



# DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA, FILM AND COMMUNICATION

## **4th Year Programmes**

Honours and Postgraduate Diploma (Arts)

- Communication Studies
- Film and Media Studies

Course Information  
2016

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## Information For Honours Students

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### WELCOME

We would like to welcome you as a potential Honours student to the Department of Media, Film and Communication. As an Honours student you'll become an important part of the Department's larger postgraduate community. However, Honours is also unique among postgraduate degrees in terms of its combination of supervised research by thesis with advanced papers taught in a seminar style. As such, it can be seen both as a gateway to the MA and PhD programmes as well as the culmination of a distinguished course of undergraduate study.

This booklet is designed to provide the necessary information about the Honours programme; the 400-level papers, protocols, and use of the Department's facilities.

### THE BA (HONS) DEGREE

In 2013 the Honours degree became a stand-alone postgraduate degree. The main benefit of this change is that students need not progress directly from the BA to the Honours degree, making it available for the first time to returning students. Since 2014 it has also become possible to pursue Honours part-time and complete the degree over two years. Part time study typically requires the student to take MFCO 401 and two additional 400-level papers in the first year and take MFCO 490 and complete the dissertation in the second year. Please speak directly to the Honours Coordinator about options for part-time study.

### REQUIRED COURSE OF STUDY FOR HONOURS – MEDIA, FILM AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

The same programme of study for Honours consists of MFCO 401 and MFCO 490, plus two further 400-level MFCO papers. There are possibilities for incorporating papers or co-supervision from other departments into your MFCO Honours degree. Please contact the Honours Coordinator to discuss these options.

### ALLOCATION OF SUPERVISORS

Students anticipating enrolling in the Honours programme are encouraged to refer to the list of staff and their research interests on page 16 and feel free to make appointments with those whose research interests coincide with potential 490 dissertation topics. Although final allocation of supervisors will not be confirmed until after project abstracts are submitted early in S1, informal conversations with relevant staff members can assist potential students in refining and focusing their dissertation topics and help the department in deciding on supervisory assignments. Please note that some staff members may be listed as unavailable for supervision in 2016.

## APPLYING FOR HONOURS

The deadline for Honours applications is 10 December 2015, and they can be submitted electronically via the University of Otago webpage. Late applications will be considered, but we encourage students to make enquiries during 2015 and apply sooner rather than later, as this helps us to start considering possible supervisory arrangements.

The admissions requirements for Honours are that the student is that the student will have completed a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in the subject proposed with an average grade of at least a B+ for the appropriate 300-level papers. Please note that this includes you four top marks in 300-level papers counting for the major (in the case of some students who have completed more than four), including any required 300-level papers for the major. For more specific details on how the average grade is computed, please consult the Honours Coordinator.

Information and application for the Honours degree can be found at:  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/bahons.html>

## ON COMPLETION

It is expected that, as an Honours graduate, you will be able to do the following:

- Undertake independent research
- Demonstrate relevant expertise
- Effectively present research results in written and oral form to a wider audience
- Assemble, critically evaluate and analyse information from field/library and other sources
- Think critically within an established theoretical or methodological paradigm
- Practise the highest ethical standards in scholarly activity
- Be prepared to respect the beliefs, needs and aspirations of all people

## PRELIMINARY LECTURES AND ORIENTATION

Preliminary lectures will be held for all 400 level papers in Media, Film and Communications on Friday 20 February, before the start of semester one lectures. You will be notified about the exact time for this event as it approaches. Dates, times, and locations of individual papers will be announced on the University website and will also be posted in the Departmental foyer on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Richardson building.

An orientation day for all fourth year students will be held early in the first semester. At this event students will have the opportunity to meet with other staff and postgraduate students in the department.

## OTHER OPTIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDY: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA (ARTS) AND THE DIPLOMA FOR GRADUATES

The PGDip (Arts) normally involves one year's full time study in the same papers required for the BA (HONS), and can also be undertaken part time over two years of study. The PGDip (Arts) is usually pursued after completion of a BA, and often as a precursor to MA study.

The Diploma for Graduates (Dip. Grad) is an even more flexible option, in which students who already hold a degree may develop a combination of subjects that follows a coherent academic programme, but across one or more departments. If desired, it can be endorsed in any major subject area, providing the right papers are taken. Students interested in this option should discuss their interests with the Head of Department and eventually the Programme Director for the Dip. Grad.

Information and a link to the application for the Postgraduate Diploma can be found at:  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/pgdiparts.html>

Additional information and a link to the application for the Dip. Grad can be found here:  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/dipgrad.html>

## 400-LEVEL PAPERS

Please note that all paper information and assessment schedules are listed below for information purposes only and are subject to change. Updated information will be posted on the Department of Media, Film and Communication notice board, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Richardson Building.

Please discuss your options regarding available papers with the fourth year coordinator during course advising.

Papers are worth 20 points each with the exception of MFCO 490, which is worth 60 points. To successfully complete your 400-level, 120 points is required. For example, the Honours programme consists of 4 papers, MFCO 490 (60 points) + MFCO 401 (20 points) + two additional 400 level MFCO papers (20 points each).

### **MFCO 401      **Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory**** Full year

20 points

This paper familiarizes students with the research methods, strategies and skills required for scholarship in Media, Film and Communication while offering an introduction to current theoretical debates within the fields. Readings will cover the broad range of perspectives that the contemporary scholar encounters in a field characterized by multi-disciplinary approaches.

<i>Assessments</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Research proposal and bibliography	20%	S1/week 3
Response paper on issues/debates	15%	S1/week 9
Presentation on key reading	15%	S1/weeks 10-13
Take home exam (approx. 3000 words)	30%	S1/end of exam period
Journal entries	20%	S2

Coordinator: Dr. Holly Randell-Moon  
Friday: 2-3:50 pm.

**MFCO 407 Audience Studies**

Semester One

20 points

This paper will address the way in which reception of film and media by audiences has been theorized, including approaches to active/participatory audiences within the contemporary transmedia environment. Attention will be given both to empirical methodologies and critical analysis.

<i>Assessments</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Presentations on selected reading (x2)	40%	ongoing
Seminar contribution (2 pages x8)	24%	Selected weeks
Essay proposal	6%	Week 7
Research Essay (approx. 3000 words)	36%	Week 9

Coordinator: Dr. Davinia Thornley  
 Lectures: Tues. 12-2.50 pm.  
 Film Screenings: Wed. 3-6:00pm.

**MFCO 408 Screening Gender**

Semester Two

20 points

This paper focuses on the contribution that feminist film theory has made to film and television studies. It revisits and extends work previously covered on film and TV narrative, genre, history, authorship, spectatorship, stars, audiences and representation. Topics covered may include: comprehending and critiquing Mulvey's work; the (male) gaze; understandings of the woman's film and women's genres (melodrama, romance, soap opera) on film and television; men's genres (crime on TV, film noir, western) and representing the male; female authorship; 'counter-cinema' and a de-construction of the mainstream; the advent of gender studies and the performance of (queer) sexualities; masculinity as spectacle and the problems such a concept raises; audience studies; the new man, fatherhood and relationships between men.

<i>Assessments</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Close textual analysis	20%	ongoing
Critical commentary on selected reading	20%	ongoing
Essay presentation	15%	Week 10
Research Essay (approx. 4000 words)	45%	Week 13

Coordinator: Dr. Catherine Fowler  
 Lectures: Tues.: 10 -12.50pm  
 Film Screenings: Tues: 2 – 4:50pm.

**MFCO 409    Advanced Media History**

Semester One

20 points

This paper will explore advanced topics in media history. We will be especially interested in analyzing developments in the history of broadcasting during the past century. We will explore the complex interaction among media institutions, technological developments, cultural identity, and social context. There will also be a particular focus on the recent history of media and communication policy in New Zealand.

<i>Assessments</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Participation (including attendance)	15%	ongoing
Research Essay Prospectus (including Annot. Bib.)	10%	Week 7
Research Essay	30%	Week 12
Journal/ Research log	15%	Week 11
Final Examination	30%	TBC

Coordinator: Dr. Hugh Slotten  
Lectures: Thurs. 2 –4.50 pm

**MFCO 410    Documentary Film and Media**

Semester One

20 points

This paper will address the history and theory of documentary practice, with specific attention to movements and filmmakers. The focus on documentary movements will encourage students to reflect on the socio-cultural and institutional contexts and philosophies that inform the range of documentary methods. The focus on individual filmmakers will address applied methodology, including the aesthetics and ethics of documentary practice. Readings will draw from film and media historians and theorists, but also from the writings of documentary practitioners. Weekly screenings for the class will attempt to present the broad range and variation of documentary practices, historical periods, and topics.

<i>Assessments</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Presentation on selected reading	20%	ongoing in semester one
Position paper on selected reading	30%	May
Take home essay exam (3000 words)	40%	Examination period (TBA)

Coordinator: Dr. Kevin Fisher  
Lectures: Tues: 10 – 12:50  
Screenings: Wed: 3 – 5:50

## **MFCO 490 Dissertation**

Full Year

60 points

A compulsory paper that supports the writing of the 490 thesis and will meet periodically in conjunction with MFCO 401 at the time listed below to provide informational sessions and workshops related to the practices of dissertation research and writing.

The sole assessment for MFCO 490 is the fourth year dissertation due **by 4pm on Friday 14 October 2016**. However, a completed draft should be submitted to your supervisor by **30 September** to allow time for feedback and final revisions.

Please note that there will not be a separate course outline for MFCO 490, as details about specific meeting dates will be incorporated into the outline for MFCO 401.

Coordinator: Dr. Kevin Fisher

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK**

In addition to the submission requirements of each individual paper, all assessments worth 20% or more must be sent in electronic form by email attachment to [mfco@otago.ac.nz](mailto:mfco@otago.ac.nz) for purposes of external moderation. Failure to do so according to instructions provided at the beginning of Semester One could result in the delay of your final marks for fourth year.

## **MFCO 490 DISSERTATION GUIDELINES**

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Every dissertation involves an individual research project on a topic chosen by the student. The research and writing of the thesis is carried out under the supervision of one or more members of staff. The word limit is **16,000 in length (+/- 10%)**.

### **CHOOSING A TOPIC**

This is one of the most important decisions you will have to make in your fourth year studies. The topic you choose will depend on the interests you have developed in the course of your undergraduate work in Media, Film and Communication. If you have developed strengths in particular areas by the fourth year or have become closely involved with certain fields of study, there would be considerable advantage in continuing within that vein for your 490 thesis.

One important consideration, and one reason for discussing your thesis closely with staff, is making sure that you select a topic that is practical to complete within the time available. The challenge here is selecting something which is going to constitute a satisfying and rewarding piece of research, but which will also be of such size and scope that you will be able to bring it to completion on time.

## SUPERVISION

Students will work with the coordinators of MFCO 401 to develop a fully-fledged dissertation proposal. Students are expected to arrive on the first day of lectures prepared to discuss their potential topic and will be guided through the process of drafting a research proposal and provisional bibliography due **Friday, 11 March by 12 noon**. Proposals will then be reviewed by the Honours Coordinator in consultation with the HOD, and students will be assigned a supervisor based on the expertise and availability of staff members. The assignment of supervisors will be announced in week five at the latest. Every effort is made to match student project to the appropriately qualified academic staff member. However, students should not expect to be able to choose specific supervisors. Any questions about the assignment of supervisors should be addressed to the Honours Coordinator or to the Head of Department.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR

The supervisory relationship is marked by reciprocal obligations and expectations. However, you should expect to meet your supervisor regularly and obtain from them the best advice that they can provide within their experience and expertise. You will be expected to adhere to whatever arrangements are made for regular meetings with the supervisor, and make use of the advice that they give you. Your main obligation will be to do the work required within the time frame that is agreed upon. Supervisors' obligations do not include correcting style, grammar, spelling, etc., although they may assist you at their discretion. You are encouraged to discuss your overall workload plan with your supervisor to ensure that it is balanced across the year.

## SUPERVISORY AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT AND SUPERVISOR

A memorandum of understanding is an agreement between individual students and their supervisors. The MOU can be a useful tool in avoiding misunderstandings and can be referred to if difficulties do arise. The document can be reviewed regularly in light of changing circumstances. Such agreements would deal with the following:

- frequency of meetings
- the nature, promptness and limits of feedback on written work
- target dates for various stages of the research, including the MFCO 401 research proposal

Templates for this agreement will be available through your supervisor or the departmental office.

## PRESENTATION AT THE FOURTH YEAR RESEARCH DAY

A requirement of MFCO 490 is the presentation of your research at the Annual Fourth Year Research Day, which will be held on **15 July 2015**. Each presentation will be fifteen minutes in duration with five minutes for questions. Guidelines for the presentations will be provided at the end of S1 and students will be required to submit their title and abstracts beforehand for inclusion in the booklet circulated on the day. The purpose of the presentation is to give you the opportunity to discuss your preliminary findings, progress to date, and identify challenging issues.

## PLAGIARISM

Students should make sure that all submitted work is their own. Plagiarism is an unacceptable form of academic dishonesty, defined as copying another's work, whether intentionally or otherwise, and presenting it as one's own. In practice, this means plagiarism includes any attempt in any piece of submitted work (e.g. an assignment or test) to present as one's own work the work of another (whether of another student or a published authority). Any student found responsible for plagiarism in any piece of work submitted for assessment shall be subject to the University's dishonest practice regulations which may result in various penalties, including forfeiture of marks for the piece of work submitted, a zero grade for the paper, or in extreme cases exclusion from the University.

Plagiarism includes:

- disregard of the need for referencing;
- inadequate detail in referencing;
- quoting directly or paraphrasing to a moderate extent without acknowledging the source;
- submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without the permission from the instructor/s;
- using data or interpretative material for a report without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators. All contributors to the preparation of data and/or to writing the report must be named;
- major or essential portion of work plagiarized;
- repeat offences;
- presenting work of another as one's own.

Penalties may include:

- warning;
- rewrite section or work;
- withhold or withdraw the granting of terms in the subject concerned;
- reduced marks for work submitted;
- zero marks for work submitted;
- zero marks for work submitted plus a reduction in final examination marks;
- disqualify the student from an entire paper;
- cancellation of any pass or passes for any other part of the student's course undertaken in the same semester/summer school;
- exclusion from University.

## ETHICAL GUIDELINES

All research that involves human subjects (through, for example, their participation in interviews) must comply with the ethical guidelines set down by the University. In most cases ethical approval needs to be obtained from the University Ethics Committee. Your supervisor will assist with this process.

## SUBMISSION OF THE 490 DISSERTATION

An electronic copy of the dissertation should be presented to the Department of Media, Film and Communication by 4pm, on the last day of formal lectures, Semester Two. In 2016 this will be **Friday 14 October**. Specific guidelines for the formatting and submission will be distributed in Semester Two.

Two copies of your dissertation will be printed by the department, one for you and another that will be housed in the Media, Film and Communication library.

## EXAMINATION OF THE DISSERTATION & COURSEWORK

Your overall mark for fourth year is calculated on the basis of your 490 dissertation (60 points = 50% of total mark) and your coursework (3 papers x 20 points = 50% of total mark). The dissertation is examined both internally by a staff member other than your supervisor within the department, and externally by a staff member at another New Zealand University. Both examiners submit detailed reports and recommend marks. The two marks form the basis of a final grade for the dissertation that is decided upon in a departmental examiners' meeting. Most examiners permit a copy of their report to be given to the student. If, however, the report is confidential, then the Head of Department will provide you with an oral summary.

Marks for coursework are also moderated by staff at another New Zealand University to check for fairness and compliance with national standards. All marks received in the course of a 4th year in any paper counting towards a BA Honours or a PGDip (Arts) are provisional until reviewed by the examiners' committee and by the external assessor at the end of the year.

## FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT

### AV Facilities

The Department has a range of media equipment. Those students who require the use of such equipment should consult their supervisor.

### Tea Room

You are welcome to use these facilities as a member of the postgraduate community. However, with privileges also come responsibilities. Please clean, dry and put away your dishes.

## RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES AND PUBLIC LECTURES

All Honours students are strongly encouraged to attend all seminars, reading groups and conferences as part of the postgraduate community.

Finally, in joining the Department of Media, Film and Communication postgraduate community you are now part of an academic culture. We encourage you to participate in both your formal study programme and the various symposia, talks, and conferences put on by the department.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THESIS PREPARATION

The Student Learning Centre offers Thesis and Dissertation Writing workshops for Honours and Postgraduate students at various times in the year.

For dates and times see <http://hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/sld.html>

### *Further Reading*

Anderson, J. & Poole, M. (1994) *Thesis and Assignment Writing* (2nd ed). Brisbane: John Wiley and Sons.

Berger, A. (2011) *Media and Communication Research Methods: A Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Sage

Bouma, G. (1996) *The Research Process*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Rountree, K. (1991) *Writing for Success: a practical guide for New Zealand students*. Auckland: Longman Paul. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Rountree, K. & Laing, T. (1996) *Writing by Degrees: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses and Research Papers*. Auckland: Longman Paul.

## RECENT 490 DISSERTATIONS

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### 2014

Shelly Harding. "Flourishing Under a Rose-tint: Nostalgic Depictions of Misogyny in *Mad Men*".

Amy Holmes. "Selfies: The 'face' of neoliberalism".

Rosie Howells. "'Call Me Papa Stevesy': The world of Wes Anderson through the optic of Freudian Psychoanalysis".

Thomas Osborne. "From the 'Serial Grizzlers of Neverpay' to the 'Militant Rats of Flockton': A Case study of the Mainstream and Online Production of Moral and Political Outrage in New Zealand".

Olivia Sullivan. "The Fate of the local newspaper in the age of global media convergence: An examination of *The Timaru Herald*".

Margot Taylor. "Through a Glass Darkly: Maori, Alcohol and Biopower in New Zealand Newspapers".

### 2013

Jeremy Bone. "*L'année dernière à Marienbad: An Intermedial Collaboration*".

Jessica Drysdale. "The Choreography of Celanthropy: Exploring the Effects of Philanthropic Work on Star and Celebrity Images".

Siali Farani-Tomlin. "Poster Girls: An exploration of Post-Fordist labour practices in the HBO show, *Girls*".

Sanjana Marie France. "Fluffy Friends and Natural-Born Killers: Discourses of Pets, Pests and Speciesism in New Zealand".

Patrick Lawson. "The Unannounced Future – Implications from the NFL for the Future of the Mass Media".

Megan Lindsay. "Representations of Māori in Taika Waititi's *Boy* and Vodafone's *Do Your Thing Better* Campaign".

Alice Lloyd. "Reality à la Mode: Chanel's Postmodernist Fabrication of Reality in the Spring Summer 2011 Collection Inspired by Alain Resnais' *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad* (1961)".

Alistair Lynn. "News or Infotainment? An analysis of the shifting ideology in New Zealand current affairs programming".

David Reynolds. "Death on Facebook: Memorialisation, Continuing Bonds and Sequestration".

Simon Swale. "Worlds Collide: Streetstyle Fashion Blog Practices and their Implications for Mobility through Physical and Virtual Space".

Ryan Tippet. "Security TV: The Biopolitics of Borders in Australia".

Sam Valentine. "Jockey Full of Bourbon: Tom Waits, Persona and the Cinema".

Lauren Wootton. "The Pakeha Party and Attitudes Towards Race Relations in New Zealand: A Performative Analysis of Facebook Interactions".

## **2012**

Abigail Howells. "'Killing Prostitutes': Fame and Celebrity with Ricky Gervais".

Marissa Kirkham. "Sorry seems to be the hardest word: Crisis Management in New Zealand Brands".

Elmarie le Grange. "Making sense of fracking: public discourse and media representation".

Tristan Lovett. "Digital Rights Management in the Video Games Industry".

Rosa Marden. "Spaces of Information: An Analysis of Surveillance, the supermarket and Self-Scan".

Lydia Randall. "Ethics in Information Age Journalism: The *News of the World* Phone Hacking Scandal".

Kez Wallis. "Small Screen Lives: Television and Identity in the New Zealand Chinese Diaspora".

Tom Wilkinson. "'No Power in the 'Verse Can Stop Me': Aspects of Synthesis in Joss Whedon's *Firefly* and *Serenity*".

Martinette Williams. "Raised in Paradise? Children in the New Zealand Cinematic Landscape".

## **2011**

Luke Balvert. "Professional sport in New Zealand: is commodification and consumerism overstepping the mark?"

Danitsa Brajkovich. "The American Family on Television: from idealized to actualised?"

Claire Davis. "Long Live the Videodrome: 'Torture-porn' and the Eroticization of Violence in Contemporary Horror Cinema".

Hamish Gavin. "*Cannibal Holocaust* and the Conundrum of Extreme Cinema".

Laura Johnstone. "Loser Like Me: Community Sentiment and Belonging in *Glee*".

Sarah Kelly. "The Media Representation of Hone Harawira".

Daniel Read. "Experiencing virtual worlds through community in *World of Warcraft*".

Sarah Rooney. "Performing the Heterosexual Matrix: the television coverage of the St. George Illawarra Dragons and Manly Sea Eagles game during The 'Women in League' week".

Holly Russell. "Facebook and online peer-to-peer surveillance: from top-down power to mutual social observation".

Katie Sherriff. "Eye on Pornography: *Deep Throat* and *Pirates*".

Shahirah Elaiza Wan Hassan. "The Role of Al Jazeera during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution".

Susan Wardell. "Depression, Drugs and Doctors: the framing of depression in GP-targeted advertising".

Copies of these theses are available for short-term loan. Please see the Departmental Administrator.
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## ACADEMIC STAFF AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

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### **Associate Professor Catherine Fowler, Head of Department Richardson Building 6C13**

E-mail [catherine.fowler@otago.ac.nz](mailto:catherine.fowler@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.8615

*National identity and European cinemas, the film/art axis of influence, political modernism and experimental practice, theories of (female) authorship and women filmmakers, film analysis.*

### **Dr Kevin Fisher, Senior Lecturer and Honours Coordinator**

Richardson Building 6C24

E-mail [kevin.fisher@otago.ac.nz](mailto:kevin.fisher@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.8472

*Film theory, phenomenology, documentary, science fiction, special effects, postcolonial and indigenous cinema.*

### **Dr Brett Nicholls, Senior Lecturer (Not available for supervisions in 2016)**

Richardson Building 6C18

E-mail [brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz](mailto:brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.8819

*Postcolonial theory, political economy of the media, Australian screen studies, computer game studies, and the impact of modern technologies upon social and cultural life.*

### **Dr Rosemary Overell, Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C20

E-mail [rosemary.overell@otago.ac.nz](mailto:rosemary.overell@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.5723

*Cultural studies, gender studies, urban planning, cultural geography, popular music, Asian studies, Japanese studies, masculinities, affect studies, creative cities, Heavy Metal music studies, non-representational theory.*

### **Dr Erika Pearson, Senior Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C23

E-mail [erika.pearson@otago.ac.nz](mailto:erika.pearson@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.8680

*Internet culture, trust networks, online identity, digital technologies, remix, digital nomads.*

### **Dr Paul Ramaeker, Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C12

E-mail [paul.ramaeker@otago.ac.nz](mailto:paul.ramaeker@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.8646

*American film history, international cinemas, film analysis, narratology, and television aesthetics*

### **Dr Holly Randell-Moon, Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C19

E-mail [holly.randall-moon@otago.ac.nz](mailto:holly.randall-moon@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 471.6096

Media, politics and religion, popular television and film, theories of the state, citizenship and Indigenous sovereignty, critical race and whiteness studies, gender and queer theory.

**Dr Hugh Slotten, Senior Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C22

E-mail [hugh.slotten@otago.ac.nz](mailto:hugh.slotten@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.6546

History of communications, communication policy studies, satellite communications, radio and television, and technology.

**Dr Davinia Thornley, Senior Lecturer**

Richardson Building 6C14

E-mail [davinia.thornley@otago.ac.nz](mailto:davinia.thornley@otago.ac.nz)

Tel: 479.4182

Audience/reception studies, cultural theory, indigenous media, national media, postcolonial theory, race and place in film and New Zealand cinema.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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### **Maureen Lloyd**

Departmental Administrator

Richardson 6C15

E-mail maureen.lloyd@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479.8371

### **Paulette Milnes**

Administrative Assistant

Richardson 6C25

E-mail paulette.milnes@otago.ac.nz

Tel: 479.3724

## UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO GRADING SCALE

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Percentage Range	Grade	Honours Class/Postgraduate Diploma Class
90 - 100	A+	First Class/Distinction
85 - 89	A	First Class/Distinction
80 - 84	A-	First Class/Distinction
75 - 79	B+	Second Class Div. 1/Credit
73 - 74	B	Second Class Div. 1/Credit
70 - 72	B	Second Class Div. 2
65 - 69	B-	Second Class Div. 2
60 - 64	C+	Third Class
55 - 59	C	Third Class
50 - 54	C-	Third Class
40 - 49	Fail D	
Below 40	Fail E	

## GUIDELINES AND SUMMARY: 2015

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### 1. Beginning Your Research

The researching and writing of a MFCO 490 Dissertation marks the moment at which the student begins his or her journey in becoming an independent researcher. The Dissertation is generated by your own interests (rather than written on a prescribed topic). The supervisor serves as a guide in that process. It is important to clarify the steps (such as a literature review, an extended abstract and bibliography, a proposed chapter break-down and outline, etc.) that your supervisor expects you to take in terms of gathering material, documenting that material and, finally, crafting a polished thesis. These steps will vary depending on your discipline, topic and approach.

The dissertation itself is the culmination of a sustained research programme in which you will engage with the help of your supervisor. The best way of acquiring a sense of what a dissertation requires is to look through several examples. Both the ISB (the Central Library) and the Department have copies of previous dissertations available for you to read.

MFCO 401 will assist you in the process of defining a topic and establishing a preliminary bibliography. The first few weeks of this paper will focus on equipping you with the tools that will enable you to write a dissertation under the guidance of your supervisor.

### 2. The Dissertation

The MA and PhD both require a thesis. The MFCO 490 Dissertation is similar to an MA or PhD thesis but the scope and depth of the research is significantly reduced. The Dissertation is considerably shorter. The word limit is **16,000 in length (+/- 10%)**. Style and coherence are significant factors in determining exactly how long the dissertation will be in its final form. In the process of revising your material, be prepared to cut extraneous passages in some sections while adding material in other sections, at the direction of your supervisor.

### 3. The Question

Your supervisor will help craft and organize your material into a compelling argument. It is helpful to begin with an issue of particular interest to you within the area of Film, Media and Communication that may be analysed further through scholastic thought and methods associated with MFCO disciplines (e.g. critical political economy, discourse analysis, framing, film genres, reception studies, auteur theory). This “question” can serve as a guide in terms of determining the direction, shape and organization of your research. The MFCO 401 class and your supervisor will assist you in the first few weeks of your study programme to shape your research question(s), identify suitable scholastic perspectives, and find appropriate methodologies to undertake your project. Your aim will be to position the outcomes of your research alongside other scholastic contributions pertaining to studies in media, film and communication. In order to do this, you will need to have a solid understanding of the literature that informs your topic, and your supervisor will assist you in this task by providing a reading list within the first few weeks of your programme to help you get started.

#### 4. Goals

In a completed dissertation, the student should demonstrate the following:

- a familiarity and an understanding of previous scholarship on the topic
- the capacity to undertake research and present the results of that research in a coherent and convincing manner
- a critical sense of his or her work relative to the work of other scholars on the topic.

The dissertation will also be evaluated on whether or not it presents its material in a way that meets the standards for publication in the relevant discipline.

#### 5. Format

In preparing your dissertation manuscript, please follow the guidelines posted on the University of Otago Library website, "Notes on the Preparation of Otago Theses." Determine a citation style with your supervisor and use it consistently throughout the manuscript. The library offers examples of widely accepted citation styles.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/phd/handbook/otago050800.html>

#### 6. Feedback

You should meet with your supervisor regularly at a mutually agreed upon time. It is helpful to bring questions to the meeting to which your supervisor can supply immediate and detailed feedback. During your meeting, your supervisor will check your progress, help you establish and keep to a schedule and advise you on your strategies and methods.

In terms of draft chapter submissions and other written outputs, it is important that you and your supervisor agree about when materials, including comments and suggestions, will be returned to you at the time at which you submit them. Your supervisor has many other responsibilities and the time that he or she has available to you outside your scheduled supervisory meetings will vary through the semester.

Be aware that if you submit a completed draft of your Dissertation after **25 September** (without prior arrangement with your supervisor), it is unlikely that your supervisor will be able to return it to you with comments in time for you to make substantial revisions before submitting the final version on the last day of lectures, semester two (9 October 2015) It is very important that you and your supervisor agree about when you will submit the final draft and when he or she will return it early on in the supervisory process.

## 7. Dates

**Friday, 13 March Semester One, 12 noon:** Submit extended proposal for supervisor assignment. This is also the MFCO401 assignment.

**week 5, Semester one:** Supervisors announced.

**6 July, 4:00 pm:** Submit abstract for semester two research presentations to honours coordinator.

**17 July** Research Presentations (on Dissertation topics).

**25 September:** Last day to submit draft to your supervisor to guarantee feedback prior to submission.

**9 October, by 4pm:** Submission of the completed Dissertation.

Note: Failure to submit the Dissertation before 4 pm 9 October will have serious consequences. In the absence of extenuating circumstances, the HOD may refuse to accept the Dissertation once the submission date has passed. If you anticipate encountering difficulties in meeting the 9 October deadline, it is in your interests to consult the HOD as soon as possible.