

# The 2009 English Honours Brochure and Handbook

This booklet is a Handbook which provides detailed information about all aspects of the fourth-year program. Among other matters it explains how to apply for admittance to fourth year. In it you will find guidance on matters like the role of the Honours Coordinator, assessment and written work requirements, the Research Essay, unit details and so on. You should retain it as a guide to all aspects of the fourth-year program.

If you require further information you should contact the Honours Coordinator, Dr Paul Salzman on 9479 2395 or messages for the coordinator can be left with the Administrative Officer, Mrs Christine Burns (room 530, Humanities 2, telephone 9479 2390).

## ***1 Entrance into the Honours Program***

English Honours basically consists of a fourth year, comprising three semester units, an annotated bibliography and a research essay.

### **1.1 Qualifying and applying for Honours**

(i) At the completion of studies at first-year level:

If, at the end of your first year, you are interested in the possibility of eventually taking fourth-year Honours you should plan your studies in English at second- and third-year level. It is advisable (though not essential) to take eighty credit points in English at second-year level. Make sure you take a range of units and are on your way to fulfilling the requirements for an English major.

(ii) At the completion of studies at second-year level:

Students who do well in second-year level studies receive a letter inviting them to consider taking Honours. Any student who has gained a B grade final result at second-year level should consider going on to Honours. In practice this means taking 3HS, with a view to proceeding to fourth year if you continue to do well in English.

Students at third-year level intending to enter the Honours program are encouraged to consult the Honours Coordinator to discuss their unit choices. It is important that you take a range of studies in your major. All intending Honours students must include in their English major the third-year Honours unit, 3HS. This will be available each year, in at least one semester. (Details are given later in this document.)

(iii) At the end of studies at third-year level:

By the end of their studies at third-year level all students who intend to proceed to fourth-year level studies must:

- have an English major totalling 130 credit points. (Intending Honours students are advised to take more.
- preferably have B grade final results or above at first-and second year in English.
- normally have B grade final results or above in all third-year units in English.
- have taken English 3 HSA and should normally have received a B grade of 75% or more.

Submit an application form to enrol in the fourth-year. (On the form you will be asked to nominate a staff member who will support your application.)

Applications to enter fourth-year honours are considered at the end of each semester by the honours committee. This committee considers all applications on their merits; its decisions are final.

Students who have already graduated with a BA from La Trobe or with a BA degree from another university are also eligible to apply for admittance to the fourth-year Honours program. Students who have graduated with a BA degree from La Trobe and whose application to take fourth year is approved will be asked on successful completion of fourth year to surrender their BA degree prior to graduating with the BA (Honours) degree. Students with a BA degree from another university who are admitted to the fourth-year program and complete their studies successfully will be awarded the La Trobe BA (Honours) degree.

Students who have not completed the 3HSA unit or equivalent will be required to take it as one of their fourth year units.

We welcome mid-year entry to the Honours Program.

It is essential that all students who intend to proceed to fourth year in first semester 2009 hand in a completed Application for Fourth-year Honours' form by the due date, 21 November 2008. Students intending to begin in second semester should apply by 5 June 2009. The form is available from the English office. Please talk to the Honours Coordinator if you have any queries about fourth year.

## 1.2 When will I know if my application is successful?

Applicants for the fourth-year first semester intake in 2009 will be notified in December whether their applications have been successful or not. It is hoped that all arrangements for the 2009 first semester intake can be made by letter; if a meeting of students is necessary it will be held in late January, 2009. Applicants for second semester intake will be told whether they have been successful by the end of the first week of July, 2009.

## 2 Part-time study

Fourth-year Honours is a demanding course of study. The Program recognizes that because of personal or work commitments some students cannot devote themselves full-time to such a course of study. Anyone in this position should take fourth-year Honours part-time over two years. The standard part-time enrolment pattern is: one first-semester unit and one second-semester unit in the first year of enrolment; and one first-semester unit in the second year of enrolment, with the Research Essay being submitted at the end of the second year. (A supervisor for a part-time student's Research Essay is usually arranged at the beginning of his or her second year.) A full-time enrolment is not advisable for any student who has to work more than a few hours per week or who has other commitments that will affect their ability to study. The honours year is very demanding and students who have other commitments should strongly consider studying part-time.

A student whose circumstances change during the year may apply to go part-time. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences' regulations do not permit a student to change to a part-time enrolment after the census date in semester two which is around mid August.

## 3 Financial assistance

An Honours-year grant scheme is designed to provide assistance for students who may find it difficult to proceed to fourth-year study. Details and an application form can be found at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/equity/honyrgr.htm> or they may be contacted on 9479 2900 or email [equity@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:equity@latrobe.edu.au).

## 4 Third-year Honours seminar (HSA)

Fourth-year Honours students are required to have taken Honours seminar, which is available in semester one. The unit has two main purposes. First, to give students a broad knowledge and understanding of the main historical periods of literature and the cultural transformations that constitutes literary history. Second, to examine some theoretical issues raised in the critical and historical study of English, focusing on such topics as: historical and revisionist constructions of meaning; contemporary theories of interpretation and resistance; feminism; new historicism; Marxism; postcolonial theory; queer theory; cultural studies. 3HS counts as a 20 cp unit towards your degree; in this respect it has the same status as other 2/3 units.

## **Fourth-year Handbook**

This part of the booklet contains important information. Once you are enrolled as a fourth-year student you should read it carefully. It summarises all fourth-year procedures and tells you exactly what is expected of you in matters of workload in fourth year. Retain your copy during fourth year as a guide to all aspects of fourth-year study.

### **5 Information for fourth-year students**

#### **5.1 Noticeboard**

Week to week information for fourth-year students (change of room, notice of seminars, text changes) as well as other information of interest to fourth-year students is posted on the fourth-year notice board. This is located on the east-facing wall adjacent to room 508. It is a good idea to get into the habit of glancing at the board whenever you pass it.

The Honours Coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day running of the fourth-year program. The Honours Coordinator will set aside one office hour a week for consultation without appointment. Please feel free to contact the Honours Coordinator at other times if you need to. If, for any reason, you do not feel able to do this, problems can also be taken up with any of the Student Advisers or with the Program Coordinator.

#### **5.3 The Honours Representative**

The English Program regulations provide for one elected student to represent fourth-year students at the English Staff Meetings. Both full and part-time students are eligible. The representative has full voting rights on the Board. Nomination will be called for in April, and nomination forms will be available from Christine Burns. The Honours representative has a pigeon-hole for the receipt of messages in the Program's mail-room.

#### **5.4 Timetable arrangements**

Class times will be arranged towards the end of November, and will be posted on the fourth-year noticeboard. Please note that not all units listed will be taught if they fail to reach the required number of enrolments. Details of venues will be posted on the fourth-year noticeboard at the beginning of each semester.

#### **5.5 Library orientation talk**

The library puts on an informative guide to research materials and procedures in the library early in semester one. You will be advised of details of this talk. All participants in the fourth-year program are advised to attend.

#### **5.6 Availability and choice of units**

All units available are listed at the end of this handbook. To complete the fourth-year program students must take three units at fourth-year level and submit the Research Essay and an annotated bibliography.

It is possible to substitute a fourth-year unit in another discipline for a fourth-year English unit with the permission of the Program Coordinator: you should consult the Honours Coordinator if you are interested in doing this.

Combined Honours degrees are also a possibility, and a number of successful combined honours degrees have been arranged, including combinations of English with History, Drama, Philosophy, Cinema Studies and Sociology. Courses of study have to be worked out and approved in consultation with the Honours Coordinators of both Programs involved.

Please note that minor changes are sometimes made to set texts. Class times may also change, though this will not usually be done without the agreement of the group. If a unit does not gain a viable enrolment (it is expected that this will be about ten students) that unit may be cancelled and students will have to choose another unit.

#### **5.7 Annotated bibliography**

The annotated bibliography should consist of 10 one hundred word critical appraisals of key texts (usually secondary material) that have been read in relation to the long essay topic. It is worth 5% of the final result.

The student's long essay supervisor will normally examine the methodology assessment. These exercises will also be considered by the Honours committee.

The bibliography should be arranged alphabetically, with few if any divisions by topic area. It should be absolutely consistent with the chosen style (eg MLA, AGPS Style Manual).

Paragraph-length annotations should be critical as well as descriptive – that is they should give information about the contents of the book or article, some analysis or comment on the argument, and some indication of its relevance to the Long Essay project.

Students will still be required to submit an unannotated full bibliography as part of their Long Essay.

An extremely useful reference which provides a description of the Annotated bibliography, and samples of annotations can be found at the following website:

[www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm](http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm).

#### **5.8 Changing units**

There is usually no problem in changing units provided you do it early enough. All changes to unit enrolments must be approved by the Honours Coordinator.

## 5.9 Assessment and written work requirements: units

The written work requirement for each unit is 5000 words.

Unit tutors will advise students of the weighting of the different pieces of written work and class requirements. Unit tutors also set the submission dates for these pieces of written work but all written work for a fourth-year unit is to be submitted no later than the end of week fourteen. Extensions beyond that date must be approved by the Honours Coordinator. A student who is unhappy with the assessment of a particular essay may ask to have the piece remarked. The request should be made in the first instance to the unit tutor. If a student remains unhappy with the remarking process, the honours committee will convene and adjudicate the final mark.

Marks given in fourth year correspond to the following Honours results:

H1	80+	First Class Honours
H2A	70-79	Second Class Honours, Division A
H2B	60-69	Second Class Honours, Division B
H3	50-59	Third Class Honours
	49 or lower	Recommended for Pass degree only

This means, in effect, that whereas the 'B' range in the BA was 70-79, in fourth year the 'B' range is 60-79. If you are an ongoing Honours student your semester results will be recorded as an X. This is not a grade, it indicates that your Honours result is not finalised.

### English Honours Band Descriptors

All work submitted in Honours is expected to conform to the style guide, have a full and correctly assembled bibliography, and be written in correct English prose.

#### H1 Descriptors

##### H1 80+ First Class Honours

The Faculty of Humanities has agreed to adhere to the following descriptors for marks within the H1 grade.

**95 plus** Truly exceptional. Publishable in a quality refereed journal (with perhaps minor revision). Exhibits rare interpretive and analytic insight. Makes an original contribution to knowledge. Exceptional grasp of current critical and theoretical approaches to topic, and of research methodology. Awarded once in every 25 years.

**90-94** Outstanding achievement equivalent to the best scholarship in the academic field. Some material publishable. Exhibits rare interpretive subtlety. Extremely well written. Awarded once in every 10 years.

**85-89** Outstanding work of a quality well above average for the Honours I grade. Has potential for publication in a quality refereed journal, with revision. Substantially original where that is an appropriate expectation in the discipline. Strong grasp of current critical and theoretical approaches to topic and of research methodology. Exhibits great interpretive subtlety. Very well written.

**80-84** Accomplished work which demonstrates some capacity for originality and sound research potential. Sure grasp of current critical and theoretical approaches to the topic and of sustained research methodology. Exhibits some interpretive subtlety and genuine research capacity reflected in the level of analytic insight. Well written.

##### H2A 70-79 Second Class Honours, Division A

Displays a capacity to develop a coherent argument about a complex subject and evidence of having extensively explored sources about that subject. Writing, organisation and presentation demonstrate understanding of, and ability to use, the techniques and conventions of scholarship.

Attainment of a H2A mark is regarded by English staff as a significant achievement. Generally, work which attains a 2A Honours mark includes the following qualities:

- presents a coherent and well-planned argument;
- contains sufficient research to support the arguments made in the essay, with research taken from reputable academic sources;
- Shows evidence of research potential;
- shows clear evidence of an ability to present an original reading of the key text or texts under discussion;
- is written well;
- is carefully proof-read and does not contain many typographical errors;
- follows the style guide, and handles the referencing system correctly, both for the in-text references and for the bibliography.

##### H2B 60-69 Second Class Honours, Division B

This grade is awarded to work which shows clear evidence of ability to present an academic argument, but in which the argument is not always sustained, convincing, or original.

Generally, work which attains a 2B Honours mark includes the following qualities:

- shows ability to organise and structure material;
- is written well;
- is carefully proof-read and does not contain many typographical errors;
- follows the style guide, and handles the referencing system correctly, both for the in-text references and for the bibliography.

##### H3 50-59 Third Class Honours

Displays an adequate capacity to gather and reproduce material. Qualities of organisation, writing and presentation may be lower than for 2B work.

**49 or lower** Recommended for Pass degree only

## 5.10 Assessment and written work requirements: the Research Essay

All fourth-year students write a Research Essay of 12,000 - 14,000 words on a topic of their own choice. (See section 9: "Writing the Fourth-year Research Essay".) If you would like to see what kinds of topics other people have written on you can read some of the Research Essays submitted in previous years. The Program keeps a

copy of all Research Essays submitted and they may be consulted by contacting Christine Burns.

You should give the Honours Coordinator a one paragraph outline, indicating if possible the texts/objects of study and the approach that you plan to adopt, as soon as possible, and no later than mid-January in the case of first semester entry or Mid July in the case of second semester entry. See 10.2 Finding a topic.

This brochure includes details of staff members' research interests: consult this before choosing a topic. It may give you some ideas, and some sense of what staff members are likely to be interested in supervising.

Students will be assigned a supervisor by February where possible and should make preliminary contact with their supervisor as soon as possible. In any case work on the Research Essay - especially exploratory reading - should commence during the summer vacation before the academic year starts. Students are encouraged to contact potential supervisors at the end of their third year and they may suggest possible supervisors to the Honours Coordinator. The allotment of supervisors is finally the responsibility of the Honours Coordinator as questions of staff availability and staff workloads have to be taken into consideration.

You will normally meet your supervisor once a fortnight (in the year you are writing your long essay) at a designated regular time. If you hand in work-in-progress to your supervisor you can expect to have it returned to you within a fortnight. If you want to discuss particular articles or books give your supervisor plenty of warning. You must give your supervisor reasonable time to provide feedback; in particular, a supervisor is unlikely to be able to provide feedback for work that is submitted less than three weeks before the due date. Your supervisor's role is to guide your investigations, suggest avenues of inquiry and to comment on whatever you write. A supervisor must not make any kind of substantive contribution to your work. Such work must be entirely your own. If, for any reason, you wish to change your supervisor you should first make contact with the Honours Coordinator.

The last date for second semester submission of the Research Essay in 2009 is  
**4.30 pm Friday 30 October**  
The date for first semester submission is  
**4.30 pm Friday 5 June**  
Extensions are possible only in very exceptional circumstances.

Students must submit two bound copies of their Research Essay to the English General Office. One copy will be returned to the student along with Examiners' comments and a mark. You can collect these from Christine Burns Room 530. The other copy will be retained by the English Program.

### 5.11 Weighting of components in final result

- The Annotated Bibliography counts as 5% of the final result.
- Each unit counts as 15% of a student's final result.
- The three units together thus count as 45% of the final result.
- The Research Essay counts for the remaining 50%.

### 5.12 Assessment procedures: final result

All members of the English Program understand that a great deal hinges upon the final result a student receives. The Program goes to great lengths to ensure that assessment procedures are fair, open and follow a due process. All honours unit essays and major creative pieces are double marked.

Students should note that all marks received during the year are provisional until approved by the final Examiner's Board. All work submitted during the year must be kept by the student as the Examiners are entitled to recall any piece of work before finalising results.

In the case of the Research Essay the procedure is as follows. The Research Essay is assessed by two members of the academic staff chosen by the Honours Coordinator in consultation with other members of staff. (Supervisors are entitled to propose examiners to the Honours Coordinator, but are not themselves examiners of any Research Essays they have supervised.) The Honours Coordinator receives the reports and marks of the two examiners and, if they have agreed upon a final mark, an agreed mark. All essays are then reviewed by a panel normally made up of the Honours Coordinator and the Postgraduate Coordinator. This panel formally recommends a final mark for each Research Essay in the light of the reports they have received. These recommended final marks are presented to an Examiners' Board for approval. All students will receive examiners' comments on their essay and the agreed mark.

A student's final result is the aggregate of all marks received during the year. This mark has to be recommended by the Honours Coordinator to an Examiners' Board usually comprising all staff members who have taught or supervised in the fourth-year program, and approved by that Board.

### 5.13 Program seminars and conferences

The English Program normally holds regular research seminars at which staff members or visitors from other universities in Australia and overseas present papers. Everyone participating in the fourth-year program is encouraged to attend these seminars which are an important part of the Program's life. It is a good way of finding out what is current in the discipline and you will find that it offers you much stimulation for your own work. Conferences are also held from time to time and, once again, all participants in the fourth-year program are encouraged to attend. Concessional registration rates sometimes apply, and it is also possible to sit in on particular papers at a conference if you cannot afford to register for the conference (check with the conference convenor). The Postgraduate students also

hold a research seminar and conferences (watch the postgraduate board for details).

### 5.14 Postgraduate work and scholarships

The English Program is committed to maintaining a strong postgraduate program. Any student doing well in fourth year (Honours 2A results or better) is eligible for enrolment in the various postgraduate courses - MA (Coursework), MA or Ph.D. Demand for scholarships has increased over recent years and they are now very competitive. As competition varies from year to year it is impossible to predict what result might be necessary to secure a scholarship. Postgraduate scholarship applications are due at the end of October.

### 5.15 Graduation

The gaining of a degree is a significant step in one's life and it adds to the satisfaction if it is celebrated in some way. As a result of requests from the English Program, all Honours students in a particular discipline will graduate at the same ceremony. The English Program hopes that everyone eligible for the BA (Honours) degree who is able to do so will graduate in person in May of the following year. The ceremony is dignified but not over-formal. People who attend it (even those who are sceptical of its value beforehand!) are invariably pleased that they have come along.

## 6 Information and Queries

Christine Burns is the Program Administrative Officer who handles Honours matters (Humanities 2, room 530, tel. 9479 2390, email. c.burns@latrobe.edu.au). Many initial inquiries can be directed to Christine.

All other queries about the fourth-year program should be directed to the Honours Coordinator.

### Keeping in Touch

Please inform all relevant parties (teachers, supervisor, Program Administrative Officer and the student centre) if you change your address or email. We can't help you if we can't contact you.

## 7 First Semester Units

### ENG4ABN: Auto/biography: narratives of the self in biography and autobiography

Coordinator: Dr Alexis Harley

People have written biographies and autobiographies for centuries, but only in recent years has the study of these forms become a major field of academic discussion and inquiry. The field opens up many important and interesting questions: What's the relationship between self-knowledge and the knowledge we have of others? How much can we in fact know about self or other? To what extent, and in what ways, does the sense of self we have derive from cultural norms and narratives? What sorts of plots do authors of biographies and autobiographies inherit or fashion in order to write narratives of the self? What role does ideology - gender, class, racial, colonial, ethnic - play in the narratives of self that we can, or might want to, write? In this unit we will discuss these and other issues in relation to a range of biographical and autobiographical texts.

#### Prescribed Reading:

- Darwin, C., *Autobiographies*, (Penguin)
- Frame, J., *An Autobiography* (George Braziller)
- Freud, J., *An analysis of a case of hysteria*, (Simon & Schuster)
- Gosse, E., *Father and Son*, (Penguin)
- Jacobs, H., *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
- Nabokov, V., *Speak, Memory*, (Penguin)
- Rousseau, J.J., *Confessions*, (Penguin)
- White, P., *Flaws in the Glass*, (Vintage)
- Wilde, O., *De Profundis and other writings* (Penguin)
  
- Shakespeare, W., *The winter's tale*, (any edition: Oxford (OUP) preferred)
- Shakespeare, W., *Twelfth night*, (any edition: Oxford (OUP) preferred)
- Shakespeare, W., *Two gentlemen of Verona*, (any edition: Oxford (OUP) preferred)
- Shakespeare, W., *Much ado about nothing*, (any edition: Oxford (OUP) preferred)

### ENG4RWM: Reading and writing memoir

Coordinator: Dr Susan Bradley Smith

Memoir is a flourishing creative non-fiction genre. This course explores a selection of contemporary memoirs—reading as writers—and also expands creative writing competencies. Discussion of contemporary texts will focus on the content of these life stories, as well as the forms and techniques authors use to shape memoirs, considering the interrelationships of technical and thematic concerns. Theoretical and critical issues such as memory, ethics, and authenticity will also be surveyed.

Because the elastic characteristics of the novel can now be found in non-fiction, craft workshops will be devoted to developing these

creative skills whilst writing memoir. The guided writing workshops aim to strengthen student's skills in areas such as accessing confessional material, 'capturing' content, writing about place, structuring narratives, conducting research and interviews, and how to deal with ethical issues in writing about subjects.

Assessment requirements will allow students to either consider set texts in terms of their implicit theories of memoir, (submitted in essay form), or allow the opportunity to submit an extended piece of creative non-fiction writing (memoir).

**Prescribed Reading:**

- Miler, P., *The memoir book*, (Allen & Unwin) 2007
- Course Reader

**ENG4WRT: Writing transcendence: Jung, Hillman, Derrida, Levinas**

**Coordinator: Dr David Tacey**

The transcendent dimension will not go away, try as culture might to expunge it. In modern and in postmodern times, its traditional forms are often obliterated or contested, and then transcendence returns in a new guise. In Jung it returns as psyche and symbol, in Hillman as soul and image, in Derrida as negative theology and the impossible, and in Levinas as the absolute other.

This unit will explore the transcendent in these psychologists and philosophers, while also reflecting on their common sources: Nietzsche, Heidegger. We will contextualise the return of transcendence to a postmodern philosophy that seemed inimical to it. We will read essays by Jung, Hillman, Derrida, Levinas, and read or re-read poems and novels in light of the 'postmodern transcendent'. Poets will include Plath, Hardy, Heaney, Larkin, Murray, Wright; and novels by Atwood and Dillard. Students are invited to introduce new works and writers into this list.

## **8 Second Semester Units**

**ENG4/5POT: Poetics of transgression**

**Coordinator: Dr Alison Ravenscroft**

Transgression and subversion are often cited as characteristics of avant-garde literary and other artistic practices. These art forms, it is said, transgress and subvert not only social codes, but aesthetic ones. In western art, 'avant-garde' aesthetics have not only pitted themselves against the prevailing values of 'polite society' but have transgressed the borders of art; they have challenged artistic genre and modes of representation; they have sought to unsettle received notions of beauty, transcendence, and the sublime; they have sought a 'revolution in feeling'. This subject studies some exemplary moments in English-language literary history since 1900 up to the present, in Australia and elsewhere, and organises its investigations around the questions: what are transgression and subversion in the literary arts, and what are their effects?

**Prescribed Reading:**

To be advised.

**ENG4WRF: Writing fiction**

**Coordinator: Dr Catherine Padmore**

This unit takes the form of a series of workshops and seminars focusing on elements of the writer's craft in fiction, including style, structure, point of view, setting, research and characterisation. Student works in progress will be discussed in detail. Prescribed reading lists will be available in the first class.

**Prescribed Reading:**

To be advised.

## **9 Writing the Fourth-year Research Essay**

### **9.1 Introduction**

As a fourth-year student you are required to write a research essay of fourteen thousand words. The research essay is the most important piece of work you will undertake in fourth year. It is worth 50% of your final result and it is a test of your ability to undertake independent research. You should think of it as a short thesis. In any postgraduate/scholarship application your research essay will be regarded as an important indication of your potential.

### **9.2 Finding a topic**

In previous years, students have completed research essays on a very wide variety of topics. We do our best to accommodate this diversity of interests, and usually can, but in order that we may do this - in particular, find supervisors and markers - we need advance notice of your proposed topic. It is possible to undertake a research essay with a substantial creative component, but 30% of this type of essay must consist of reflections on the critical/theoretical aspects of the project, and will be judged on the same criteria as any other critical/theoretical work.

You should give the Honours Coordinator a one paragraph outline, indicating if possible the texts/objects of study and the approach that you plan to adopt, as soon as possible, and no later than late January in the case of first semester entry or mid-July in the case of second semester entry. The Honours Coordinator will then proceed to consult other staff and find or confirm supervisors and markers, and report back to you if it appears that your proposed topic will have to be modified. (In rare instances a topic may have to be reconsidered.)

In the past research essays have often been studies of individual texts or individual authors, but increasingly a range of more general thematic and theoretical topics, and topics in the area of Cultural

Studies, are being undertaken. If you would like to see a few samples, the Program keeps essays on file and you are welcome to browse through them. In the early stages of settling a topic you may wish to pursue a number of possibilities. This is acceptable, but it is important to start narrowing your focus as soon as possible. Your supervisor will help with this. The Honours Coordinator is also

available for consultation. This brochure includes details of staff members' research interests: consult this before choosing a topic. It may give you some ideas, and some sense of what staff members are likely to be interested in supervising.

A research essay should not simply be an appreciation of a text. It must have a specific aim and a clear thesis. Gail Jones *Black Mirror* would not be an acceptable project. A specific reading of *Black*

*Mirror* - for example: Poststructural Subjectivity in *Black Mirror* - would be. You can tackle a particular theoretical problem or approach; you can group together a number of literary or cultural texts for examination in the light of some general issue; you can problematize a text and traditional readings of it in the light of a particular theoretical stance; you can offer a theorized reading of a text or group of texts. Try to frame your topic in the light of issues and problems in literature, culture and criticism that are important to you - questions that demand investigation and elucidation.

It is important to take into account any relevant criticism. This does not mean reading everything in print (an impossible task in many instances), but it does mean being aware of relevant critical material and familiar with the current state of theoretical or critical debate. Your supervisor will help you in your choice of reading.

### 9.3 Supervision

You are welcome to approach members of staff to discuss potential topics and supervision, but the actual designation of supervisors is made by the Honours Coordinator. If you cannot think of a suitable supervisor the Honours Coordinator will try to find one for you. You should expect to see your supervisor once a fortnight during the teaching year in which you undertake your long essay.

Supervision is a process that varies from person to person, but certain rules need to be observed on both sides (see section 5.10 above). You can expect close guidance from your supervisor at all stages of your research. You cannot expect your supervisor to supply basic ideas or to write your essay for you. The essay is something generated out of your own interests, and produced by means of your own capabilities. The sooner you supply a draft of the essay, the sooner you will receive detailed commentary on it. You cannot expect your supervisor to help you out without due warning. On the other hand, you are entitled to reasonable access to your supervisor throughout the year. If any problems occur, you must seek the advice of the Honours Coordinator or Program Coordinator without delay.

### 9.4 Timetable

Students must submit their essay at the end of the appropriate semester (in 2009, by 4.30 pm on Friday, 5 June, or Friday, 23 October). The submission date is absolutely final, and extensions are only granted under the most exceptional circumstances, and only if an Application for Special Consideration has been submitted through the Student Centre.

With the submission date in mind you should work around the following timetable:

- (i) Decide on an area of inquiry by the time of the Honours Orientation meeting and inform the Honours Coordinator of this.
- (ii) Narrow down your topic early in first semester. Do your preliminary reading and research during the summer before first semester begins. Work towards refining your topic over this period, and aim to have it finalised by the start of the academic year.
- (iii) You should meet your supervisor on average once a fortnight throughout the year. Your supervisor will read any work you submit and comment on it. Remember that the best way to write an essay of this length is to break it into its component parts, and to work on it - and write it - one section at a time. In general, the sooner you start writing, the better.
- (iv) Aim to have a complete first draft finished by the beginning of your second semester.
- (v) Ideally, allow the whole of your second semester for the process of revision and redrafting. Remember that the work you do at this stage is as important as the original research and writing. Crucial insights and ideas are often developed at this stage and frequently the shaping of the argument occurs only now when you have achieved an overview of your material. Be sure to leave yourself enough time for this important work.
- (vi) Your supervisor will expect to read through the finished essay before it is submitted. Allow adequate time for him or her to do this. Remember, however, that it is your essay and the responsibility for what you say is yours alone.

### 9.5 Style and format

Your essay must be written clearly and grammatically. Proof-read it carefully before you submit it. Marks will be lost for careless presentation: format and presentation are important aspects of the task you have been set and it is expected that you will present your argument in a professional manner. You are making an original contribution to the discipline and you should think of your essay as potentially a publishable piece of work. A number of style guides are available which offer detailed information on presentation. The important thing is to be consistent and to ensure that all the requisite information is presented in the essay. See section (v) below

The following points should be particularly observed:

(i) Begin your essay with a title page containing the title, your name, your supervisor's name, year of submission and the following statements.

'Long Essay submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA (Honours), English Program, La Trobe University'

A signed Statement of Authorship stating

'I certify that the attached material is my original work. I declare that no other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement. Except where I have clearly stated that I have used some of this material elsewhere, it has not been presented by me for examination in any other course or unit at this or any other institution.

I have read the Academic Misconduct Policy ([www.latrobe.edu.au/policies](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/policies)), Statute 16 ([www.latrobe.edu.au/legalservices/statutes.html](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/legalservices/statutes.html)) and Regulation 16.2 ([www.latrobe.edu.au/legalservices/regulations.html](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/legalservices/regulations.html)) relating to Student Discipline and Academic Misconduct, which are available on the University's web site and understand that I am bound by such Policy, Statute and Regulation and that I may be subject to student discipline processes in the event of an act of plagiarism by me.

I understand the nature of plagiarism to include the reproduction of someone else's words, ideas or findings and presenting them as my own without proper acknowledgement. Further, I understand that there are many forms of plagiarism which include direct copying or paraphrasing from someone else's published work (either electronic or hard copy) without acknowledging the source; using facts, information and ideas derived from a source without acknowledgement; producing assignments (required to be independent) in collaboration with and/or using the work of other people; and assisting another person to commit an act of plagiarism.

I understand that the work submitted may be reproduced and/or communicated by the University or a third party authorised by the University for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.'

A Declaration of Ethics Compliance stating either

'The research for this thesis did not require research ethics approval'

or

'The research for this thesis was research ethics approved with file number so-and-so.'

(ii) Submit two copies of the essay. One of these will be retained by the English Program.

(iii) Include a table of contents if you have divided your essay into chapters.

(iv) Your essay must be typed in at least 12pt, double-spaced, on one side of the page only. The page size should be the standard A4 sheet. The essay must be securely bound.

(v) Adhere to a consistent system of footnotes and references. A number of systems are currently in use and you should choose the most appropriate one for your purposes. (Discuss this matter with your supervisor.)

The major Style Guides may be found in the Reference section of the library. Normally you would use the most recent version.

#### **For instance the MLA Manuals:**

Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA style manual and guide to scholarly publishing* New York : Modern Language Association of America, 1998.

Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA handbook for writers of research papers* 6th ed. New York : Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

The MLA website offers more information:

[www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org).

The PMLA (Publications of the Modern Language Association of America) also demonstrates the use of the current MLA Style.

#### **Chicago Manual of Style:**

The Chicago manual of style. 14th ed Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Chicago FAQ site

[www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/cmsofaq.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/cmsofaq.html)

A 'form guide' based on the Chicago Manual

[www.lib.ohio-state.edu/guides/chicagogd.html](http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/guides/chicagogd.html)

#### **Harvard or Author-date system**

[www.csad.coventry.ac.uk/IDN/neopraxis/harvard.html](http://www.csad.coventry.ac.uk/IDN/neopraxis/harvard.html)

Citing electronic sources - see above and also

#### **Berkely Style Sheet for citing internet and electronic sources:**

[www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Style.html)

The Bartleby site offers a variety of excellent reference sources:

[www.bartleby.com/reference/](http://www.bartleby.com/reference/) It includes a full copy of Strunk's *The Elements of Style* for assistance with grammar and construction of argument etc.: [www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/).

## **10 Staff Research Interests**

### **Dr Susan Bradley Smith**

Cultural historian and writer, with particular interests in poetry, theatre, and medical worlds

### **Dr Alexis Harley**

Auto/biography and life-writing; Victorian Literature

### **Dr Sue Martin**

Australian literature generally, especially fiction, and with a special interest in nineteenth century Australian literature; women's writing; gender studies and theory; Spatial theory; garden history/culture; nineteenth century /Victorian American and English fiction; Canadian women writers, especially Atwood and Shields; Thomas Pynchon.

### **Dr Catherine Padmore**

Fiction writing (including technical and discursive elements); women's writing; feminist theories; and migration stories.

### **Associate Professor Chris Palmer:**

Postmodern fiction and theory; Science Fiction, especially contemporary; Adaptation theory (novel into film); contemporary crime fiction; the fiction of Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, Philip K. Dick, Brian Aldiss, Iain Banks/Iain M. Banks, William Gibson; the criticism of Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton.

### **Dr Alison Ravenscroft:**

American Modernism and Postmodernism; contemporary Australian women's writing; Aboriginal women's autobiography; Feminist literary theory; Feminist theories of gender and race

### **Dr Paul Salzman:**

Early modern writing (especially writing by women; sixteenth and seventeenth century prose; sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century cultural history); contemporary Australian writing; scholarly editing.

### **Associate Professor David Tacey:**

Jungian and Post-Jungian Theory; Masculinity; literature and theory concerned with the Sacred; ecopsychology

### **Professor Sue Thomas:**

Decolonising literatures (Caribbean, African, 'black' British, the transculturation of modernism, 'tropical Gothic', and some Australian and Canadian topics); nineteenth and twentieth century women's writing in Britain (especially 'New Woman' fiction and plays, suffragette writing, and female modernism); feminist theory and theories of cultural and literary decolonisation; historical reading practice; Jean Rhys; Charlotte Bronte; histories of racial thinking; 'whiteness' as a historical racial category.

### **Dr Iain Topliss:**

Literature and Journalism (with special reference to the *New Yorker*); postmodern fiction (Ian McEwan, Julian Barnes); nineteenth century fiction (Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth); the theory and practice of humour.

### **Honorary Associate Fellow Terry Collits:**

The novel from realism to modernism; Shakespeare (tragedies, histories, problem plays); drama and the theory of drama; Greek tragedy; contemporary theories of tragedy; Marxist theory; Lacanian theory; postcolonial theory and writing (especially Indian writing in English; Conrad.

## **Contact details**

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