PHIL7000
Research Topics in Philosophy I
Session 1, Special circumstances 2021
Department of Philosophy

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Disclaimer
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Notice
As part of Phase 3 of our return to campus plan, most units will now run tutorials, seminars and other small group activities on campus, and most will keep an online version available to those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies online.

To check the availability of face-to-face activities for your unit, please go to timetable viewer. To check detailed information on unit assessments visit your unit’s iLearn space or consult your unit convenor.
General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor, seminar facilitator
Mianna Lotz
mianna.lotz@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email
By appointment

Seminar facilitator
Paul Formosa
paul.formosa@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email
By appointment

Seminar facilitator
Robert Sinnerbrink
robert.sinnerbrink@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email
By appointment

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit will explore various theoretical and practical issues raised by a single important recent theme in philosophy, such as the nature of the self or the impacts of technology. The unit will explore this theme from a variety of perspectives by looking at the relevant metaphysical and epistemological, ethical and moral, and political and social issues it raises. The unit’s topics and themes may differ from year to year but will not replicate those covered in Research Topics in Philosophy II. Students will be exposed to important philosophical debates so that they are able to begin to pursue their own research projects.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are
Learning Outcomes

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

- **ULO1**: understand issues discussed in the contemporary philosophical literature
- **ULO3**: evaluate philosophical arguments
- **ULO2**: analyse philosophical arguments
- **ULO4**: communicate clearly your own perspective on the philosophical issues examined in this unit

General Assessment Information

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.

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Plan</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Plans to be presented in class in Weeks 11 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Submissions open 11.59pm Fri 4 June 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participation in discussion

Assessment Type 1: Participatory task
Indicative Time on Task 2: 18 hours
Due: Continuous
Weighting: 20%

On successful completion you will be able to:
- understand issues discussed in the contemporary philosophical literature
• evaluate philosophical arguments
• analyse philosophical arguments
• communicate clearly your own perspective on the philosophical issues examined in this unit

Essay Plan
Assessment Type 1: Plan
Indicative Time on Task 2: 20 hours
Due: Plans to be presented in class in Weeks 11 & 12
Weighting: 30%

Essay Plan

On successful completion you will be able to:
• understand issues discussed in the contemporary philosophical literature
• evaluate philosophical arguments
• analyse philosophical arguments
• communicate clearly your own perspective on the philosophical issues examined in this unit

Essay
Assessment Type 1: Essay
Indicative Time on Task 2: 38 hours
Due: Submissions open 11.59pm Fri 4 June 2021
Weighting: 50%

Research essay

On successful completion you will be able to:
• understand issues discussed in the contemporary philosophical literature
• evaluate philosophical arguments
• analyse philosophical arguments
• communicate clearly your own perspective on the philosophical issues examined in this unit
If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

• the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
• the Learning Skills Unit for academic skills support.

Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

Delivery and Resources

Weekly 2 hour seminar. This will be either on-campus, via zoom, or both – to be confirmed with students.

Required readings are available in iLearn under each seminar.

Students must complete both readings before the seminar and come prepared with questions to discuss.

Further readings are suggested – these are optional only. Students may use these or others they have selected themselves for their essays.

Unit Schedule

PART I (WEEKS 1-4): ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND AUTONOMY (Paul Formosa)

Seminar 1: Introduction to unit, topics, and assessment

Seminar 2: Relational Autonomy, Authenticity and Technology

Readings:


Further reading:

Response papers in the same volume of the above journal.

Seminar 3: Manipulation, Autonomy and Technology

Reading:

1. Susser, Daniel, Beate Roessler, and Helen Nissenbaum. “Technology, Autonomy, and


**Further reading:**


Seminar 4: Autonomous Technologies

**Reading:**


**Further reading:**


PART II (WEEKS 5-7) PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES IN CHILDHOOD AND PARENTING (Mianna Lotz)

Seminar 5: The Nature and value of Childhood

**Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


**Seminar 6: The Nature and Limits of the Child's Right to an Open Future**

**Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


**Seminar 7: Parents, the State, and the Child's Right to an Open Future**

**Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


**PART III (WEEKS 8-11) DOCUMENTARY ETHICS/CINEMATIC ETHICS** (Robert Sinnerbrink)
Seminar 8: Captive Animals: Use or Exploitation?

Film:

Blackfish (Cowperthwaite, 2013)

Reading:


Further viewing and reading:


Hickman, D. ‘Blackfish: proof that documentary can be a powerful force for change’, The Conversation, Nov 12, 2015.


Seminar 9: Animals in Research: Use or Exploitation?

Film:

Project Nim (Marsh, 2011)

Reading:


Further Reading:


Seminar 10: Documentary Ethics: Trauma, Memory and Reenactment
Film:


Reading:


Further Viewing and Reading:

*The Look of Silence* (Oppenheimer and Anonymous, 2014)


Seminar 11: Essay Plan Presentation Week I

Students to submit and present their essay plans for discussion and feedback.

Seminar 12: Essay Plan Presentation Week II

Students to submit and present their essay plans for discussion and feedback.

ESSAY SUBMISSION: 11.59pm Friday 4 June – 11.59pm Friday 11 June 2021

**Policies and Procedures**

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central ([https://policies.mq.edu.au](https://policies.mq.edu.au)). 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

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

• Getting help with your assignment
• Workshops
• StudyWise
• Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

• Subject and Research Guides
• Ask a Librarian
Student Enquiry Service

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

Equity 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.

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.

Changes since First Published

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/02/2021</td>
<td>no changes made (apologies Richard, I thought I was convening this but its already sorted).</td>
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