

GEOG4310: Research Methodologies

Callaghan

Semester 1 - 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

OVERVIEW

Course Description	This course builds knowledge and understanding about the history and philosophy of research in the social, environmental and natural sciences. This knowledge and understanding is used to develop insights into the ways that the development problem is conceived and acted on. The course enhances skills and capacities in reading and literature reviewing, critical reasoning and argument, essay writing and verbal communication. The course includes: discussions of theoretical and applied directions in development studies; student-based presentations of key issues; and training workshops in computing skills, on-line bibliographic searches, statistical analysis, writing techniques, and cartography.
Academic Progress Requirements	Nil
Assumed Knowledge	Completion of Bachelor of Development Studies with credit grades or above in core 2000 and 3000 courses.
Contact Hours	Callaghan Lecture Face to Face On Campus 2 hour(s) per week(s) for 13 week(s) starting Week 1 Self-Directed Learning Self-Directed 8 hour(s) per week(s) for 13 week(s) starting Week 1 Each GEOG Honours student will present a short 15min seminar in their first semester and 1/2hr seminar in their second semester.
Unit Weighting Workload	20 Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator **Callaghan**
A/Pr Kathleen Mee
Kathy.Mee@newcastle.edu.au
(02) 4921 6451
Consultation: Please email Kathy for an appointment.

Teaching Staff A/Pr Michelle Duffy
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Please email Michelle for an appointment.

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9am-5pm (Mon-Fri)

SYLLABUS

Course Content Approaches and Definitions of:

- First World/Third World and North/South- paradigm
- Economic and cultural interpretations of progress and growth
- Holistic interpretations

Critical analysis of development theories and their paradoxes:

- Economic and political development theories
- Development models, indicators and measurements
- Alternative approaches

The history and philosophy of research approaches in development studies:

- Social science epistemologies
- Environmental approaches
- Ideological contradictions

Advanced skills development:

- Oral presentation and discussion
- Essay writing

Course Learning Outcomes **On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. An advanced comprehension of contemporary development issues and their historical, socio-cultural and geographical dimensions.
2. An advanced understanding of cross-disciplinary approaches to demographic, socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors and structures, uneven development and its impacts at local, regional and global scales.
3. An advanced comprehension of the variety of theoretical approaches with which to examine and evaluate development processes and problems.
4. A wide range of skills and methods necessary to undertake a complex analysis and communication of development issues and to critically analyse development measures, indicators, reports and policies.

Course Materials Please see Honours Coursework Information Handout for more details of course materials.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	Introduction to honours: Cultivating a caring collective	Seminar	
2	4 Mar	The Research Process	Seminar	
3	11 Mar	Ethical research practice	Seminar	
4	18 Mar	Researching Your Topic/ Research Methodologies I	Seminar	
5	25 Mar	Research methodologies II	Seminar	
6	1 Apr	Research proposal presentation	Seminar	Research proposal presentation
7	8 Apr	Research methodologies III	Seminar	
Mid-Semester Recess				
Mid-Semester Recess				
8	29 Apr	Successful academic writing I	Seminar	
9	6 May	Successful academic writing II	Seminar	
10	13 May	Successful academic writing III	Seminar	
11	20 May	Practical Research Skills	Seminar	
12	27 May	Course Work Essay Due		Course Work Essay Due
13	3 Jun			
Examination Period				
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 2 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Coursework Essay	30 May 5PM.	Individual	80%	1, 2, 3, 4
2	Research Proposal Presentation	Thursday April 4th in class.	Individual	20%	1, 2, 3, 4

Note the Coursework Essay is worth 20% of your total honours grade. The Research Proposal Presentation is worth 5% of your total honours grade.

Late Submissions The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Coursework Essay

Assessment Type	Essay
Purpose	Students consider the links between questions, theory, methods and outcomes in designing their project.
Description	Write an essay in which you critically examine the relationship between research questions, research methodology, methods and research outcomes. For more details see the Honours Coursework Information Handout.
Weighting	80%
Length	3500 words
Due Date	30 May 5PM.
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	See Coursework Handout for Rubric.
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - No longer than 3 weeks after the submission of the essay.

Assessment 2 - Research Proposal Presentation

Assessment Type	Proposal / Plan
Purpose	For students to present their research plan including issue to be addressed, aims and objectives, methods and progress plan.
Description	See Coursework Handout for more details.
Weighting	20%
Length	10 minutes plus 5 minutes for questions
Due Date	Thursday April 4th in class.
Submission Method	In Class
Assessment Criteria	See Coursework Handout for Marking Rubric.
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - No later than 3 weeks after the presentation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.
- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse

Circumstances system;

3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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