Master of Research in Philosophy – 2018

BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Master of Research is a two-year program and is the main pathway to Macquarie’s Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) programs.

In Year 1 (BPhil) you will undertake advanced coursework units including the study of research frontiers in your area of study.

Year 2 (MRes) is a masters-level postgraduate research training program. You will specialise in research preparation and focus on a specific research topic, and will be required to submit a research thesis of 20,000 words.

2018 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

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FOAR701 – RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Compulsory – Session 1, Day & External

This unit provides a broad overview of the research paradigms that characterise the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Through FOAR701:

- The Faculty of Arts seeks to provide students with a constructive framework to recognise the possible contribution of diverse theoretical and disciplinary approaches.
- Students will learn to better recognise the assumptions that underpin diverse approaches, their strengths, and their relations to each other, especially to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- Students will have a strong grasp of the intellectual terrain across Arts disciplines, having become familiar with some of the core paradigms that have persisted in our fields, including through multiple variants over time.

PHIL701 – FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH IN MIND AND WORLD

Session 1, Day & External – Dr Jennifer Duke-Yonge

This unit provides the opportunity for an in-depth study of foundational texts in metaphysics and epistemology. This year, we will focus on David Hume's Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding. In this work, Hume developed a unified empiricist study of human understanding and human nature, incorporating influential and controversial examinations of topics including reason, knowledge, causation, free will and religious belief. We will examine the arguments presented in this text in detail, and consider the influence of Hume's thought on later philosophy.

PHIL703 – FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH IN MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY

Session 1, Day & External – Dr Robert Sinnerbrink

Plato’s famous call to ban poets from the ideal city indicates that from the inception of the discipline political philosophers have recognised the powerful connections between politics and art. In this unit we will examine some key episodes in the modern development of this philosophical interest in the relation of aesthetics and political life. Alongside readings from authors ranging from Kant and Hegel to Rancière and Stiegler, we will closely examine individual works of art in order to shed light on how political theory and political practice are buttressed, contested, and animated by art, and vice versa.

PHIL705 – FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH IN ETHICS

Session 1, Day & External – Dr Paul Formosa

This unit will equip students with foundational research knowledge and skills in the broad area of ethics. We focus on two of the most influential texts in the history of ethics: Kant’s *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as a range of contemporary analyses of key ideas in these works. We consider and contrast the roles of duty, virtue, and happiness in each of these philosophers’ views, and explore the impact of those views in the context of a selection of current meta-ethical, moral and political debates.
PHIL708 – NEUROLAW  
Session 1, Day & External – Prof Jeanette Kennett  
Neurolaw is a new interdisciplinary field at the intersection of philosophy, bioethics, law, criminology, sociology, and the mind sciences. Neurolaw advocates claim that discoveries about the neural bases of human cognition and behaviour, alongside powerful new diagnostic and intervention techniques, can help the law in numerous ways, such as improved lie detection, better ways of assessing mental illness and mental capacity, superior prediction of propensity and recidivism, and the design of better laws through insight into what motivates human conduct. Some even argue that neuroscience shows that nobody is responsible for what they do, and that the law should be purged of its retributive aims. The unit will explore these topics.

MRES700 – RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS  
Compulsory – Session 2, Day – Faculty Staff  
This unit aims to enable students to:

- Communicate research effectively in different modes for different audiences;
- Understand what it means to conduct and report responsibly in their discipline;
- Participate in academic peer review practices; and
- Appreciate the uses and relative merits of traditional and contemporary research communication practices.

FOAR700 – RESEARCH FRONTIERS 1  
Compulsory – Session 2, Day – Philosophy Staff  
This unit is delivered by departments and provides an opportunity for students to engage with leading-edge research in their discipline. Students will acquire advanced disciplinary knowledge, know about how research is carried out in a disciplinary area and will demonstrate competence in the application of research skills to the disciplinary area.

PHIL702 – RESEARCH TOPICS IN MIND AND WORLD  
Session 2, Day & External – Dr Albert Atkin  
Is race real? What do we even mean by ‘race’? What is racism, and why do we assume that wrong? And what do these questions really mean for the many social issues that arise in relation to race and racism? In this course, we shall look at these and related questions by examining recent research from philosophy of race and racism. We shall look at the best arguments for social-kind theories of race, error theories of race, and also recent claims that science does, in fact, establish the reality of race. We shall also examine particular theories of what racism is and why we should think it is wrong. Throughout the course, we will apply our understanding of these metaphysical and semantic issues to such moral and social issues as racial profiling, affirmative action programs, race specific medicine, and racial language. Useful Background Readings: Atkin, Albert. (2012). The Philosophy of Race. Routledge.

PHIL704 – RESEARCH TOPICS IN MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY  
Session 2, Day & External  
A/Prof Jean-Philippe Derany  
In this unit, we explore the significance and legacy of one of the most influential texts of modern European Philosophy, Hegel’s Elements of the Philosophy of Right, published in 1820. The unit follows a dual pattern. First, we conduct an in-depth reading, section by section, of the main parts of the book, to extract its most original and substantive arguments. Following each section’s thematic focus, we also seek to locate Hegel’s ideas within classical social and political theory, and to outline their impact on subsequent generations of thinkers. The main issues studied are: Hegel’s alternative definition of freedom, between negative and positive freedom; his alternative approach to justice, between liberalism and republicanism; human rights; political sovereignty and citizenship; the relationship between economic and political institutions; the conception of democracy.

PHIL706 – RESEARCH TOPICS IN ETHICS  
Session 2, Day & External – Prof Wendy Rogers  
This unit will examine contemporary research in ethics, moral psychology, applied ethics or political philosophy. The unit will focus on current ‘hot’ topics of research in one of these sub-disciplinary fields and will pay attention to the impact of empirical advances on these topics. The topics chosen will align with the research projects of members of the Department. Examples of areas that might be explored include: bioethics and cinematic ethics; moral cognition; vulnerability, autonomy and justice; clinical and/or public health ethics. Students will develop an in-depth knowledge of the major debates relevant to the topic, and acquire the necessary research skills for pursuing their own research project.

PHIL707 – RESEARCH TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE  
Session 2, Day & External – Dr Karola Stotz  
This unit explores some of the cutting edge research questions at the forefront of cognitive science and the philosophy of cognition. The unit explores philosophical problems that arise from the core disciplines of cognitive psychology, cognitive neuropsychology, linguistics, neuroscience and AI and robotics. Topics to be covered may include: embodied and distributed cognition; disorders of the mind; folk psychology and theory of mind; the use of FMRI to understand brain function; is the brain massively modular; can cognitive science explain consciousness, or the self?

CONTACTS  
PROFESSOR NICHOLAS SMITH  
Philosophy MRes Director: nicholas.smith@mq.edu.au  
ARTS HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH OFFICE  
Building Y3A, Room 225: arts.mres@mq.edu.au