



FOAR701

Research Paradigms

S1 External 2018

Dept of Anthropology

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	5
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	6
<u>Learning and Teaching Activities</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	7
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	8
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	11

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides a broad overview of the research paradigms that characterize the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Through this unit, the Faculty of Arts seeks to provide students with a constructive framework to recognise the possible contribution of diverse theoretical and disciplinary approaches. By concentrating on a core problem that crosses disciplinary boundaries in their final assessment task, demonstrating how that problem might be confronted under different paradigms, students will become conversant in a range of analytical techniques and theoretical perspectives. Students will learn to better recognise the assumptions that underwrite diverse approaches, their strengths, and their relations to each other, especially to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Although much of scholarship today requires focused specialisation, being able to communicate our ideas, recognising the significance of new research, and building meaningful collaborations all require an understanding of the diversity of approaches available in the Arts.

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:

Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.

Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.

Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.

Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.

Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.

Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

General Assessment Information

Please note that all assignments must be submitted electronically through the iLearn unit for FOAR 701. Marking, comments and return of submissions will be handled electronically in as timely a fashion as possible given the marking load involved.

Students can format documents using standards from their own disciplines, but need to provide clear references, a consistent format, and an accessible text. Essays will be marked primarily on content, argument, evidence, analytical originality and strength, and demonstrated command of the material, not on stylistic adherence to document formatting or other similar issues. Students are encouraged to engage thoroughly with the material and to err on the side of providing extra evidence and references to the texts, rather than to focus on superficial elements of the work (in simple terms, our preferred model is the legal brief, not creative non-fiction).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Textual Analysis Essay</u>	40%	No	Week 7
<u>Research Design Paper</u>	60%	No	Week 14

Textual Analysis Essay

Due: **Week 7**

Weighting: **40%**

The co-convenors will distribute a small number of target texts in Weeks 6. Students are responsible for a 2000 word analysis detailing where at least two (preferably three or more) of the research paradigms discussed in the class have been employed. Students should be able to cite specific passages, concepts and terminology from the target text to demonstrate where and how a paradigm is being used.

The essay should then explain any peculiarities to the author's use of the perspective, suggest the purpose for which it is deployed, and suggest any limitations to this use that the student can perceive.

Finally, the student should write a conclusion which discusses the effectiveness of the synthesis of these perspectives, and the relation among them (for example, how did the author resolve or fail to resolve key points of disagreement amongst the paradigms).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.
- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Research Design Paper

Due: **Week 14**

Weighting: **60%**

The final project for FOAR 701 will be an essay in which the student will lay out the initial proposal for three different projects, all on a single topic, demonstrating how the project would be articulated under three different research paradigms. These paradigms need to be clearly identified, but they can be hybrid paradigms. Students should choose a unifying topic from their own research interests or disciplines and can very much articulate their three approaches within a disciplinary framework, if they choose (but also may reach outside their discipline for one or more of the proposals).

Each proposal should give a clear sense of how the research question would be posed, what sorts of data would be sought, and what the expected outcome of the proposal would be, given the research paradigm. In a concluding analysis, the author should identify the relative strengths

of each project, how they relate to each other (complementary, opposed, asking incompatible questions, etc.), and -- if possible -- the potential weaknesses of each approach. The goal is to demonstrate a grasp of the way that research paradigms shape fundamental research questions into diverse types of projects.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Delivery and Resources

All resources, including readings and lecture recordings, will be made available through the unit's iLearn site and the Library Reserve (which is online). Please refer to this site for specific due dates, procedures, and other materials, including the schedule of topics and reading. The unit is offered both externally and internally, and students are encouraged to establish reading groups (like tutorials), but these are not required.

We do strongly recommend that students try to attend physically, both the lectures and the discussions, but this external offering is available because we know students have conflicting responsibilities. We know that physically attending can be inconvenient, but most students, in spite of their best efforts, maintain higher motivation, attention and performance if they do attend classes. Even if you are registered to do the unit externally, please know that you are welcome to attend either the lectures or a tutorial discussion, and you can do so irregularly if that suits you. We believe that, at the MRes level, students are the best judge of how to apply their time and energy to achieving their goals in the program. You will not be penalised in any way for doing this unit externally, or attending intermittently (or not at all).

Discussion boards will be provided online, and students are encouraged to engage with the texts and assessment tasks, although all students must produce their own work on the two assessment tasks. Discussion of these tasks is permitted and encouraged. In prior years, students have not made extensive use of the discussion boards even though one of the co-convenors does monitor them.

PLEASE NOTE: Students do not need to purchase texts for this unit. All materials will be available through electronic reserves.

As of 2017, a new optional tutorial program has been added for students to provide an opportunity to explore the paradigms in a more interactive, peer-to-peer fashion. These tutorials are headed by highly qualified recent PhDs (as well as the unit convenors, on occasion).

Although they are not required or assessed, attendance will be recorded and they are strongly encouraged. External students will have an analogue activity available online.

Unit Schedule

Unit schedule for 2018.

Week 1, 1 March: Introduction to Research Paradigms Overview: **Greg**

Week 2, 8 March Rational Choice Theory. Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Adam Lockyer (Security Studies and Criminology)**

Week 3, 15 March Marxisms. Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Jean-Philippe Deranty (Philosophy)**

Week 4, 22 March Functionalism, Structural Functionalism, et al. Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Adela Sobotkova (Ancient History)**

Week 5, 29 Mar Modernisation theory, Weber and the use of 'ideal types' Overview: **Noah** Guest lecturer: **Greg Downey (Anthropology)**

Week 6, 5 April Hermeneutics and symbolic approaches. Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Clare Monagle (Modern History, Politics and International Relations)**

Week 7, 12 April Optional meeting (no tutorials). Writing week. Finish and submit midterm assessment task.

Midsemester break

Week 8, 3 May Psychoanalysis and psychodynamics. Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Robert Reynolds (Modern History, Politics and International Relations)**

Week 9, 10 May Narrative theory. Overview & Guest lecturer: **Paul Sheehan (English)**

Week 10, 17 May Microsociology or Interactionism Overview: **Greg** Guest lecturer: **Amanda Wise (Sociology)**

Week 11, 24 May Structuralism, Semiotics, and Cognitive Approaches Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Anthony Lambert (Media, Music, Communication, and Cultural Studies)**

Week 12, 31 May Poststructuralism Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Noah Basil (Modern History, Politics and International Relations)**

Week 13, 7 June Post-humanism and the Anthropocene Overview: **Nicole** Guest lecturer: **Ian Collinson (Media, Music, Communication, and Cultural Studies)**

Learning and Teaching Activities

Tutorial discussions

Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling. Discussion threads are posted in each week under the topic heading for those

students who have questions or wish to discuss the readings. The convenor will try to post relevant reflection questions here if they might help external students to master the material.

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.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 outcomes

- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Analyse a model text and identify broad paradigms being deployed by another theorist.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

Learning and teaching activities

- Optional tutorial activities are available weekly starting in Week Two. See the timetable for scheduling. Discussion threads are posted in each week under the topic heading for those students who have questions or wish to discuss the readings. The convenor will try

to post relevant reflection questions here if they might help external students to master the material.

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

- Explore key texts in the context of theories specific for understanding the range of Arts disciplines.
- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
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- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Assessment tasks

- Textual Analysis Essay
- Research Design Paper

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

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- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
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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

- Examine different kinds of research and research skills used within a chosen discipline/s.
- Review, analyse and critique broad and diverse theoretical literature in relation to a particular research topic and the related field of research.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
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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 outcomes

- Communicate a clear and coherent explanation of ideas to different audiences.
- Describe and evaluate diverse theoretical paradigms in general and in relation to a particular research topic.
- Devise model research projects, on a single topic, demonstrating command of multiple theoretical paradigms.

Assessment tasks

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Changes from Previous Offering

No major substantial changes have been introduced between 2017 and 2018, but a writing week was added prior to the midsemester break to allow students extra time to finish the midsemester assessment task prior to the break.