locates that problem in an area of philosophy
3. Outlines the structure of the argument, indicating the key concepts or arguments that require attention in addressing the problem.

Second, each student will be asked to present their proposal and outline and to be prepared to respond to questions on the proposal.

Finally, each student will be expected to participate in the presentations, to ask questions of other students and to offer constructive commentary aimed at clarification or refinement of each proposal.

Criteria for assessment: clarity of the thesis problem, contextualisation in philosophical debate, articulation of the argument structure and rationale. Clarity of verbal presentation, value of the contribution to discussion.

External students will prepare and record a presentation to be played for the internal students in seminar, and receive feedback.

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Summaries of Reading

Due: **13/6/14**

Weighting: **15%**

Summaries must be made of each reading for the week. At least 10 must be submitted for assessment.

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Research Essay

Due: **3/7/14**

Weighting: **45%**

4000-5000 word essay drawing upon research related to course content, building from presentation.

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Delivery and Resources

Seminars will be held Wednesday from 10-12 in the philosophy department seminar room.

The unit website is available through iLearn (<http://ilearn.mq.edu.au>). It contains essential resources for the unit, and you are expected to log in on a regular basis.

Unit Schedule

Week 1: Introduction and planning

Week 2: What is cognitive science?

Week 3: Cognitivism and Explanation

Week 4: The idea of a Computational Architecture

Week 5: Classic Modularity

Week 6: Connectionism

Week 7: Neuropsychology

Week 8: Neuropsychology in non-modular systems

Week 9: Massive Modularity

Week 10: Neural Re-use

Week 11: Predictive Coding

Weeks 12 & 13: Presentations

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.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

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/

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://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.