PICT812

Research Methods

S1 External 2017

Department of Security Studies and Criminology

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General Information

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Credit points 4
Prerequisites Admission to MCRIM or MPICT or MCPICT or PGDipPICT or PGCertPICT or MIntSecStud or GradDipIntSecStud or MPICTMIntSecSt or MCPICTMIntSecSt or MIntPubDip
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description This unit examines general aspects of academic research including purpose/aims, questions and 'problems', organisation and design, the philosophy of science and associated debates, as well as specific methods and materials applied to pursue a research project including archives, interviews, surveys, quantitative, and discourse analysis.

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:

Understand debates around the question of the possibility of political "science"

Understand debates on the question of human agency

Understand basic issues relating to various research methods, ie - Qualitative and Quantitative

Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

General Assessment Information

- Please feel free to stay in touch with your lecturer regarding your progress.
- Start thinking about your assessments early; do not let them creep up on you.
- Plagiarism will attract severe penalties, including marks of zero for essays/assignments with plagiarism.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Internals: Class presentation	15%	No	Ongoing from Week 2
Externals' Short Essay 15%	0%	No	27 March (Week 5)
Quantitative methods	20%	No	1 May (Week 8)
Research project proposal.	40%	Yes	29 May (Week 12)
Test	25%	No	Week 13 (see below)

Internals: Class presentation

Due: **Ongoing from Week 2**
Weighting: **15%**

Internal students only

Each student will be placed into a group of two or three on Week 1. Each group will be assigned a week in which it will lead a class discussion based on that week's topic. The group is expected to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the week's readings
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the issues relating to the week's topic
3. Be able to generate sustained class discussion/participation though creative means such as:
    1. Formulating questions for discussion
    2. Prompting discussion of questions with follow-up questions
    3. Activities that generate discussion around the key questions of the week's topic: debates, for example
4. Being able to relate the week's topic to current events and questions

The group's presentation can extend throughout most of the duration of the 2 hour seminar (good presentations often will). The Lecturer will also facilitate by interjecting with questions, comments, and thoroughly unhelpful asides.

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Externals' Short Essay 15%

Due: **27 March (Week 5)**
Weighting: **0%**

External students only

Length: 1000 words

Summarise and evaluate the argument in the following online article: **'Is a Science of Politics Possible?' - James Skillen**

Your evaluation should draw on at least four sources used in class (the textbook counts as a source).

Article available at: http://www.metanexus.net/essay/science-politics-possible

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Quantitative methods

Due: **1 May (Week 8)**
Weighting: **20%**

Task to be confirmed

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Research project proposal.

Due: **29 May (Week 12)**
Weighting: **40%**
This is a hurdle assessment task (see assessment policy for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

The task entails writing up a detailed, professional research proposal of **8 pages (no less, no more, including references)** (12 point font, 1 ½ spacing). Write concisely and with clarity. The individual items include:

- The identification of a problem and/or a central research question that the project will pursue
- Review of relevant literature and identification of a lacuna that your project will fill – how does your project make an original contribution to the scholarship
- Aims (what the project strives to discover/establish/refute) contextualized against a background
- The method/s to be used and justification why it/they are appropriate
- Organization of the project (e.g. what will be done where, chapter outline, etc)
- Logistical and/or budgetary issues (e.g. travel requirements, special equipment, translation
- costs)
- A schedule/plan
- A bibliography of works cited. Use the Harvard method. If you are unsure how to use this consult the following website (from MQ library): http://libguides.mq.edu.au/content.php?pid=459099&sid=3759396

Think of this proposal as a plan for a long master's thesis (40 000 to 50 000 words). You have one year to complete the project. This would mean that any field work you do (should your project require it) would have to be undertaken in the first few months.

In choosing a topic you are able to build on work you have done in previous units, **but you must not substantially replicate this work**. All essays are now processed through turnitin. Proposals that substantially borrow from other essays will be penalised. Depending on the seriousness of the plagiarism, this can involve anything from the loss of a few marks to failure in the unit.

Guidelines for writing research proposals can be found on the ilearn site (under the assessment tab).

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Quantitative
- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Test

Due: **Week 13 (see below)**
Weighting: **25%**

Internal students will sit a 2 hour (closed book) test **during class in week 13 (5 June)**.

External students will receive test questions at **4pm Monday (5 June)** and will submit their answers via turnitin **by 11:59pm Wednesday 7 June**. External students are expected to use essay-style referencing as it is a non-invigilated examination.

Both Internal and External students will be marked fairly with none being advantaged or disadvantaged owing to their mode of examination.

More details to come.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Delivery and Resources

Compulsory textbook: David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, (Palgrave, 2010). Third Edition.

Other weekly reading available online.

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_2016.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

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/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, 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.

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://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 outcome

- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Assessment task

- Internals: Class presentation

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

- Understand debates around the question of the possibility of political "science"
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Assessment tasks

- Internals: Class presentation
- Externals' Short Essay 15%
- Quantitative methods
- Research project proposal.
- Test

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

- Understand debates around the question of the possibility of political "science"
- Understand debates on the question of human agency
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Assessment tasks

- Internals: Class presentation
- Externals' Short Essay 15%
- Quantitative methods
- Research project proposal.
- Test

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

- Understand debates around the question of the possibility of political "science"
- Understand basic issues relating to various research methods, ie - Qualitative and Quantitative
- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Assessment tasks

- Internals: Class presentation
- Externals' Short Essay 15%
- Quantitative methods

- Research project proposal.
- Test

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:

Learning outcome

- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Assessment tasks

- Internals: Class presentation
- Test

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:

Learning outcomes

- Understand debates on the question of human agency
- Understand similarities and differences between the various theoretical approaches to studying politics

Assessment tasks

- Internals: Class presentation
- Test

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
02/03/2017	This unit is now being taught with POIR901. I have just copied the unit guide of POIR901 to be reflected in this unit's Guide.