

ANTH3002

The Anthropology of Politics and Power

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2023

Macquarie School of Social Sciences

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer and Unit Coordinator

Chris Houston

chris.houston@mq.edu.au

Contact via 02 08508471

Arts Precinct B513

Through appointment. Please email for a time to meet.

Lecturer and Unit Coordinator

Paul Mason

paul.mason@mq.edu.au

Through appointment. Please email for a time to meet.

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Politics and power can be thought of as intimate aspects of our social life and relationships, and hence as aspects of all subjects of anthropological investigation. Processes of domination, resistance and social transformation are inevitably involved in the creation and representation of cultural practices and meanings. In the first half of the unit students will identify and compare the themes - explicit or otherwise - that dominate the composition of a number of classical political ethnographies, while also exploring the wider question of their colonial contexts and how this context influenced the development of anthropological knowledge. Its second half examines how these themes are still relevant in illuminating more contemporary manifestations of power, including forms of political practice such as nationalism and its project of social transformation; violence and terror; gender and agency; resistance and collaboration; and peace-making and reconciliation.

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: Apply the concerns of various anthropological writings to contemporary processes of power and politics.

ULO2: Discern and discuss the tensions and correspondences between the political institutions of different societies, their representation in ethnographic writing or film, and political processes in the ethnographers' own society.

ULO3: Demonstrate knowledge of influential ethnographies and debates relevant to the anthropology of politics and power.

ULO4: Write cogently about the sociocultural dimensions of political systems and practices

General Assessment Information

General Assessment Information

Late Work Information and Penalties: Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to non-time sensitive assessment (incl. essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special Consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

PARTICIPATION

Weight: 20%

Due: Weekly

Note: ANTH 3002 has both face-to-face tutorials **and** an external, **online only** enrolment, in which participation will be graded via iLearn discussion boards only. Please see below for instructions on participation depending on your enrolment. You only need to fulfil the requirements of your enrolment mode - not both.

1) Face-to-Face Tutorial Participation (On Campus):

You are expected to complete the weekly readings before class and come to class prepared to discuss the material. **Class attendance is required**. *No more than two absences will be accepted*.

Participation is worth 20% of your grade.

Active participation entails contributing thoughtful comments regarding readings, films, and group discussions during each tutorial meeting. Students who regularly make positive contributions to class discussions and display serious engagement with required readings will receive extra credit towards their final grades.

2) External/Online Only Student Participation (iLearn Discussion Board):

Each week, external students will be required to complete **two activities** on the weekly discussion thread found within the ANTH3002 Tutorial Discussion Forum (above):

- 1. Each student should post one (1) unique question related to the unit material for the rest of the class to consider. This could be tangentially related, or inspired by the reading/lecture directly. It doesn't have to be a spectacular insight by any means. In short, bring something intellectually stimulating to the table that came to your mind during the week as a result of your reading the tutorial material and listening to the lecture. Feel free to share external links, readings, audio/visual material whatever you like, as long as it is related to the core topic of the week in question.
- 2. Each student should then answer another (1) student's posted question, or, one of the questions posted by Chris or Paul. Each student's response should be around 250 words. This is obviously not going to be rigidly enforced, but we all know what 250 words looks like, as opposed to a few lines of text.

ESSAY PLAN: Weight: 10%

Due: September 29th (by 23:59pm)

Brief Description: This is a two-page plan in which you sketch out the research essay that you will be submitting in Week 10. For the research essay, you must select a case study of your own choice from any week of the course. Please consult with either Paul or Chris on essay topics.

RESEARCH ESSAY: Weight: 40%

Due: October 13th (by 23:59pm)

Brief Description: You will write a research paper of 2000 words (+/- 10%) on a self-selected

topic.

TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM: Weight: 30%

Exam Opens: 27th October (Friday), 5:00pm

Exam Closes: 3rd November (Friday), 11:59pm

Brief Description: The take-home exam will consist of a combination of short answers to questions that link together topics covered in the unit material so far. The questions will be made available under the 'Take-Home Exam' section on iLearn on the **27th October** after 5 pm. You must submit your responses through the Turnitin by 11: 59 pm on **November 3rd** (7 days total).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Essay plan	10%	No	Week 8, 29/09/2023
Essay	40%	No	Week 10, 13/10/2023
Tutorial participation	20%	No	Weekly
Take-Home Test	30%	No	Week 12, 27/10/2023

Essay plan

Assessment Type 1: Plan

Indicative Time on Task 2: 25 hours

Due: Week 8, 29/09/2023

Weighting: 10%

This is a two-page plan in which you sketch out the research essay.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply the concerns of various anthropological writings to contemporary processes of power and politics.
- Discern and discuss the tensions and correspondences between the political institutions
 of different societies, their representation in ethnographic writing or film, and political
 processes in the ethnographers' own society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of influential ethnographies and debates relevant to the anthropology of politics and power.
- Write cogently about the sociocultural dimensions of political systems and practices

Essay

Assessment Type 1: Essay

Indicative Time on Task 2: 45 hours

Due: Week 10, 13/10/2023

Weighting: 40%

Essays will deal with major themes related to the unit, using case studies to investigate issues of political order, questions of political change, or the arguments around political agency.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply the concerns of various anthropological writings to contemporary processes of power and politics.
- Discern and discuss the tensions and correspondences between the political institutions
 of different societies, their representation in ethnographic writing or film, and political
 processes in the ethnographers' own society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of influential ethnographies and debates relevant to the anthropology of politics and power.
- · Write cogently about the sociocultural dimensions of political systems and practices

Tutorial participation

Assessment Type 1: Participatory task Indicative Time on Task 2: 20 hours

Due: **Weekly** Weighting: **20%**

Student participation in discussions and activities.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply the concerns of various anthropological writings to contemporary processes of power and politics.
- Discern and discuss the tensions and correspondences between the political institutions
 of different societies, their representation in ethnographic writing or film, and political
 processes in the ethnographers' own society.

Take-Home Test

Assessment Type 1: Quiz/Test Indicative Time on Task 2: 22 hours

Due: Week 12, 27/10/2023

Weighting: 30%

The exam will consist of a combination of short answers to questions that link together topics and themes covered throughout the course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply the concerns of various anthropological writings to contemporary processes of power and politics.
- Discern and discuss the tensions and correspondences between the political institutions
 of different societies, their representation in ethnographic writing or film, and political
 processes in the ethnographers' own society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of influential ethnographies and debates relevant to the anthropology of politics and power.
- 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.

Delivery and Resources

ABOUT THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF POWER AND POLITICS

Unit Description:

This unit introduces students to many of the vital political practices generating social life in the present. It also introduces students to some of the key literature associated with the anthropology of politics and power. Our exploration of both the practice of power and its analysis will be organized around three enduring questions: the 'secret of order', the 'secret of change', and the 'secret of action.'

In the first half of the course students will identify and compare the themes – explicit or otherwise – that dominate the composition of a number of classical political ethnographies, while also exploring the wider question of their colonial contexts and how this context influenced the development of anthropological knowledge.

The second half of the unit examines how some of these themes may still be of relevance in illuminating more contemporary manifestations of power, including forms of political practice such as nationalism and its project of social transformation; violence and terror; gender and agency; resistance and collaboration; and peace-making and reconciliation. A continuing concern of the course will be to explore how the writing of ethnography and the making of

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

ethnographic film – that is, textual and visual representations – are implicated in these issues.

Unit Rationale: Politics and power can be thought of as intimate aspects of our social life and relationships, and hence as apects of all subjects of anthropological investigation. Processes of domination, resistance and social transformation are inevitably involved in the creation and representation of cultural practices and meanings. Accordingly, the specific investigation of these issues is of great help in contributing to students' understandings of the present, as well as to their comprehension of other units in the anthropology programme at Macquarie. Appropriately, the various and competing ways that the anthropology of politics has been conceptualized and delimited has meant that political anthropology itself has been described as a "running intellectual battleground." One key reason for this resides in the historical political context of anthropology. Anthropology is a discipline more immediately familiar and hence more immediately implicated than other disciplines with the transformations produced by European power upon the non-European world. For a long intellectual moment, colonialism's primary object of control constituted anthropology's primary object of investigation. For this very reason, in this course we will seek to explore both the anthropology of politics, and the politics of anthropology.

Classes

Anth 3002 involves a two-hour seminar. Part of this weekly seminar will be used for lectures, part for films and part for discussion.

Internally-enrolled students are also required to attend the weekly tutorial.

Required texts

All readings for tutorial are found on the iLearn site of the unit. Many other readings for essays are found on the library website under ANTH3002 in e-reserve (or follow the link on iLearn). Some other listed readings are on three-day loan (books) or e-reserve (journal articles).

Unit Schedule

Lecture and Tutorial Programme

Note: Depending on unit convenors' interests, there may be some changes of topic from the provisional schedule posted below.

Part One: The Political Anthropology of Colonialism

The first six weeks of the course introduce students to the key issues in anthropology's long historic encounter[s] with state and stateless societies, which raise many fascinating questions about how such societies instituted themselves politically. Yet these questions also arose in the context of both the planned and unplanned colonial transformation of those societies, generally by the very nation states and business corporations of the European anthropologists themselves.

As a consequence, anthropologists have always been studying and constructing moving targets – albeit more or less consciously: political regimes undergoing multiple transformations in which anthropologists themselves were implicated, with political institutions and practices in flux as incorporation into global flows of capital, ideologies and social practices proceeded.

Week One: Introduction to Political Anthropology and its Key Concepts

Film: First Contact

Tutorial: Discussion of First Contact, Course Overview and Assessment Details

Week Two: Anthropology, Colonialism, & Science

Film: Robert Gardner's The Nuer

Tutorial Question: Given Feuchtwang's analysis of the relationship between the colonial State and anthropological knowledge, who should fund anthropological research?

Tutorial Reading:

S. Feuchtwang (1973) 'The Discipline and its Sponsors', in Asad, T. (ed.) *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter*. Humanities Press, New York.

Week Three: World Systems Theory, Global Cultural History, & Anthropology

Film: Joe Leahy's Neighbours

Tutorial Question: Using Kahn's discussion, give some examples of how ideas of cultural difference might be connected to contemporary processes of power.

Tutorial Reading:

Chapters One and Two, in *The Dawn of Everything*, David Graeber and David Wengrow.

Part Two: Representing Politics

In the next three weeks of the course we will seek to ground some of the above claims in the complexities of a number of 'classic' *political* anthropology texts, seeking to clarify the assumptions ethnographers have made about culture, structure, historical change, conflict, authority, and individual activism in the process of representing particular societies. Student seminar presentations make up a proportion of the seminar sessions.

Week Four: The Secret of Order

Tutorial Question: For what reasons does Clastres accuse western political philosophy of ethnocentrism?

Tutorial Reading:

Clastres, P. (1977) 'Copernicus and the Savages', and 'Exchange and Power: Philosophy of the Indian Chieftainship' (Chapters One & Two) in *Society against the State: The Leader as Servant and the Humane Uses of Power among the Indians of the Americas*. Urizen Books.

Potential readings for essays on this topic:

Fortes, M. & Evans-Pritchard, E. (1940) Introduction to *African Political Systems*. Oxford University Press, London.

Evans-Pritchard, E. 'The Nuer of the Southern Sudan', in Fortes, M. & Evans-Pritchard, E. (1940) *African Political Systems*. Oxford University Press, London.

Kuklick, H. (1984) 'Tribal Exemplars: Images of Political Authority in British Anthropology', in G. Stocking Jr. (ed.) *Functionalism Historicized: Essays on British Social Anthropology*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.

Meeker, M. (2002) 'Amnesia', in *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

Gough, K. (1971) 'Nuer Kinship: A Re-Examination', in T. Beidelman (ed.) *The Translation of Culture*. Tavistock Publications, London.

Asad, T. (1973) 'Two European Images of Non-European Rule', in Asad, T (ed.) *Anthropology* and the Colonial Encounter

[See also review essay on 'Anthropology of colonialism' in Annual Review of Anthropology 1993]

Week Five: The Secret of Change

Tutorial Question: Can we speak of exploitation in pre-capitalist societies?

Tutorial Reading:

Kahn, J. (1981) 'Marxist Anthropology & Segmentary Societies: A Review of the Literature', in *The Anthropology of Pre-Capitalist Societies*. Humanities Press, New York.

Potential readings for essays on this topic:

Leach, E. (1954) *Political Systems of Highland Burma*. (Foreword, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapters 6 - 10) London School of Economics and Political Science, London.

Friedman, J. (1975) 'Tribes, States and Transformations', in M. Bloch (ed.) *Marxist Analyses and Social Anthropology*. Malaby Press, London.

Nugent, D. (1982) 'Closed Systems and Contradiction: The Kachin in and out of History', in *Man* 17, 3, pp. 502-527.

Leach, E. (1983) 'Imaginary Kachins', Correspondence in *Man* 18, 1 & Nugent, D. (1983) 'Imaginary Kachins', Reply to correspondence in *Man* 18, 1.

Week Six: The Secret of Action

Tutorial Question: What might a focus on the purposive political actions of individuals simultaneously obscure?

Tutorial Reading:

Vincent, J. (1978) 'Political Anthropology: Manipulative Strategies', in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 7.

Possible readings for essay on this topic:

Barth, F. (1959) Political Leadership among Swat Pathans. The Athlone Press, London.

Asad, T. (1972) 'Market Model, Class Structure and Consent: A Reconsideration of Swat Political Organization', in *Man* 7, 1.

Meeker, M. (1980) 'The Twilight of a South Asian Heroic Age: A Rereading of Barth's Study of Swat', in *Man* 15, pp. 682-701.

Lindholm, C. (1981) 'History and the Heroic Pakhtun', Correspondence in Man 16.

Meeker, M (1981) Reply to correspondence in *Man* 16.

[See also 'Overview: Sixty years in Anthropology', by Barth in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 2007]

Part Three: The Political Anthropology of Modernity

The most recent globalization of the world economy has encouraged anthropologists to theorize the ways tensions and accommodations between local, national and global forces impact on the political processes and the social relations of societies represented in their ethnographic writing. It has also encouraged a re-thinking of how we might understand the human diversity traditionally studied by anthropologists and paradoxically both produced and managed by nation states and modern modes of governance. This section will centre on some of the questions these studies raise, on the effects and unintended consequences of self-conscious modernizing projects of different nation-states and elites, and on the political legacy of European colonialism.

Week Seven: Project Modernity (1): Nationalism, Republicanism and Language Reform in Turkey

Film: Triumph of the Will

Tutorial Question: In Scott's contrast between high modernist planning versus practical knowledge/ local practices, which side do you come down on?

Tutorial Reading:

Scott, J. (1998) 'Nature and Space' (Chapter One), in *Seeing Like a State*. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Week Eight: Project Modernity (2): Soviet Collectivism

Film: Three Songs of Lenin

Tutorial Question: In their discussion of 'primitive' society, how are Marx and Sahlins' contrasting interpretations related to their different analysis of capitalism?

Tutorial Reading:

Overing, J. (1993) 'The Anarchy and Collectivism of the 'Savage Other': Marx and Sahlins in the Amazon', in C. Hann (ed.) *Socialism: Ideals, Idealogies and Local Practice*.

Readings for possible essays on this topic:

Humphrey, C. (1983) *Karl Marx Collective: Economy, Society and Religion in a Siberian Collective Farm.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

Humphrey, C. (2002) 'Marx Went Away, but Karl Stayed Behind', in J. Vincent (ed.) *The Anthropology of Politics*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Scott, J. (1998) 'Soviet Collectivization, Capitalist Dreams' (Chapter Six), in *Seeing Like a State*. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Verdery, K. (1991) 'Theorizing Socialism: A Prologue to the "Transition", in *American Ethnologist* 18, No 3.

Fitzpatrick, S. (1999) Chapter Three from *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Verdery, K (1999) Introduction to *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Reis, N. (2009) 'Potato Ontology: Surviving Postsocialism in Russia', in *Cultural Anthropology* 24, 2.

Week Nine: Domination & Resistance (1): Theoretical Problems

Tutorial Question: How might we understand relations between gender, language and power in Australia?

Tutorial Reading:

Gal, S. (1991) 'Between Speech and Silence: The Problematics of Research on Language and Gender' in M. di Leonardo (ed.) *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge*. University of California Press, Berkeley

Readings for possible essays on this topic:

Ortner, S. (1995) Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal', in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2.

Scott, J. (1985) 'Normal Exploitation, Normal Resistance', Chapter 2 in Weapons of the Weak:

Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Reed-Danahay, D. (1993) 'Talking About Resistance: Ethnography and Theory in Rural France', in *Anthropological Quarterly* 66, 4.

Das, V. (1994) 'Modernity and Biography: Women's Lives in Contemporary India', in *Thesis Eleven*, No. 39.

Week Ten: Domination & Resistance (2): Islam and Gender

Film: Divorce Iranian Style

Tutorial Question: Do Muslim women need saving (from Islam)?

Tutorial Readings: Abu-Lughod, L. (2002) 'Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and its Others', in *American Anthropologist* 104 (3)

Komecoglu, U. (2009) 'Micro Spaces, Performative Repertoires and Gender Wars among Islamist Youth in Istanbul', in *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 30, 1: 107-119.

Readings for possible essays on this topic:

Abu-Lughod, L. (1990) 'The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women', in *American Ethnologist* 17, 1.

Hegland, M. (2003) 'Shi'a Women's Rituals in Northwest Pakistan: The Shortcomings and Significance of Resistance', in *Anthropological Quarterly* 76, No 3.

Mahmood, S. (2001) 'Feminist Theory, Embodiment and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival', in *Cultural Anthropology* 16, 2: 202-236.

Brenner, S. (1996) 'Reconstructing Self and Society: Javanese Muslim Women and the Veil', in *American Ethnologist* 23, 4: 673-697.

Zine, J. (2006) 'Between Orientalism and Fundamentalism: Muslim Women and Feminist Resistance', in *(En]gendering the War on Terror: War Stories and Camouflage Politics*. K. Hunt & K. Rygiel (eds), UK, Ashgate Publishing.

Week Eleven: Violence and Terror

Tutorial Question: Can Das' discussion of witnessing be applied to Primo Levi's work?

Tutorial Reading: Das, V. (1997) 'The Act of Witnessing: Violence, Poisonous Knowledge and Subjectivity', in V. Das ed., *Violence and Subjectivity*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Levi, P. (1987) 'The Drowned and the Saved', in If This Is A Man. London, Sphere.

Readings for possible essays on this topic:

Hutchinson, S. (1996) *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War and the State*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Hutchinson, S. (1998) 'Death, Memory and the Politics of Legitimation: Nuer Experiences of the Continuing Second Sudanese Civil War', in R. Werbner (ed.) Memory and the Postcolony. Zed Books, London.

Hutchinson, S. (2000) 'Nuer Ethnicity Militarized', in Anthropology Today, 16, 3.

Simons, A. (1999) 'War: Back to the Future', Annual Review of Anthropology 28.

Hobsbawm, E. & Ranger, T. (1983) 'Introduction' in *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Week Twelve: The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation

Film: We Are All Neighbours

Tutorial Question: In projects of reconciliation, is it just to make victims the primary actor, expecting them to initiate what those in power are unwilling to do?

Tutorial Reading: M. Humphries (2002) 'Trauma, Truth and Reconciliation', in *The Politics of Atrocity and Reconciliation: From Terror to Trauma*. Routledge, London.

Week Thirteen: Tying up the Loose Ends of an Anthropology of Power and Politics

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (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
- · Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution 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.e du.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

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe <u>academic integrity</u> – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free <u>online writing and maths support</u>, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the 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

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study

- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

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 <u>Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy</u>. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.