



MEDIA, FILM AND COMMUNICATION

Honours and Postgraduate Diploma (Arts)

- Communication Studies
- Film and Media Studies

Masters (Coursework)

2022 Course Information

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Information For Prospective Honours, PG Dip, and MA (Coursework) Students

WELCOME

We would like to invite you to be an Honours, Postgraduate Diploma, or Masters (Coursework) student in the Media, Film and Communication Programme. As an Honours or MA (Coursework) student, you'll become an important part of the Programme's larger postgraduate community. However, the Honours, PG Dip, and MA (Coursework) degrees are unique among postgraduate degrees as study consists of a combination of supervised research by dissertation with advanced papers taught in a seminar style. As such, the BA (Hons) and PG Dip degrees can be seen both as gateways to the MA (Dissertation) and PhD programmes as well as the culmination of a distinguished course of undergraduate study. The MA (Coursework) degree can be seen as the culmination of your course of study as an undergraduate as well as a gateway to the PhD programme.

This booklet is designed to provide the necessary information about applying to the Honours, PG Dip, and MA (Coursework) programmes, and the requirements of each of those programmes.

THE BA (HONS) DEGREE

The BA (HONS) degree can be undertaken full-time or part-time. Part time study typically requires the student to take MFCO 401: Advanced Media, Film and Communication Theory and two additional 400-level papers in the first year, and take MFCO 490: Dissertation in the second year. Please speak directly to the Honours Coordinator about options for part-time study.

At the moment, the BA(Hons) is the only postgraduate qualification students can receive a government student allowance. For all other postgraduate qualifications, including the MA, you can get student loans but not allowances.

THE COURSE OF STUDY FOR BA HONOURS – THIS APPLIES TO HONOURS IN BOTH FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES, AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

The BA (HONS) degree in our programme consists of MFCO 401: Advanced Media, Film and Communication Theory and MFCO 490: Dissertation, plus two further 400-level MFCO papers.

There are possibilities for incorporating papers or co-supervision from other programmes into your BA Honours degree. Please contact the Media, Film and Communication Honours Coordinator to discuss these options.

ALLOCATION OF SUPERVISORS for MFCO490 Dissertation

Students anticipating enrolling in the BA Honours programme are encouraged to refer to the list of staff and their research interests beginning on page 17-18 of this booklet. Feel free to make appointments with those whose research interests coincide with your potential 490 dissertation topic. Although final allocation of supervisors will not be confirmed until after project abstracts are submitted before semester one, informal conversations with relevant staff members can assist potential students in refining and focusing their dissertation topics. Please note that some staff members may be listed as unavailable for supervision in 2022.

APPLYING FOR HONOURS

The deadline for Honours applications is 10 December 2021. Applications can be submitted electronically via eVision. Late applications will be considered, but we encourage students to make enquiries during 2021 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 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 your four top marks in 300-level papers counting for the major. For more specific details on how the average grade is calculated, please consult the Media, Film and Communication Honours Coordinator.

Information and application for the BA Honours degree can be found at:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/bahons.html>

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 programmes. 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 Media, Film and Communication.

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>

MASTERS (COURSEWORK)

The Master of Arts (Coursework MA) programme is designed to provide a multi-disciplinary grounding for Humanities students in a range of subjects as preparation for further study or future employment. The Coursework MA can be used as a gateway to the Ph.D. programme.

Students who have completed a BA with a B+ average in their 300-level papers can apply to enrol in the MA coursework option. Students will continue study in the major subject of their BA. (Programmes may limit how many students they take on, depending on the availability of supervisors.) With backing from their programmes, students can apply for an MA coursework scholarship. This is competitive, i.e. based on grades. This scholarship is \$10,000 which goes towards the course fees in the first instance.

Contact the MA by coursework director Christina Ergler for further details:

MACoursework@otago.ac.nz

The MA by coursework programme includes the following papers:

Papers	Number of points needed	Details about the papers
HUMS papers	60 points	2 x 30-point Humanities papers
Subject papers	60 points	Either 400- or 500-level papers in your major as laid out for participating programmes.
Subject dissertation paper	60 points	Dissertation length - up to 20,000 words. Undertaken over 12 months, beginning either at the start of semester 1 or semester 2.

The dissertation (a single project under the guidance of an appointed supervisor) is completed over 12 calendar months, starting either in Semester 1 or Semester 2. With this pathway it will take students either 12 months or three semesters of full-time study to get an MA.

The HUMS papers will give you the opportunity to mix with other Humanities students studying a wide range of subjects. They are also designed to give you the broad range of knowledge and skills valued by many employers. Currently there are three HUMS papers on offer, from which you will need to pick two. All papers are 30 points.

HUMS 501 Writing and Revision for Graduate Research (Second semester)

This paper provides graduate research students with the theoretical and practical tools they need to achieve effective communication of their academic ideas in both print and other media.

Contact person: nicola.cummins@otago.ac.nz

(Host programme: English and Linguistics)

HUMS 502 Research Methods in the Humanities (First semester)

Students will examine key principles of research in the humanities, develop a broad understanding of a range of methods and refine skills in a method of their choice.

Contact people: melanie.beres@otago.ac.nz and bryndl.hohmann-marriott@otago.ac.nz

(Host programme: Sociology, Gender Studies and Criminology)

HUMS 503 Key Debates in the Humanities (First semester)

What is modernity? Where is power, and how is it exercised? Are there limits to our abilities to understand and empathise with other people? Where is Humanities scholarship heading?

With approval from your programme, you can substitute the HUMS 401 Internship Practicum paper for one of your 400-level papers, and get some hands-on experience in a work environment.

Master of Arts (MA) in Communication Studies – coursework option

Papers

- [MFCO 590](#) Research Dissertation
- Two of:
 - [HUMS 501](#) Writing and Revision for Graduate Research
 - [HUMS 502](#) Research Methods in the Humanities
 - [HUMS 503](#) Key Debates in the Humanities
- [MFCO 401](#) Advanced Media, Film and Communication Theory and two further [400-level MFCO papers](#)
- [GEND 401](#) or [SCOM 409](#) may be substituted for one 400-level MFCO paper

Master of Arts (MA) in Film and Media Studies – coursework option

Papers

- [MFCO 590](#) Research Dissertation
- Two of:
 - [HUMS 501](#) Writing and Revision for Graduate Research
 - [HUMS 502](#) Research Methods in the Humanities
 - [HUMS 503](#) Key Debates in the Humanities
- [MFCO401](#) Advanced Media, Film and Communication Theory and two further [400-level MFCO papers](#)
- [GEND 401](#) Debates in Gender and Sexuality may be substituted for one 400-level MFCO paper

ON COMPLETION

It is expected that, as an Honours, PG Dip, or MA (Coursework) 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

MFCO490

Dissertation

Full Year

60 points

A compulsory paper that supports the writing of the MFCO490 dissertation and will meet periodically in conjunction with MFCO401 to provide informational sessions and writing workshops related to the practices of dissertation research and writing.

The sole assessment for MFCO490 is the fourth year dissertation due by 4:00pm on Friday 14 October 2022. However, a completed draft should be submitted to your supervisor by Friday 16 September to allow time for feedback and final revisions.

Please note that there not be a separate course outline for MFCO490, as details about specific meeting dates will be incorporated into the outline for MFCO401.

MFCO 490 DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

Every dissertation involves an individual research project on a topic chosen by the student. The research and writing of the dissertation is carried out under the supervision of one or more members of staff. The word limit is 15,000 in length (+/-10%). The entirety of the dissertation must be written in formal, academic language.

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 dissertation.

One important consideration, and one reason for discussing your dissertation 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

In the first week of the Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory class, students will work on a short dissertation proposal. You will be required to email this proposal by no later than 11:59pm, 4 March to brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz. Proposals will then be reviewed by the Honours Coordinator in consultation with the Head of Programme, and students will be assigned a supervisor based on their topic, expertise and availability of staff. The assignment of supervisors will be announced in week two 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 Programme.

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 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

Templates for this agreement will be available on the Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory Blackboard site.

PRESENTATION AT THE HONOURS RESEARCH DAY

A requirement during your time with us in your honours year is a presentation of your Dissertation research at the Annual Fourth Year Research Day. Each presentation will be fifteen minutes in duration with five minutes for questions. Guidelines for the presentations will be provided at the end of semester one 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.

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 – 4pm, 14 October

An electronic copy of the dissertation should be presented to the Programme of Media, Film and Communication by 4pm, on 14th of October. Specific guidelines for the formatting and submission will be distributed in the Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory class. The guidelines are also available on Blackboard.

Two copies of your dissertation will be printed by the programme, 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 internally by two members of staff other than your supervisor within the programme. 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 the end of year Programme

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 Programme will provide you with an oral summary.

Marks for coursework and the dissertation 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 moderator at the end of the year.

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME

AV Facilities

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

Tea Room and Kitchenette

You are welcome to use these facilities as a member of our 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. In joining the Programme 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 programme.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON DISSERTATION PREPARATION

The Student Learning Centre offers Dissertation 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) *Dissertation 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*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

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

Grouba, P. & J. Zobel. (2014). *How to Write a Better Minor Dissertation*. Melbourne: Melbourne UP.

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

RECENT 490 DISSERTATIONS

2020

Sage Anastasi, "Her Robot Girlfriend: Queer Death and Resurrection in Science Fiction TV"

Rose Finnie, "'Right' Minds Think Alike? A critical discourse analysis of New Zealand's far-right"

Chris Lam, "Traumatic Agencies: Posthuman Encounters in *Annihilation*, *Observation* and *Arrival*"

Claudia Muldrew, "Advertising, audience and authenticity: Circuits of culture on YouTube"

Lauren Murrell, "How Electronic Arts turned Will Wright's *SimCity* and *The Sims* into neoliberal simulators: A player's analysis"

Mackenzie Perkins, "'... thousands of attractive local women looking to meet now': Sex Work, Sugaring and Liberation in Cyberspace"

Tessa Watson, "The Silencing of Dissent: The Securitisation of Aotearoa"

2018

Oliver Dearnley-Smith, "'If I Just Detach Myself, I Really Don't Feel Any Pain!': The Subject between Homeostasis and Jouissance in Puella Magi Madoka★Magica"

Jessica Howard, "A Content Analysis of Masculinity and Hegemonic Femininity in the Lyrics of Popular Music Genres."

Ella Soule, "Presenting the self in digital media: Goffman, Marshall and Black Mirror in the modern world"

Shaun Swain, "'And I Will Do so in the Form of Interpretative Dance': Key Problems for Adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966) for Theatre"

Joel David White, "Connecting the Classics and the Outrageous in the American Animated Sitcom: A Comparison of *The Simpsons* and *South Park*"

2017

Eleanor Bell. "Fantasy, Fashion and the Far East: Veiled Orientalism in China: Through the Looking Glass".

Amy Bieleski. "Utopian Promises, Dystopian Fears: Twitter, Trump and Communicative Capitalism".

Danielle Virginie Blyde. "The Evolution of the Hero, Spectatorship and Gender in Zombie Film: From Haiti to Romero and Beyond".

Mikayla Cahill. "Filtering Affect: Re-Membering the Self".

Jamie Dobson. "New Zealand Tenancies and Neoliberal Tendencies: The Ideology of Property Management in New Zealand's Housing 'Crisis'".

Ellen Eager. "Constructing the Neoliberal Self: Governmentality, Self-Branding, and Social Media Influencers".

George Elliott. "Obscene and Fatal Transparency: War Porn, Baudrillard's Hyperreal & Global Post-9/11 War".

Siobon Inu. "Thirdspace and Homelessness: A Spatial Project on Dunedin City".

Angel McNamara. "Establishing the New Zealand National Film Unit: Adapting Grierson's Documentary Model Within New Zealand's National Culture".

2016

Alex Cuff. "A 'Bikini Body Guide' for the Ideal, Self-Governing Woman: a Foucauldian analysis of internet fitness sensation, Kayla Itsines and her shaping of the Body Project examined through corporeal feminism".

Chloe Banks. "ShondaLand: a Post-Racial Space? Representations of race within post-racial television spaces".

Julie Stewart. "Bigger, Fatter, Gypsier: Biopower in media representation of Irish Travellers in Britain".

Ceridwyn Giddens. "Postapocalyptic storyworlds: player performance in Fallout 4".

Hannah Davis. "Modern Representations of Hactivism in Mr. Robot".

Amir Mohd Yunos. "Negotiating Identity: Situating Malaysian cinema as 'small cinema'?"

2015

Emma Bauer. "Colonial Hauntings: Ghost tourism in Dunedin, New Zealand".

Nicola Beedie. "21st Century New Zealand Cinema: a new era of 'Unease'".

Alex Blackwood. "Mediality in Masquerade: Retro pastiche in digital media".

Lisa Blakie. "Video Games and Digital Difference: Exploring indigenous culture in Never Alone".

Angharad Gladding. "Media life, Science-fiction films and Digital content".

Ngarangi Haerewa. "Aotearoa's Patched Folk Devils: Moral panic, Maori gangs and media".

Brianna Kirkham. "The Business of Blogging: a Bourdeausian analysis of fashion bloggers Margaret Zhang & Sara Donaldson".

Gabrielle Mulder. "Not so secret surveillance: the relationship of the State, corporation and user and the potential of online surveillance to control".

Zara Overton. "'All the Web's a Stage': Goffman, Dramaturgy and role distancing on social Media".

Lewis Rarm. "'Enjoy Good and Forbid Evil': convergent technologies of power in Islamic State Media".

Sarah Rayner. "Twitter & Television: new interactions between fans, critics, and creators".

Edmund Smith. "The Age of the Superhero: the cycle of appropriation & revitalisation in the Hollywood blockbuster".

Amie Taua. "Bi-cultural analogies in the Harry Potter series: Understanding negotiated space in The Philosopher's Stone (2001) and The Half-Blood Prince (2009)".

Emily Thomas. "Tu n'as rien vu": the New Wave that never grows old".

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: Māori, 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 Syndissertation 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 Programme Administrator.

ACADEMIC STAFF AND RESEARCH SPECIALTIES

Dr Anne Begg

Burns Building 3N1

anne.begg@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 3421

Research areas: Media culture; media governmentality; neoliberalism; biopolitics and affective biopower.

Dr Kevin Fisher

Burns Building 3N9

kevin.fisher@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 8472

Research areas: American Film; New Zealand film; documentary film; phenomenology

Associate Professor Catherine Fowler

Burns Building 3N11

catherine.fowler@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 8615

Research areas: 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 Olivier Jutel

Burns Building 3N4

olivier.jutel@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 471 5096

Research areas: Populism; discourse and psychoanalysis; online social movements; affective media publics; cyber-libertarianism

Dr Brett Nicholls

Burns Building 3N2

brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 8819

Research areas: Critical theory; poststructuralism; postcolonial studies; Baudrillard studies; discourse analysis; contemporary Marxism

Dr Paul Ramaeker

Burns Building 3N5

paul.ramaeker@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 471 8646

Research areas: International film history; American cinema; historical poetics of cinema; narratology; film economics; popular cinemas; art cinemas; film technology

Associate Professor Hugh Slotten – Not available in 2022

Burns Building 3N6

hugh.slotten@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 6546

Research areas: History of communications; communication policy studies; satellite communications; radio and television; and technology

Dr Davinia Thornley – Not available in 2022

Burns Building 3N8

davinia.thornley@otago.ac.nz

+64 3 479 4182

Research areas: Audience/reception studies; cultural theory; indigenous media; national media, postcolonial theory; race and place in film and New Zealand cinema

ADMINISTRATOR

Monica Vonesch

Burns 3C19

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+64 3 479 8371

GUIDELINES AND SUMMARY: 2022

1. Beginning Your Research

The researching and writing of a MFCO 490/590 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 dissertation. 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. It is recommended that your 490/590 build upon research you have done as an undergraduate, and that you determine your research topic as soon as possible.

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 Programme have copies of previous dissertations available for you to read.

The Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory class 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 dissertation. 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 15,000w 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. The MA (Coursework) dissertation word limit is 20,000w (+/-10%). Please note that your dissertation must be written in formal academic language, including the body of the text, contents, abstract, and acknowledgments.

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 Media, Film and Communication that may be analysed further through scholastic thought and methods associated with these 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 Advanced Media, Film & Communication Theory class and your supervisor will assist you in the first few weeks of your study programme to shape your research question(s), identify suitable scholarly perspectives, and find appropriate

methodologies to undertake your project. Your aim will be to position the outcomes of your research alongside other scholarly 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 with 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. 2022 key dates

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">– 4 March, 12:00 noon: Submit proposal to brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz– 11 March: Supervisors announced via email– June: Submit abstract for semester two research presentations to brett.nicholls@otago.ac.nz– July: Research Presentations (on Dissertation topics).– 16 September: Last day to submit draft to your supervisor for feedback prior to submission.– 14 October, 4pm: Submission of the completed Dissertation. |
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Note: Failure to submit the Honours Dissertation before 4 pm 14 October will have serious consequences. In the absence of extenuating circumstances, the Head of programme may refuse to accept the Dissertation once the submission date has passed. If you anticipate encountering difficulties in meeting the deadline, it is in your interests to consult the Honours coordinator as soon as possible.

The submission date for the MA (Coursework) dissertation will be 12 months from your start date (beginning of Semester One or beginning of Semester Two).