



CUL 399

Sex, Death and Politics: The Ethics of Our Lives

S2 Day 2018

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor and lecturer

Dennis Bruining

dennis.bruining@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

Y3A

By appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit is about the common (yet often scandalous) dilemmas or big issues we confront or have to ethically decide upon in our everyday lives. For example, why do we, or would we, decide to have an affair or a one night stand, and with who? Why do we decide to have kids, or not? Why do we decide to work, or be educated? Why do we decide it is important to prolong human life, or not (euthanasia)? From health; environment; science, to adultery; marriage; abortion; religion, war; sport, work and education, this unit will draw on a number of theoretical/philosophical and literary writers, as well as ethical and practical approaches, to debate how and why we make the decisions we do; why we think some decisions are more important than others, and how do we find the wisdom to decide that? How are we influenced by media and politicians, religion and society, family and friends? And are these decisions emotionally, instinctively, or rationally made?

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:

1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.

2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

General Assessment Information

Special Consideration

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 oral assessment tasks - such as debates.

Please familiarise yourself with the relevant policy and procedures regarding applications for Special Considerations here: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>.

All applications for Special Consideration must be submitted, with no exceptions, through AskMQ: <https://ask.mq.edu.au>.

Re-Mark Application

You may request a re-mark of formative assessments graded and returned in session. Any re-mark of final assessments will be determined through the university grade appeal process.

Applications for re-mark will be considered ONLY on the following grounds:

1. Administrative error
2. No feedback was provided on the assessment
3. The feedback provided on the assessment does not justify the grade awarded

In case you wish to apply for a re-mark, download the Department's Application for Re-Mark form and follow the Student Procedure as outlined in this document: <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>DEBATE ESSAY</u>	30%	No	Wednesday 19 Sept (23.59)
<u>TEAM DEBATE</u>	35%	No	Weeks 8-13 (in class)
<u>PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION</u>	15%	No	Weeks 8-13 (in class)
<u>SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY</u>	20%	No	Friday, 9th November (23.59)

DEBATE ESSAY

Due: **Wednesday 19 Sept (23.59)**

Weighting: **30%**

Assignment 1: Debate Essay (1, 800 words)

This essay is a research-based, analytic, evaluative assessment task that requires you to communicate, by academic scholarly means, your ideas via well-reasoned arguments, while taking into consideration various scholarly viewpoints.

In class you will be assigned a particular debate topic, which you will have input on choosing, depending on the areas in the unit which most interest you.

In the Debate Essay, you are required to analyse and evaluate both sides of your topic. To do so, you should outline a range of *for* and *against* positions that are generally taken in relation to the particular topic of your choice, *and take a considered position by arguing which side of the debate you find most convincing and why.*

Further information about this assessment will be discussed in the lectorial and/or via the CUL399 iLearn site.

Grading Criteria for this assessment

Your essay will be graded on the following criteria

1. Your understanding of general ethical concepts and theories explored in the unit, in the context of your chosen topic.
2. Your demonstration of reflective, analytic, and evaluative skills.
3. The quality of your argumentation and analysis and your fluency on the issue that you have chosen to write about.
4. The structure of your essay: a clear statement of its aims (in the introduction); clear organisation (in a logical order and with a clearly flowing discussion); distinctive and clear argument, and a well-stated conclusion.

5. The use of appropriate theory and evidence to support your claims and arguments, drawn from the lectures, the unit's required and recommended readings/media, as well as other relevant sources.
6. Use of scholarly referencing and bibliography, as well as the clear presentation of your paper in terms of academic format, orthography, syntax, grammar, and expression.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

TEAM DEBATE

Due: **Weeks 8-13 (in class)**

Weighting: **35%**

Assessment 2: Team Debate (same topic as the Debate Essay).

Instructions:

Depending on class numbers, you will be assigned a team of 2, 3 or 4 which will focus on a particular debate topic chosen from Weeks 1-7.

While the debate essay (assignment 1) was an opportunity for you to explore both sides of your topic, in your oral debate you will be randomly assigned to one side of the argument.

During the lectorials (and outside class) you will spend time with your team working on your specific arguments and overall team approach.

The team debates will be formally structured with a designated time keeper and adjudicator, and the team will be given a set time in which to present their arguments.

In your short debate presentation, you are required to engage directly with the audience and the other speakers, to summarise your argument in a way that is clear and effective for your team debate (including expressive eye contact, body language), and convey a depth of understanding of your topic. There will be an opportunity for members of each team collaboratively rebut the other team at the end.

Note: During your debate, you will be permitted to use a one sided cue card (half an A4 piece of paper) with some key dot points, if this is helpful to your presentation. But students are advised that they should not attempt to read their debate from a script, or feel that they need to learn their debate by heart. The important thing is convey your ideas to your audience, in a direct, engaging way.

Timing:

The debates will be held in class in the second half of semester. The exact length of each presentation, and the schedule will be distributed in class.

Even though you will be debating as part of a group, you'll be assessed and marked individually.

Further information about this assessment, including will be discussed in the lectorial, and/or via the CUL399 iLearn site.

Grading Criteria for this assessment

You will be graded on the following:

1. The fluency and lucidity in which you speak and present your arguments.
2. Your ability to communicate your understanding (through argument, research and content) of your topic so that you are able to engage your audience.
3. Your ability to develop a distinct argument that compliments and builds on our other team members' arguments. This includes your ability to frame your argument, and use or refer to the other points your team members make in your presentation in order to contextualize or extend your own arguments where relevant.
4. Your ability to rebut the arguments of the other team, during your presentation and/or during the rebuttal (either in person, or in collaboration with your team members).

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- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
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PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION

Due: **Weeks 8-13 (in class)**

Weighting: **15%**

Assessment 3: Participation Collaboration (200-300 words in total)

This assessment requires you to peer-review and grade the other members of your debate team on how much they collaborated and the quality of their collaboration. You will be provided rubrics to help you grade and you will also need to justify this grade by writing approximately 100 words on the contribution of each team member. (So, for example, if you are in a group of 4, you will be asked to write approximately 100 words on each other member of your team, which would come to 300 words in total).

You are expected to regularly attend lectorials where you will be working in your groups, and therefore will be graded on your participation in lectorials as well.

A detailed description/instruction of this assessment task, the rubric and report, and instructions on how to submit will be discussed in class during semester, and put on ilearn.

Grading Criteria for this assessment

Your participation collaboration will be graded by your peers according to the following criteria:

1. Your contribution to developing the argument towards the team debate.
2. Your contribution of team member to research towards the team debate (finding articles, books, media coverage, etc).
3. The time spent with team members developing the debate in lectorials and outside class (face-to-face and online).

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SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Due: **Friday, 9th November (23.59)**

Weighting: **20%**

Assignment 4: Short self-reflective essay (800 words)

Write a self-reflective short scholarly essay on the nuances and complications that arose when arguing for only one side of the topic debate before an audience of peers. What problems did you encounter? Were there difficulties of taking a position you might of disagreed with? What did you learn about argumentation? What did you learn about the side you had to argue for? Did you learn to respect the other side of the argument? Or was your own position reinforced further? What did you learn from the experience of presenting an argument as part of a team, for an audience of peers?

1. Your understanding of general ethical concepts and theories explored in the course, in the context of your chosen topic.
2. Your demonstration of reflective, analytic and evaluative skills.
3. The structure of your short essay: a clear statement of its aims (in the introduction); clear organization (in a logical order and with a clearly flowing discussion); distinctive and clear analysis and reflection, and a well-stated conclusion.
4. The use of appropriate theory and evidence to support your self-reflection and analysis, drawn from the lectures, the staging of the debates, unit's required and recommended readings/media, as well as other relevant sources.
5. Use of scholarly referencing and bibliography, as well as the clear presentation of your paper in terms of format, spelling, syntax, grammar and expression.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
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- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Delivery and Resources

DELIVERY

Lectorial Location: 10 Hadenfield Ave (previously known as Y3A) - T1 Theatre

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 10.00 - 12.00

- From Week 1-7, classes will consist of 2 hour lectorials, comprised of interactive lectures

with Q&A, problem and enquiry based group work, team work, feedback and assessment guidance.

- From Weeks 9 - 13 classes are devoted to the team debates. The debates will be assessed by Dennis and a tutor.

PLEASE NOTE: The day and room of your debate will be allocated in the lectorials during semester. When you are enrolling in the unit, please select CUL399 Lectorial 1/01 and then choose *either* CUL 399 Lectorial 2/01 or CUL 399 Lectorial 2/02, depending on availability.

And remember that last minute timetable changes may occur, so always re-check details with Macquarie timetables.

iLearn site:

The CUL399 iLearn website can be accessed at: <http://learn.mq.edu.au/>

Please check the iLearn site and email announcements regularly for updates and additional course material. On the iLearn site you will also be able to submit your written assignments.

Attendance:

There are no tutorials for this unit, there is only a 2 hour lectorial held once a week. Lectorials are lively and interactive - a mixture between lectures and tutorials - with Q&A and problem solving group work taking place. The team debate groups will be formed and practiced during lectorials from weeks 1 - 7. Then in the second half of semester, lectorials will be devoted to preparing for and holding the team debates. During this period students will be expected to participate as both presenters and audiences.

PLEASE NOTE: Not attending lectorials regularly throughout the semester will put you at a serious disadvantage. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that students attend all classes unless they have gained permission from their convener beforehand, or have evidence of sickness or unavoidable disruption. Not attending regularly and for the full sessions, is highly likely to affect your group 'Participation-Collaboration' and your 'Team Debate' assessment. Attendance will be taken in class every week.

CUL399 also requires that students follow the unit on iLearn and stay informed of special announcements and additional information posted there, by regularly checking student emails.

ALL questions and concerns about CUL399 should be emailed to the convener Dr. Dennis Bruining, whose email can be found in this unit guide.

RESOURCES: REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED

IMPORTANT (Please Read): In preparation for the lectorials you should read (watch, or listen to) at least TWO of the REQUIRED RESOURCES each week. It is important you do this every

week, since the ethical approaches and themes explored across the course are interconnected. Depending on the particular debate topic that you choose to explore in detail, you can then also draw on the longer list provided under Recommended Resources. However, you may find articles listed under other topics useful, too. Additional resources may also be provided on iLearn during the semester. Beyond this, students will be expected to do their own independent research.

Chapters and journal articles are available via the unit reading list for CUL399, Macquarie University Library. Links to open access media articles and interviews will be provided.

Please find all relevant required and recommended materials in the weekly sections on iLearn.

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 \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central).

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 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.m](#)

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

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.

Assessment tasks

- TEAM DEBATE
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable

of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.

- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Assessment tasks

- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.

Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.
- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while

respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
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- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

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- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should

have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
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Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Analyse, identify, and communicate broad and specific arguments in contemporary cultural, political, and ethical debates.
- 2. Evaluate cultural, social, and ethical values, to enable students to emerge as capable of professional and personal judgement in both their working and everyday lives.
- 3. Apply theoretical arguments underpinning contemporary issues and debates to specific ethical decision making in everyday life.
- 4. Apply team and individual problem and enquiry based learning to contemporary social, cultural, and ethical issues and debates.

- 5. Reflect critically the impact and consequence of one's arguments on others, while respecting the difference of counterarguments.

Assessment tasks

- DEBATE ESSAY
- TEAM DEBATE
- PARTICIPATION COLLABORATION
- SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Changes from Previous Offering

This unit was previously run from weeks 1 - 8, with an intensive session during the mid semester break. To ensure timetabling is simpler for students, the intensive teaching session was removed last year, which meant this unit ran for the full semester, from weeks 1 - 13. The unit will be run similarly to last year, so that is **without** an intensive session during the mid semester break.