

HEJ607 Topic in Journalism: Further Assessment Information

Assessment comprises an 8000-word research essay on an agreed topic, or a research essay/exegesis and journalistic writings totalling 8000 words on an agreed topic: 100%

Topic Supervision

In consultation with the unit coordinator, you must decide on a final topic for research no later than 19 March. Once we have found an appropriate supervisor for you, it is your responsibility to arrange meetings to discuss your research program.

Regular consultations with your supervisor will be necessary throughout the semester. The frequency and duration of consultations may vary according to the stage of your research, but fortnightly meetings are the norm over the course of the project. Ask your supervisor about his or her preferred mode of submission of material (ie, electronic or hard copy) and any other practical issues that might facilitate the process. If you need to see your supervisor outside your agreed meeting times, please make an appointment via telephone or email.

Your supervisor will provide guidance on the specific topic and on the process of structuring the work, but it is important to remember that Topic is an independent research project and it is your responsibility to follow your own research paths and to write and structure your work. Your supervisor will provide advice and critiques of your work but the responsibility for researching, writing and editing remains with you.

Don't forget that the Postgraduate Coursework Coordinator is also available for help with any matters not directly related to the research project.

Topic Submission

You must submit your work in hard copy form, with a signed cover sheet attached, to the School office in Hobart by 4pm on the due date. The word length is **8000** words (*excluding* references, but *including* all other material). You should meet this requirement but not exceed it by more than 800 words.

The project due date is regarded as an exam date. Any request for an extension must be submitted in advance of the due date and be accompanied by the same level of documentation as an application for a deferred exam.

Late projects will NOT be accepted so it is crucial that you submit the research project on the due date:

Semester 1 2008, **Friday 30 May**

Semester 2 2008, **Friday 17 October**

Topic Assessment Criteria

Your work will be assessed according to the following criteria:

For research essays, or journalistic and critical components:

1. Research skills

- Evidence of well-developed information retrieval skills
- Evidence of familiarity with previous and recent work in the field of inquiry

- Ability to identify relevant materials
- Ability to formulate a viable topic
- Ability to identify and apply relevant media research methodology
- 2. Clarity and strength of argument**
 - Ability to construct an engaging, persuasive argument
 - Capacity to develop and sustain the argument throughout the work
 - Ability to present an effective conclusion that draws the work together
- 3. Contribution to knowledge**
 - Evidence of independent thinking
 - Contribution to knowledge or understanding of a subject as appropriate to postgraduate coursework level
- 4. Structure and writing style**
 - Ability to structure your work in a clear and logical way
 - Ability to write lucidly
 - Accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling
- 5. Presentation and observation of writing conventions**
 - Quality of layout and general presentation
 - Correctness of referencing techniques

For journalistic component (if relevant):

- Evidence of ability to gather information from a range of journalistic sources, including interviews, direct observation and documents
- Evidence of knowledge of the broader context of your journalistic work, including previous stories on the topic
- Evidence of an understanding of journalistic practice, including news values, ethical and legal frameworks and specific journalistic genres, such as profiles and news features
- Ability to follow journalistic conventions in the use of description, anecdotes, introductions, conclusions, speech and style
- Presence of creative flair, including style and tone, within the boundaries of journalistic convention

For critical component (if relevant):

An exegesis is a critical explanation or interpretation of your 'creative' component - in this case your journalism. It should elaborate upon and contextualise your work, providing the opportunity for you to reflect upon your practice and that of others. However, it is important to remember that this is a scholarly piece of work, and not a simple 'diary' or anecdotal retelling of how your journalism was produced. In some cases, it will only obliquely refer to your own journalism, focusing instead on a related scholarly question or problem in journalism studies. The content, relationship and weighting between your creative and critical components need to be agreed upon by you and your supervisor.

As such, assessment will be based on points 1-5 above, but also on:

- Evidence of in-depth reflection on journalistic practice
- Evidence of an understanding of the context for your journalistic work

Topic Grades

HD 80-100

These projects will be highly accomplished in all areas and will be characterised by a consistently excellent standard. A result at the higher end of this scale indicates that the student is producing publishable work.

DN 70-79

Work in this range will be very competent, but with some inconsistencies in meeting at least one of the assessment criteria.

CR 60-69

Work in this range will be competent, but will fall significantly short in relation to one or more of the assessment criteria.

PP 50-59

These projects will provide evidence of a serious attempt at postgraduate work, but will have major inadequacies in relation to the assessment criteria.

NN 0-49

There can be a variety of fundamental problems behind a fail assessment. Projects may fail if they demonstrate inadequate research and little critical engagement with the topic or relevant scholarship. The writing may be unintelligible, or the work may be too short to develop the topic. Work in this range fails to meet the minimum standard appropriate for a postgraduate degree.