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ARTS3243

Remaking Nature: The Politics of Biotechnology

Semester Two // 2018

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Nicolas Rasmussen	N.Rasmussen@unsw.edu.au	posted on Moodle	Morven Brown 314	9385 2361 email if no answer

School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Phone: +61 2 9385 1681

Fax: +61 2 9385 8705

Email: hal@unsw.edu.au

Attendance Requirements

A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face (F2F) or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

For more information about the attendance protocols in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to: requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential academic information, see <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Environmental Humanities*

This course examines what many have called the 'century of the gene' and its potential for reshaping the environment and humanity. Biotechnology can be understood as a social, political and cultural project as much as a technical one. In this course we consider these issues through the prism of contemporary environmental thinking, drawing on a multidisciplinary tool kit from science studies (STS), cultural and political theory, and sociology. We retrace the emergence of biotechnology from its early imaginings through its emergence as a real project in the twentieth century, and explore a range of contemporary case-studies such as GM food, gene therapy, bio-prospecting, nanotechnology and synthetic biology. You will have the opportunity to select issues such as these for deeper exploration in group projects involving independent research and analysis.

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to

1. Explain the historical, political and cultural contexts that have shaped the emergence of biotechnology and the biosciences
2. Analyse the intersections between genetics research and shifts in contemporary political organisation and environmental practice
3. Apply selected disciplinary approaches and conceptual tools to understanding the social and environmental aspects of biotechnology and the biosciences
4. Apply skills of critical analysis, problem solving and interpretation in both written work and in-class discussions
5. Conduct independent research and demonstrate a capability to assemble, synthesise and communicate research findings and analytical interpretations

Teaching Strategies

This course requires students to engage with high-level analytical scholarship in exploring and analysing the contemporary biosciences. It will require reflective and self-critical learning together with a capacity to assemble and synthesise information from a range of sources and disciplinary backgrounds. The course also will require students to apply these insights in a real-world example and to complete a major piece of assessment that examines their capabilities to do this. These objectives will be achieved through lectures, in-depth tutorial discussions, independent research and the preparation of assessment tasks. In order for students to develop the forms of critical reflection necessary for this course, participation in tutorial discussion will be emphasised and is reflected in the assessment schedule.

Assessment

The list of course readings and lecture topics, and the schedule of what you will be expected to read for each week's buzz group discussion, is posted on the course Moodle site.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Buzz group 'quiz'	10%	Not Applicable	2,3,4
Concise essays	45%	1 week after weekly topic release	1,2,3,4
Research Project & Essay	45%	26/10/2018 04:00 PM	1,2,3,4,5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Buzz group 'quiz'

Start date: weekly in class

Length: N/A

Details: Students' participation in tutorial discussions will be assessed throughout the course on a Pass/Fail basis according to whether their discussion group intelligently addressed a set question for discussion, and the individual student was observed to actively participate. Each week's tutorial discussion questions prepare students to write up the optional weekly essay topic (below). Feedback by prompt individual email in the event a student did not Pass in a week.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 2: Concise essays

Start date:

Length: 750 w

Details: This assessment task will be comprised of three 750 word essays and will be designed to give early feedback on students' individual progress and to develop students' writing and analytical skills. One topic is set per week, based on the core readings and set tutorial discussion questions for the week, with students free to choose any three (one from the first 5 weeks). Each piece will be worth 15% of the overall mark for the course. Written feedback to students.

Submission notes: Designated portal on Moodle

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Research Project & Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 3000 w

Details: Research project, which may be conducted by groups of up to three students, with a 3000 word essay as the assessed outcome. All students in a group submit same essay and receive same mark. Students will have a choice of topics, which will challenge them to consider central course themes. Students will be expected to make use of course readings and conduct independent research. Written feedback. This is the final assessment for attendance purposes.

Submission notes: Each student collaborating in a research project must submit the SAME identical essay

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their names and student numbers on every page of their assignments.

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

Late Assessment Penalties

Students are responsible for the submission of assessment tasks by the required dates and times. Depending on the extent of delay in the submission of an assessment task past the due date and time, one of the following late penalties will apply unless special consideration or a blanket extension due to a technical outage is granted. For the purpose of late penalty calculation, a 'day' is deemed to be each 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline for submission.

- **Work submitted less than 10 days after the stipulated deadline** is subject to a deduction of 5% of the total awardable mark from the mark that would have been achieved if not for the penalty for every day past the stipulated deadline for submission. That is, a student who submits an assignment with a stipulated deadline of 4:00pm on 13 May 2016 at 4:10pm on 14 May 2016 will incur a deduction of 10%.

Task with a non-percentage mark

If the task is marked out of 25, then late submission will attract a penalty of a deduction of 1.25 from the mark awarded to the student for every 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline.

Example: A student submits an essay 48 hours and 10 minutes after the stipulated deadline. The total possible mark for the essay is 25. The essay receives a mark of 17. The student's mark is therefore $17 - [25 (0.05 \times 3)] = 13.25$

Task with a percentage mark

If the task is marked out of 100%, then late submission will attract a penalty of a deduction of 5% from the mark awarded to the student for every 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline.

Example: A student submits an essay 48 hours and 10 minutes after the stipulated deadline. The essay is marked out of 100%. The essay receives a mark of 68. The student's mark is therefore $68 - 15 = 53$

- **Work submitted 10 to 19 days after the stipulated deadline** will be assessed and feedback provided but a mark of zero will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component (hurdle requirement), a student will be deemed to have met that requirement;
- **Work submitted 20 or more days after the stipulated deadline** will not be accepted for assessment and will receive no feedback, mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will receive an Unsatisfactory Fail (UF) grade as a result of unsatisfactory performance in an essential component of the course.

This information is also available at:

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Special Consideration Applications

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances interfere with your assessment performance.

Sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may:

- * Prevent you from completing a course requirement,
- * Keep you from attending an assessable activity,
- * Stop you submitting assessable work for a course,
- * Significantly affect your performance in assessable work, be it a formal end-of-semester examination, a class test, a laboratory test, a seminar presentation or any other form of assessment.

For further details in relation to Special Consideration including "When to Apply", "How to Apply" and "Supporting Documentation" please refer to the Special Consideration webstie:

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

(<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>)

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 23 July - 29 July	Topic	Modern Science and the Religion of Capital
Week 2: 30 July - 5 August	Topic	Frankenstein, Steam, and the Romantic Rebellion
Week 3: 6 August - 12 August	Topic	The Gene: Industrialising Plants
Week 4: 13 August - 19 August	Topic	Blood and Milk: Commodifying Body Fluids
Week 5: 20 August - 26 August	Topic	Double Helix, Cold War
Week 6: 27 August - 2 September	Topic	Rewriting the Code of Life
Week 7: 3 September - 9 September	Topic	Pharma's Cloning Gold Rush
Week 8: 10 September - 16 September	Topic	Frankenfood: Biotech and the Control of Agriculture
Week 9: 17 September - 23 September	Topic	Genomes: Making Life Virtual
Break: 24 September - 30 September	Group Work	You should be working on your group research projects in earnest this week.
Week 10: 1 October - 7 October	Topic	'Gene Therapy': Humanity 2.0
Week 11: 8 October - 14 October	Topic	Dolly Mixtures
Week 12: 15 October - 21 October	Topic	Gene Drives: Engineering Ecology

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Required readings for each week will be indicated on the course Moodle site and provided through the Leganto portal there

Recommended Resources

Daniel Charles, *Lords of the Harvest* (Basic, 2001)

Sarah Franklin, *Dolly Mixtures* (Duke, 2007)

Ralph Kloppenberg Jr, *First the Seed* (U Wisconsin, 2005)

Nicolas Rasmussen, *Gene Jockeys* (Johns Hopkins, 2014)

Course Evaluation and Development

"Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered from students using myExperience. Students are encouraged to complete their surveys by accessing the personalised web link via the Moodle course site"

Image Credit

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