



BIOL3520

Palaeobiology

Session 2, Special circumstances, North Ryde 2021

Archive (Pre-2022) - Department of Biological Sciences

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Session 2 Learning and Teaching Update

The decision has been made to conduct study online for the remainder of Session 2 for all units WITHOUT mandatory on-campus learning activities. Exams for Session 2 will also be online where possible to do so.

This is due to the extension of the lockdown orders and to provide certainty around arrangements for the remainder of Session 2. We hope to return to campus beyond Session 2 as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Some classes/teaching activities cannot be moved online and must be taught on campus. You should already know if you are in one of these classes/teaching activities and your unit convenor will provide you with more information via iLearn. If you want to confirm, see the list of [units with mandatory on-campus classes/teaching activities](#).

Visit the [MQ COVID-19 information page](#) for more detail.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Matthew Kosnik

matthew.kosnik@mq.edu.au

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

150cp including (BIOL2310 or BIOL2510 or BIOL2520 or BIOL263) and (30cp from BIOL or ENVS or GEOS units at 2000 level or above)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The fossil record is our best guide to large-scale evolutionary patterns and processes. This unit will include a mix of palaeobiology readings, written reviews, seminars, supplementary lectures and lab sessions to explore into the most interesting research, techniques, controversies, debates and discoveries in the discipline of palaeobiology. Key macroevolutionary themes will be explored including evolutionary trends, time scales, palaeoecology, phylogenetics, and the evolution of major marine and terrestrial groups. This unit is the Capstone for the Major in Palaeobiology.

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:

ULO1: Utilise fossils combined with analytical skills to solve advanced evolutionary problems

ULO2: Apply frontier imaging, lab and field techniques and industry standard software to analyse fossil material at an advanced level

ULO3: Apply advanced numerical methods that involve faunal turnover, extinction and conservation palaeobiology

ULO4: Integrate skills to demonstrate capacity at producing primary scientific

manuscripts and research proposals based on readings of the primary

ULO5: Gain insight and experience with post degree career options in palaeobiology and related disciplines

General Assessment Information

Assessment Criteria

Assessment at Macquarie University is standards-based, as outlined in the [Assessment Policy](#). This means that your work will be assessed against clear criteria, and these criteria (e.g. in a rubric) will be made available when the assessment tasks are released to you on iLearn.

Submission of Assessments

All assessments must be submitted online through [Turnitin](#) unless otherwise indicated. Links for the submission of each assessment will be available on [iLearn](#).

You should always check that you have uploaded the correct file. If you have a problem, please email the Unit Convenor with your correct file. You must also keep a copy of your assessments until the end of semester in case there is a problem with your submission. It is your responsibility to ensure that you can provide a copy of your assessment if requested.

Marking of Assessments

Assignments will usually be marked through Turnitin with grades provided through Gradebook on iLearn. Please do not submit your assessments via email or in hard copy unless requested (e.g. a sketch or drawing).

We aim to return your assessment grades and feedback within two to three weeks of the date that you submitted it. We appreciate your patience and will advise you through iLearn when your marked assessments and feedback are available for viewing.

Penalties for Late Assessments

The penalty for late submission of assessments in this unit is **ten percent (10 %) of the assessment value per day**, calculated from the due time and date. This means that if the assignment is worth a total of 30 marks (or 30 % of the unit) you will lose 3 marks for each day it is late. This is a hefty penalty designed to make you aware of the importance of organising yourself around assessment due dates. The penalty will be applied over weekdays and weekends unless you have been granted an extension prior to the due date.

Extensions for Assessments

To obtain an extension for an assessment task, you will need to follow the formal process as outlined in the [Special Consideration Policy](#), and you must provide appropriate supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate - see advice for [Special Consideration](#) requests). The final decision regarding the granting of an extension lies with the unit convenor. Permission for extensions must be sought **before the due date** unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please let us know of problems in advance or as soon as possible, not after the event. We are likely to be much more sympathetic and able to accommodate your circumstance

if you follow this advice.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Major Essay	30%	No	Week 7 or as arranged
Workshop Quizzes	45%	No	within 7 days of competing workshop
Engagement in Fora	10%	No	During Fora
Seminar	15%	No	Weeks 12 & 13 or as arranged

Major Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **Week 7 or as arranged**

Weighting: **30%**

Scientific essay selected from a prescribed set of palaeo discipline areas. Student must define research area, formulate research question(s) data mine, read papers, formulate and organise text, write formal scientific paper.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Workshop Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **within 7 days of competing workshop**

Weighting: **45%**

T/F and written answer quiz questions based on activities completed in separate modules (mix of Lec/Lab/Tutorial)

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- Apply frontier imaging, lab and field techniques and industry standard software to analyse fossil material at an advanced level
- Apply advanced numerical methods that involve faunal turnover, extinction and conservation palaeobiology

Engagement in Fora

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **During Fora**

Weighting: **10%**

There are four fora in which students discuss a current, primary scientific paper where there is controversy.

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- Apply advanced numerical methods that involve faunal turnover, extinction and conservation palaeobiology
- Integrate skills to demonstrate capacity at producing primary scientific manuscripts and research proposals based on readings of the primary
- Gain insight and experience with post degree career options in palaeobiology and related disciplines

Seminar

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **Weeks 12 & 13 or as arranged**

Weighting: **15%**

Presentations with questions delivered in person or online outlining a palaeontological topic completely separate from the Essay topic - to show breadth of knowledge - can be related to career or post graduate aspirations

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¹ 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 [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² 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

Unit iLearn

This unit has an iLearn page that can be accessed through ilearn.mq.edu.au. It contains important information and other materials relating to the unit, including details and links for assessments.

Communication

The unit iLearn is the primary way that we communicate with you. Please check it regularly for announcements and posts. You are encouraged to use the Discussion Board on iLearn to post questions and generate discussion with other students. Please only email the convenor with private matters – all other questions should be posted on iLearn.

Classes

The class timetable for this unit can be found through the [Timetable](#) portal. You should also check the unit schedule as some weeks may have other instructions or locations.

In person requirement

Lectures, seminars and SGTAs can be joined online (link available through iLearn) or face to face depending on current COVID-19 restrictions. Activities include online with face-to-face options that will be transitioned to online-only delivery if this is required.

We currently plan on having 3 compulsory full-day face-to-face / on campus practical sessions during the mid-session break. We also plan a full day field trip (date TBD) to examine modern and fossil sedimentary environments. Should we not be able to have a face-to-face activities due

to COVID restrictions then other activities will be provided for the practical content.

Should anyone feel unwell during any scheduled face-to-face activity DO NOT COME TO THE ACTIVITY, but notify the convenor of your illness and alternative arrangements will be made.

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) (<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) (<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 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.