ARTS3243

Remaking Nature: The Politics of Biotechnology

Term One // 2019

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

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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.

Course Learning Outcomes

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 the schedule of what you will be expected to read for each week's buzz group discussion, is posted on the course Moodle site (readings via Leganto portal).

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Buzz group 'quiz'	10%	Weekly in Tutorial	1,2,4
Research Project & Essay	50%	3 May 2019; 4:00PM	1,2,3,4,5
Concise essays	40%	weekly, at 4pm 7 days after the date when topic was offered	1,2,3

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Buzz group 'quiz'

Start date: Not Applicable

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.

Submission notes:no written submission is involved

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 2: Research Project & Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 2600 min, 3200 max

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.

Additional details:

Students will be encouraged to propose their own topics by Week 5. A standard topic will also be issued by Week 5, which must be done by anyone whose proposed research project topic is not approved. All essays co-authored by a team should be IDENTICAL, and all will share the same mark.

Submission notes: upload essays via designated pathway on course Moodle site

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

Assessment 3: Concise essays

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1200 max

Details: This assessment task will be comprised of two 1000 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 two (one from the first 5 weeks). Each piece will be worth 20% of the overall mark for the course. Written feedback to students.

Additional details:

One essay topic is posted on Moodle weekly at the end of the day after each class session. Topics build on tute discussion questions.

Submission notes: upload essay file via designated pathway on course Moodle site

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

Attendance Requirements

Attendance of tutorials is mandatory in this course. Unexcused absence from more than 20% of tutorials will result in the award a fail grade.

In tutorials you will catively engage with core course content, enabling you to attain CLO 1.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 18 February - 24 February	Lecture	Topic: The religion of Capital, modern science, and the emerging concept of life Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 2: 25 February - 3 March	Lecture	Topic: Classical genetics, eugenics and life in the second industrial revolution Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 3: 4 March - 10 March	Lecture	The old biotechnology - fluids, hormones, and the commodification of flesh Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 4: 11 March - 17 March	Lecture	Double helix: DNA from pure Cold War ideology to neoliberal money spinner Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'

Week 5: 18 March - 24 March	Lecture	Pharma's molecular gold rush, monopolising biology Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 6: 25 March - 31 March	Lecture	Frankenfood: GMOs in the fields and supermarket shelves Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 7: 1 April - 7 April	Lecture	Human genome projects, human gene 'therapies' and the ethics of a new eugenics Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 8: 8 April - 14 April	Lecture	Dolly follies: reproductive cloning, stem cell futures, and biological time Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 9: 15 April - 21 April	Topic	NO CLASS FRIDAY 19 APRIL- GOOD FRIDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
Week 10: 22 April - 28 April	Lecture	Life 2.0: synthetic biology Readings: As listed on Moodle site, via Leganto portal
	Tutorial	Discussion of the week's assigned readings with buzz group 'quiz'
Week 11: 29 April - 1 May	Homework	Study week: no class or tute. Work on your Research Essays!

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Required readings for each week will be indicated on the coures 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

Submission of Assessment Tasks

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.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

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

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- 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/

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