



FOAR702

Posthumanism

S2 Day 2019

Dept of English

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Paul Sheehan

paul.sheehan@mq.edu.au

Contact via Please contact via email.

AHH L2 North Wing

Please email to arrange appointment.

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will introduce students to posthumanism, a critical discourse that seeks to question the exclusionary politics that has historically positioned human beings as the dominant life form. It will explore posthumanism's multi-faceted relationship to mythological fable, cybernetics theory, disability studies, animal studies and ecocriticism, and provide an transdisciplinary perspective of how posthumanism demands a radical re-evaluation of human identity and society. This unit will be accessible to all Arts MRes students, will provide a range of critical concepts and tools useful to scholars in an array of research pathways in Arts.

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 posthumanism as both a material condition and a developing philosophical-ethical project.

Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.

Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the

humanities and social sciences.

Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Active Participation</u>	10%	No	Weeks 1-13
<u>Research Proposal</u>	20%	No	Sunday 15 September
<u>Major Research Paper</u>	50%	No	Wednesday 13 November
<u>Essay workshop</u>	20%	No	Week 13

Active Participation

Due: **Weeks 1-13**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will be evaluated on their participation in each weekly seminar. Their grade will be determined in relation to their preparedness for each class and their willingness to raise ideas in class and respond to the questions of others.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge of posthumanism as both a material condition and a developing philosophical-ethical project.
- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.

Research Proposal

Due: **Sunday 15 September**

Weighting: **20%**

Students must submit a 800-1000 word outline for their final research paper. This outline should provide brief information about:

1. The problem/issue/text(s) that the paper seeks to address. (That is, outline the scope of your paper.)
2. The theoretical framework that will be used to analyse this problem/issue/text. Please refer specifically to published scholarship and indicate how these writers/publications will

allow you expand and develop your own ideas.

3. Indicate how your argument will progress and develop – what issues and concepts will you consider, and what kinds of conclusions do you hope to be able to draw?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Major Research Paper

Due: **Wednesday 13 November**

Weighting: **50%**

The aim of this paper is to apply posthumanism as a critical framework to an issue or problem within your own discipline. Alternatively, you can focus your analysis on a book, film or other cultural artefact. Questions that you might use to frame your critical inquiry include:

1. How can posthumanism challenge or expand traditional understandings of human identity and experience?
2. How might posthumanism offer fruitful suggestions for how to address deeply entrenched problems of social and political life?
3. What might a posthuman future entail? What are the implications of this future for humanity and other life-forms?

(Please only use one of these questions to frame your argument and discussion.)

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a

sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Essay workshop

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **20%**

In the final week of semester, each student will make a brief presentation which outlines the central focus of their major research project.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Delivery and Resources

Required Texts:

1. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818)
2. J. M. Coetzee, *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983)
3. Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (2005)

*We will also be watching a number of films in class. Please refer to the FOAR702 Handbook for further details.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)

- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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

- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper

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

- Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge of posthumanism as both a material condition and a developing philosophical-ethical project.
- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.

- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper
- Essay workshop

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

- Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge of posthumanism as both a material condition and a developing philosophical-ethical project.
- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
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Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper
- Essay workshop

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

- Synthesise and analyse information from a variety of sources in order to develop an awareness of current debates about the status of the posthuman.
- Critically reflect on the relationship between posthumanism and research in the humanities and social sciences.
- Exercise independence in the identification of a research problem and formulate a sophisticated approach to investigate it.

Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper
- Essay workshop

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:

Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper
- Essay workshop

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Assessment tasks

- Active Participation
- Research Proposal
- Major Research Paper