



School of English, Journalism  
& European Languages

---

## Unit Outline

HEJ703/704  
Major Research Project  
Semester 1 and 2, 2007  
<http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism/>

<b>Convenor:</b>	Ms Nicola Goc  Room: HUM 544 Phone: 6226 2473 Email: Nicola.Goc@utas.edu.au
<b>Consultation Hours:</b>	Wednesdays 4pm – 5pm  Thursdays 4pm – 5pm
<b>Unit Description:</b>	Students undertake substantial research on an approved subject leading to a major journalistic project or thesis.  SPECIAL NOTE: Taken over two sequential semesters on a part-time basis
<b>Unit Aims and Objectives:</b>	This unit will give students the opportunity to pursue a specific topic of interest while deepening their understanding of aspects of journalism.
<b>Learning Outcomes:</b>	At the end of this unit students will have developed skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Journalism research</li><li>• High-level scholarly and journalistic writing/production</li></ul>
<b>Required Texts:</b>	Individual reading lists to be provided by supervisor.

<b>When Taught:</b>	Students will work independently with consultation with supervisors, and should attend at least four three-hour research methodology seminars, combined with JMC honours students, held in weeks 2-6, Tuesday 1.10-4pm, in SOCSCI 581. Students are also encouraged to attend the School postgraduate seminars. Times to be advised.
<b>Assessment:</b>	Work on the 12,500-word (or equiv) major journalistic project, which will be completed in HEJ704 Major Research Project Part-time B.

## ASSESSMENT

There are two kinds of projects to choose from:

1. A piece/pieces of **researched print journalism**. This should be a long feature-style piece of journalism or a closely related series of features, based upon strong journalistic principles and capable of being published in an acknowledged forum. The student should make a statement about the forum within which the piece could be published (whether or not it is actually published eventually). This work should be about 10,000 words long. It **must** be accompanied by a 5000-word exegesis that shows scholarship around the topic of your work. You must read the literature pertinent to your topic and show how your piece of journalism fits within the context you have chosen. Your exegesis must be scholarly and make use of the MLA referencing system.
2. A **radio documentary** intended for an acknowledged forum (e.g. ABC's Background Briefing, or The Night Air). The length of the documentary will be dictated by the forum nominated. Regular rostered access to recording and editing facilities will be provided to undertake production work. This project **must** also be accompanied by a 5000-word exegesis that shows scholarship around the topic of your work. You must read the literature pertinent to your topic and show how your documentary fits within the context you have chosen. Your exegesis must be scholarly and make use of the MLA referencing system

**The project is worth 100% of your unit mark.**

### **Project assessment criteria**

All projects will assess all of the Learning Outcomes for this Unit and will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Evidence of efficient planning and management of a research project, incorporating original work, within clearly defined constraints of time, resources and (in the case of journalism projects) prospective identified publication/broadcast forum and audience.
2. Clearly outlined methods of collection of information, using suitable techniques (e.g. questionnaires, journalistic interviews, etc.).
3. Sound analysis and interpretation of data and information, within a clearly specified and defined analytic framework, together with a discussion of methodological considerations. Those undertaking the exegesis should include the requirements of this criterion in that part of their work.
4. Effective presentation of data and information using suitable written, numerical, recorded and/or illustrative techniques.
5. Well-developed and engaging discussion of the results and conclusions that arise from the investigation OR well-developed and engaging journalistic writing that draws upon research and scholarship to produce a substantial and readable feature or series of features that would be suitable for publication in an acknowledged forum OR professional broadcast quality radio storytelling.
6. High-quality presentation of the document in effective and grammatically correct English. The style guide provided must be adhered to in any journalistic piece. All scholarly work (i.e. the entire media research project or the exegesis accompanying journalistic work) must feature the MLA referencing system and a full bibliography.

## **The exegesis**

An exegesis is a scholarly essay that reveals the underlying concepts informing the primary work, in this case the piece of journalism. Here is one explanation of this kind of work that you might find useful:

[The exegesis] discusses origins, possible options, explains why certain paths were followed rather than others. It might set the work in a contemporary context, comparing it to that of other writers. The exegesis might explain the creative product's weaknesses, referring to the student's developmental stage. At the conceptual end the exegesis might offer a coherent theoretical appraisal, proving how the student has incorporated theory into practice. (Kroll, Jeri (1999) "Uneasy Bedfellows: Assessing the Creative Thesis and its Exegesis" TEXT Vol 3 No 2)

An exegesis should show evidence of broad reading - both analytical works around journalism studies and works specific to the topic being elucidated in the larger piece of writing. You should consult with your supervisor about the content of your own exegesis.

## **General information**

### **Staying in contact**

Following acceptance of your project abstract, students will be assigned a supervisor or supervisors for the duration of the project. It is very important to keep in contact with supervisor/s. Students will be required to attend some seminars during semester, and to have fortnightly contact throughout. Students should allow about one hour per fortnight, at an agreed time, to either meet face-to-face or have a telephone conversation with your supervisor. Regular e-mail contact is also encouraged.

### **Supervision**

The major project is an independent research essay or research-based journalism and students are solely responsible for researching and writing/recording/editing the piece. Supervisors will provide advice and feedback but it is the student's responsibility to fulfil the assignment requirements and to polish and proofread the work before submission. As this work is being undertaken at Masters level in a writing discipline, a very high standard of grammatical and journalistic correctness will be expected in all the written work. Students will need to be familiar with the requirements of the journalism style guide and should consult the suggested editing texts listed in the style guide to ensure that the work is of the highest standard.

### **Project submission**

Students must submit three copies of the project and each copy should be bound. The work should be referenced according to the School's standard format, the MLA referencing style. Information on the correct use of this form of referencing will be presented early in semester. The work should be typewritten and double-spaced. The project must be submitted in hard copy form, accompanied by a signed cover sheet acknowledging that the student has read and understood the University's plagiarism policy (reproduced at the end of this document). Under University policy, evidence of plagiarism will result in failure.

### **Marking**

The project will be assessed by three markers: the supervisor, another staff member from the School and an external marker. The external marker reads and marks all the projects. Comments from all the markers will be made available to students after results are released.

**Important note:** For those students enrolled in HEJ701 for Semester 1 2007, the project is due by 5pm on Friday 1 June, the last teaching day of Semester 1. This is regarded as an exam date, so any request for an extension will require the same level of documentation as an application for a deferred exam. It is crucial that you submit your project on this date, and you should pace your work throughout semester to ensure you can meet this deadline. **For those students enrolled in HEJ703/4, the part-time unit, the due date is Friday 19 October.** The same conditions regarding the due date apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit a signed cover sheet with every assignment. This includes a declaration that all material submitted is their own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others and that they have read the University statement on Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at [www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism](http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism) or in the Student Information Handbook. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office or the School website. **Assignments submitted without a signed cover sheet will not be marked.** Students who submit assignments without a signed cover sheet will be contacted once via their UTAS email address; in such instances the cover sheet must be completed within two weeks of the due date.

All assignments must be submitted in hard-copy (not by email) and placed in the essay box at the School office on or before 5pm on the due date. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments. Assignments submitted on time will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once on time assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted. All marked assignments will be returned in tutorials unless otherwise advised.

### Difficulties with your Studies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or one of the following Student Services staff as soon as possible:

- Learning Skills Adviser
- Disability Adviser
- Careers Adviser
- Student Counsellor

### University Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

**"Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>."

**The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.**

### Assignment Presentation

The Journalism, Media and Communications discipline uses MLA Style, which is characterized by in-text referencing and a list of works cited. See the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003). For a brief introduction, please go to <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism>. For journalistic writing, refer to the JMC Style Guide, also available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism>.

### Marking Scale

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.

### IT Support

Learning online—for online learning and Vista support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>  
Information Technology Services—for general IT Support (includes link to UTAS download website)  
<http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk/student/index.html>

Library Services—for information literacy support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>  
Help Desk (email [HelpDesk@utas.edu.au](mailto:HelpDesk@utas.edu.au) or 6226 1818, within University 1818)