Master of Research
Transdisciplinary Units 2018

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.

FOAR703 – LIVING IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Session 1, Day – A/Prof Andrew McGregor

Geologists are investigating whether we have entered a new geological epoch known as the Anthropocene in which humanity is a driving force of global environmental change. With human activities increasingly connected to processes of planetary degradation there is an urgent need for multidisciplinary research that overcomes traditional divides between physical scientists, social scientists and environmental humanities researchers. This unit offers an interdisciplinary and critical introduction to Anthropocene studies, an important area for current and future research. The unit focuses upon how we should live in the Anthropocene and respond to the knowledge that current socioecological practices are not sustainable. Some key themes include: histories of the Anthropocene; human-nature relations; social and environmental justice; Indigenous knowledges; non-human agency; environmental governance; activism and impacts. The unit is team taught involving leading thinkers from across the university. It is designed to be accessible to students from a wide range of backgrounds and incorporates considerable flexibility to steer assessments towards your research interests.

FOAR706 – FEMINISM, QUEER THEORY AND THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY

Session 1, Day – Dr Leigh Boucher

This unit examines the ways in which various contestations (over postmodernism, poststructuralism and queer theory) challenged the foundational categories of feminist theory in the 1980s and 1990s. The unit will ponder whether the call for a contingent feminist theory and practice undermined or, in fact, invigorated feminist critical thought and practice. Through an engagement with the various critical frameworks that emerged in the wake of these contestations, the unit will then examine the reformulations and reframings that feminist scholars have produced in the decades since these interventions. What do these new critical frameworks seek to explain? Do they represent a return or a critical rupture? Are we living in a post-feminist moment? This unit will be framed as a cross-disciplinary unit, students are encouraged to bring their diverse disciplinary perspectives to the discussion and assessment.

FOAR707 – NEOLIBERALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Session 1, Day – A/Prof Pauline Johnson, Dr Noah Bassil, & Dr Jean-Philippe Deranty

This unit introduces key themes and theorists in contemporary social and political theory. In particular, it will explore competing diagnoses and responses to the winding back of the post-war
This unit will be accessible to all Arts MRes students, will provide a range of critical concepts and tools useful to scholars in an array of research pathways in Arts.

**FOAR704 – RELIGION, SECULARISM AND SOCIETY**

**Session 2, Day – Dr Gabriele Marranci**

This unit will provide both a historical and contemporary comparative look at the ways that different societies deal with religion in the public sphere, freedom of religion, and the concept of "the secular". An important aspect that the course considers is that there is no single way of being "secular" or religious within human societies but, rather, varieties of complex systems. A close study of such difference provides a unique and valuable line of sight into comparative studies of how different traditions have developed their social political structure. In recent years, in particular within western countries and new emerging economies, some of the most interesting contemporary debates have arisen out of questions about freedom of religion, its limits, and the relationship between religion and the state. Drawing on case studies and through the review and discussion of scholarship within the field of social sciences, this seminar will provide an introduction to such complex debates.

**FOAR705 – DIGITAL RESEARCH METHODS FOR HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Session 2, Day – A/Prof Shawn Ross**

This unit explores cross-disciplinary approaches to research that fall under the rubric of eResearch, the aim of which is to use technology to solve scholarly problems in humanities, arts and social science disciplines. We will begin by asking what forms eResearch can take, specifically how digital approaches can help answer particular research questions. Students will learn how to frame questions, find appropriate tools and solutions, acquire the knowledge required to deploy those solutions and present results in an accessible way. In short, students will cultivate their ability to 'learn how to learn' digital approaches and software tools. The main output of this class is a proof-of-concept deployment of a digital tool or approach that advances each student’s provisional thesis topic.

Topics covered include:
- Defining eResearch, knowledge infrastructure, data and related concepts
- Overview of major approaches and tools
- Framing questions
- Selecting appropriate approaches
- Finding and learning appropriate tools
- Managing data
- Project management
- Digital presentation and visualisation
- Digital publication and data sharing

This unit includes approaches used by or useful for research in many disciplines. Students are encouraged to bring their own disciplinary perspectives to the course and will explore how their own research can benefit from digital methods.

**CONTACTS**

**PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SPECIFIC DEPARTMENT MRES DIRECTOR**

**ARTS HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH OFFICE**

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Information in this flyer is current as of 16 August 2017