



The University of Sydney  
Department of History

History Honours 2010

<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/history/undergrad/honours.shtml>

Provisional Handbook, October 2009

## **Honours in History**

The honours year gives students a taste of history as a vocation. In seminar work, students grapple with problems in the theory and practice of history; the thesis gives you the experience of formulating a significant historical problem and writing a substantial piece of original research.

Students who take honours at the University of Sydney study in one of Australia's leading history departments. You work closely with dedicated teachers and active researchers whose interests span a wide variety of fields and methodological approaches.

The department is proud of its honours program, graduates of which have gone on to a rich variety of rewarding careers. For some people, the honours year is a critical step on the path to further study; some of your teachers will be University of Sydney honours graduates. For others, the fourth year is the culmination of formal education, an experience that helps you refine your skills in research, analysis and writing; extend your intellectual range; and develop personal and professional skills needed to see a major project through to completion.

### **Organization**

The program is overseen by the fourth-year honours coordinator. Dr Kirsten McKenzie is the honours coordinator in 2010. Her email address is [kirsten.mckenzie@usyd.edu.au](mailto:kirsten.mckenzie@usyd.edu.au) and her telephone number is 9351-6668.

The honours coordinator approves students' entry into the program, maintains student records, liaises with supervisors and seminar coordinators, and chairs the committee that oversees the marking of theses. Students having any difficulties with the program at any time should contact Kirsten.

### **The Program**

The fourth-year honours program in history consists of two seminars, which students take in the first semester, and a thesis of 15,000-20,000 words, which is due on Friday 1 October.

#### *The Seminars*

Students take two seminars. Each seminar requires approximately 5000 words of written work or its equivalent.

Descriptions of all these seminars can be found on pages 9 - 12 of this handbook.

## *The Thesis*

The culmination of the honours year is a thesis of 15,000-20,000 words. The thesis is an original piece of work based on research in primary sources and a sound command of the existing scholarship. Students will do the bulk of work on the thesis in the second semester, after their seminars are over. But it is vitally important to make an early start, and not just for reasons of time management: having the project simmer away in the back of your mind as you concentrate on your seminars will enrich the thesis immeasurably. Moreover, having a good idea of what your thesis is about by the beginning of the March semester will enable you to connect what you learn in your two seminars to your thesis work.

To ensure that the thesis does not get altogether left until the July semester, students will submit a brief statement on their thesis topic, together with an outline of the primary and secondary sources available and read so far, to the history honours coordinator in the middle of the first semester. The coordinator will meet with each student individually to discuss this prospectus and the student's progress so far. *Please see the back of this outline for details on submitting the prospectus and meeting with the coordinator.*

Students work out a thesis topic in consultation with a supervisor, whose responsibility it is to ensure that the topic is manageable—both in its scope for completion in the time available and in the availability of appropriate materials in Australia. The supervisor guides and advises the student as she or he undertakes research, helps the student refine the topic and the argument, and comments on drafts. Students and supervisors should meet regularly: every two to three weeks on average, more often at 'crunch' times, and also whenever problems crop up.

Each student will have a member of staff in the history department as his or her supervisor. Students may have associate supervisors where appropriate, and students doing joint honours in history and another discipline will have a second supervisor from another department.

The thesis is initially marked by the supervisor and by one other academic. Both examiners write reports, which the student sees. All the theses are then reviewed by a committee chaired by the honours coordinator. This committee ensures that the thesis results are comparable across different fields, and adjudicates cases where the two reports diverge in their assessment of the thesis in question: the committee reviews the reports and the thesis, and sometimes commissions a further report. Every thesis in contention for a medal is read by the entire committee.

## Due dates

Seminar papers: Monday 21 June

Thesis: Friday 1 October

## Suggested Thesis work schedule.

It is **vital** that you have a substantial proportion of work on the thesis done before the start of second semester. Drafting is an essential part of thesis writing. Your work will improve exponentially if your supervisor is able to comment on drafts. The following work schedule is suggested to ensure this. Discuss it with your supervisor and plan accordingly.

*Over summer:* Begin work, especially gathering primary sources. If you need material from interstate or overseas, you need to figure out where it is, and order it via interlibrary loan.

*By mid-late April:* drafts of introduction and first chapter completed.

*May-June 20ish:* work on seminar papers

*July 20:* draft of second chapter

*August 20:* draft of third chapter

*First week of September:* draft of entire thesis. Supervisor reads within one week, then can read the whole again or read necessary parts a second and even third time before due date early October.

## How do I find a Supervisor?

First think about the kind of topic you would like to write on. If you are stuck for ideas, you might find inspiration in *topics* you have covered in previous History units. Alternatively you might find inspiration in an *approach* discovered in a previous History unit that you want to apply to another historical context in your honours thesis.

Your topic can be quite vague at this point. Your supervisor can help you to refine it. Once you have some idea about your topic you should consult the list of possible supervisors in this guide. Make an appointment to discuss the topic and potential supervision with appropriate members of staff. When you apply to the Department, we **require** that you list the names of **at least two** members of staff whom you have consulted. Do not confine yourself to staff who have previously taught you. The department has a large number of research-intensive staff who are also available to act as supervisors. Teaching staff are allowed to supervise a maximum of four honours students. Research-intensive staff are exempt from this rule. Staff may not supervise whilst on leave. In exceptional circumstances, staff on leave for one semester may be able to organise a co-supervision arrangement.

## **Thesis Prospectus/Progress Report**

Honours students are required to submit a brief report on their theses by Wednesday 21 April. This report should include:

1. An explanation (a paragraph, or several paragraphs) of the problem your thesis explores—not just the general topic, but the more specific problem. What historical question or questions are you setting out to answer?
2. An account of the main primary sources you will be using for the thesis, in the form of either an annotated list or a descriptive paragraph or two.
3. An account of the principal historians and debates relevant to your research — again, in the form of either an annotated list or one or two descriptive paragraphs. What historical contexts are relevant; to which bodies of historical literature are you contributing?
4. A brief statement of the progress you have made so far, and any potential difficulties you can identify.

Make sure that you discuss the report with your supervisor and show them a draft of it before submitting it to Kirsten.

The purpose of this report is to get you to make sure that you have a viable conception of the thesis in place while you're still doing your seminars. It's also to help identify any complications with a thesis topic early on. I will schedule interviews with each of you to talk over the reports.

The report is due on Wednesday 21 April. You can slide a copy of the document under my door, or you can email it to me.

Only students whose theses are due in October need to submit a progress report: part-time students who will be completing their theses in 2011 do not have to write a report.

## Application Process

**There are two steps to the application process:**

### *1. Pre-enrolment with the Faculty of Arts*

Students pre-enrol for honours in person at the Faculty of Arts office. Use the '**Arts Pre-enrolment Form**' available on the web:

[http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/courses/undergraduate/apply\\_for\\_honours.shtml](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/courses/undergraduate/apply_for_honours.shtml)

Current University of Sydney students moving on to fourth-year honours in 2010 will have their eligibility for honours checked by the Faculty of Arts. All the applications that fulfil the published requirements for honours entry are forwarded to history department's honours coordinator. The faculty will also refer to the department applications from students who haven't completed all the prerequisites. In these cases, the department's honours coordinator has some discretion to allow those students into the honours year. Students who want to do honours in 2010 but have not fulfilled all the prerequisites should contact the honours coordinator as soon as possible. If a student's pre-enrolment is successful, that should be the end of their dealings with the faculty. The student will be sent an invoice with an interim library card in December/January, and another for the 2010 academic year in February.

In the first semester, students simply enrol in two 'shell' units, HSTY4011 and HSTY4012 (History Honours A and History Honours B). These codes bear no relation to the actual seminars taken. The faculty only needs to know that you're doing two 12-credit units of history honours; which two seminars you take is between you and the history department. (This is why the seminars have no unit codes.) In the second semester, you enrol for another two 'shell' units, HSTY4013 and HSTY4014 (History Honours C and History Honours D), which represent the thesis.

If you are transferring from another university, or returning to studying at the University of Sydney after more than a semester away, the procedure is different. Students in this situation need to lodge an Honours Conversion form with the faculty office. You can download the form at

[http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/courses/undergraduate/apply\\_for\\_honours.shtml](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/courses/undergraduate/apply_for_honours.shtml)

Use the '**Honours Conversion application form**'. Before going to the faculty office, transfer students need to get the history department's honours coordinator to approve and sign the form. Once the faculty office has the completed form, it will produce an enrolment form, which students complete in February 2008.

### *2. Registration with the History Department*

Students also need to register with the Department of History. Each student's program of seminars and thesis topic must be approved by the honours coordinator, who will sign the student's registration form. There is a copy of this form at the end of this handout. The completed form should be handed to the coordinator by 1 December 2009. It is possible to change your seminar choices before March next year, but we do need an indication of what courses you would prefer and the names of those staff with whom you have discussed the possibility of supervision.

### *Part-time and Mid-year Entry*

Only in exceptional circumstances will the department allow mid-year entry to the honours program. Students who have the two seminars under their belts at the end of the March semester can bring that experience to bear on the four or five months they have to devote solely to the thesis, which is due at the beginning of October. Because all the fourth-year-only seminars are in the March semester, mid-year students must work on the thesis in the July semester, and then take both seminars in the March semester of the following year. More generally, a student entering the program mid-year would have an honours experience that is very different from that of other honours students in history. Taking honours on a part-time basis also raises problems. Students contemplating part-time study or mid-year entry should talk to the coordinator as early as possible.

### **Marks**

The department and the Faculty of Arts regard the honours year as a single, unified program. Consequently, while honours students receive marks on the assignments they write in their seminars, they receive only one overall grade for honours on their academic transcript. At the first semester, students will receive an 'RINC' mark (indicating satisfactory performance) on their academic record. Their final, overall honours mark will be for the History Honours D course code (HSTY 4014).

The marking scale for honours is as follows:

Above 90%:	Eligible for medal
80%-100%:	First Class
75%-79%:	Second Class, Division One
70%-74%:	Second Class, Division Two
65%-69%:	Third Class
64% and below:	Honours not awarded

As you can see, honours coursework and theses are marked on a different scale from undergraduate work. Eighty percent, the threshold for first-class honours, is equivalent to a High Distinction at undergraduate level. A mark of 79 in fourth-year thus indicates a higher achievement than a 79 in a third-year course.

The following criteria for grades of award for the thesis may help to explain the raw marks above:

#### *First Class*

- 90+: Medal quality. Exceptional quality; outstanding academic promise; demonstrating independent thought throughout, a flair for the subject and research achievement of a kind that produces at least some element(s) of PhD or potentially publishable standard in serious academic fora.
- 87-89: Excellent first-class quality, showing a command of the field both broad and deep; independent intellectual argument and the presentation of original thought to a significant degree.
- 83-86: Good first-class quality with some evidence of intellectual independence and

some originality of thought.

- 80-82: Clear but bare first-class quality, comprising general soundness in subject area, breadth of knowledge in discipline, clear familiarity with and ability to use central methodology and theory of discipline, clear evidence of some independence of thought.

*Second Class, First Division*

- 75-79: Sound in subject area; average ability to use methodology and theory of discipline, evidence of careful and thorough discovery and use of appropriate sources; ability to present material clearly and succinctly with a well-thought out argument and to meet normal professional requirements.

*Second Class, Second Division*

- 70-74: Adequate understanding of subject area and methodology; honest and straightforward research into sources and presentation of material; may lack one or more of the qualities expected in a higher award.

*Third Class*

- 65-69: Adequate overall, but with significant defects in several of the qualities expected in a higher award.

### **The Thesis: Some Practicalities**

Theses are between 15,000 and 20,000 words in length. This figure includes appendices and discursive footnotes, but neither citations nor bibliography. No extensions of length will be given.

Two copies must be submitted to the SOPHI office by twelve noon on the designated date. They should be on A4 size paper, double spaced, with reasonable margins to allow for binding. Ensure the binding is secure: buckram binding, spiral and plastic comb binding and springback binders are all acceptable. Theses should be printed on a good-quality laser printer. The text should be in a standard serif font such as Times New Roman, Palatino or Book Antiqua, in 12 or 11 point. Use footnotes, not endnotes.

Footnotes and bibliography should be presented according to the history department's style guide, which is available at the URL below. The referencing style adopted by the department is that of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which is used by many publishers and journals, including *Australian Historical Studies*. The history department's style guide presents an epitome of the *Chicago Manual*; for unusual or complex citations, students may need to consult the *Chicago Manual* itself. It's huge and has an answer to nearly every footnoting and formatting question. There are copies of the fourteenth and fifteenth editions available in Fisher. Either is acceptable, but for obvious reasons, the fifteenth edition (2003) provides better guidance for citing electronic sources than the fourteenth, which was published in 1993. (Department guides to essay writing and presentation: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/history/undergrad/resources.shtml>.)

Students must also write a thesis abstract of 50-100 words and email it to the honours coordinator when they submit the thesis.

The Department also expects students to submit electronic copies of their theses so that they can be archived in the Sydney eScholarship Repository, which is run by the university library.

You would do well to read through a few theses, so you get a feel for the genre. While it's longer than essays you've written before, it is not a book-length project; the scope and structure are specific. Electronic versions of theses from the past few years are available at <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/1436>. You can also borrow theses from the SOPHI thesis library. Names and titles are listed at <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/history/undergrad/theses.shtml>. Ask your supervisor or Kirsten for recommendations.

Any problems with a thesis, at any stage of research or composition, should be taken up with the supervisor or with the coordinator.

### **Late Work**

Requests for extension of time for late work must be made in writing (email) to the honours coordinator at the earliest possible date and before the relevant submission dates. Extensions will be granted only for serious illness or misadventure. For theses, the bar for an extension is much higher than it is for undergraduate assessments. A thesis is a long-distance event, not a sprint, and an illness that prevents you from pulling all-nighters in the last week is highly unlikely to be grounds for an extension.

Late work should be handed in at the SOPHI office and may not be marked if submitted without an extension. A record will be kept of work which is late without extension and presented to the final history honours meeting, which will take notice of this in its final assessment and ranking of students.

### **Seminars for Honours Students in History in 2010**

All these units are offered in the first semester of 2010. See the history department web site early in 2010 for the seminar locations.

**Dr Lyn Olson**

***Place & Meaning in the Past***

Wednesday 10am - 12 noon

Although traditionally associated with time, History can also be rewardingly approached through place, and place-oriented History has its own methodology. The places of which the historical meaning was investigated the last time the seminar was taught were: Great Zimbabwe, Mohenjodaro, Greater Angkor, Mausoleum of Augustus/Ara Pacis, Temple Mount/Dome of the Rock, Winchester Cathedral, the Great Wall of China, the 'Mary Rose' shipwreck, Delhi, a slaveholding household in Baltimore, Berlin's Wilhelmstrasse/Reichstag, the World Trade Center and houses in Sydney's Rocks (field trip). Other suggestions are welcome. The seminar offers both geographical breadth and chronological depth to round out your historical experience.

**Dr Kate Fullagar**  
***Cross-Cultural Encounters***  
Monday 10am - 12 noon.

How have different cultures encountered one another in the past? Our focus will be on encounters between Europeans and various peoples of Asia, America, and Australasia from around 1500 to the present — though students are welcome to include research on other encounters. We will investigate the ways that modern scholars have approached historical encounter, including the anthropological, the literary, the ecological, and the subaltern. Some continuing questions will concern the degree to which cultural structures can be said to prescribe an encounter, the various ways in which resistance may be registered, the significance of motive on later moral assessments of encounter, and the perennial dilemma about who can speak for the ‘other’.

**Professor Warwick Anderson**  
***Science, Race & History***  
Tuesday 2 - 4pm

This seminar surveys new and classic studies of racial thought and practice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing on knowledge of human difference in Australasia, the Pacific, and Southeast Asia. We will examine the entanglements of racial thought with imperialism, decolonisation, and nationalism. Additionally, we explore the relations of science and other intellectual endeavours with whiteness, Aboriginality, and the ideals of modern citizenship. No previous knowledge of the history of science is assumed.

**Dr Kirsten McKenzie (with Professor Nigel Worden, University of Cape Town)**  
***Southern Crossings***  
Thursday 2 - 4pm

This course explores colonial history and its political impact on the present. Our case studies are the Cape Colony and Australia in the period c.1750-1850, areas where the historiography has taken great strides in recent years. We examine some of the most innovative examples in order to familiarise students with debates in the field and new approaches to research. Topics emphasise transnational themes and will include: historiographical challenges to national histories; indigenous encounters; cartographic, textual and visual representations of landscape and its inhabitants; debates over the nature of convict and slave labour; violence, masculinity and honour; scandal and reputation; liberalism, humanitarianism and transnational lobbies; the History Wars and recent public debates over the past in South Africa and Australia. No prior knowledge of South African or Australian history is assumed or required.

**Associate Professor Penny Russell**

***Gender and History***

Monday 3 - 5pm

Gender has been entangled in all the recent twists and turns of history. Historians have argued about the place of women and men in history, the historical politics of gender and sexuality and the gendered politics of history writing itself. Their arguments have been enriched by – and have significantly contributed to – developments in cultural history and postcolonial studies as well as emergent interests in the body, citizenship and the emotions. This unit takes Australian feminist history as a case study, showing what it has owed, and what it has contributed, to international trends. It will benefit all students who wish to understand how and why the question of gender imbues historical interpretation, and especially those who seek to deploy its analytic frameworks within their own research.

**Associate Professor Mark McKenna and Professor Peter Read**

***Biography***

Tuesday 10am - 12 noon

In this course we explore both the current theories and practitioners of biography. We ask: Who writes, and why? How close should a biographer be to the subject, in gender, age, interest and time. How have preferences changed historically as to what makes a good biography and what it should contain? Narrative or analysis? What are the relative merits of biographical methods practised in film, drama, dance and music? What kinds of sources do biographers draw upon? What are the merits of authorised as opposed to unauthorised biographers when writing about a contemporary subject. What degree of closeness to the subject is desirable? What is it like to be written about? What are the constraints? In the end - Is there a real personality to be written about at all, or does the subject only exist in a series of personas shown to different others? In the course of the semester we will meet some well-known biographers and maybe a biographee and try to unpack the biographical experience.

In the long essay, students will be free to study their own biographical interests

**Professor Ann Curthoys and Professor John Docker**

***The Sixties***

Wednesday 3 - 5pm

This unit will focus on ‘the sixties’ as a period of radical change, or at least a period in which many *sought* radical change. Though the focus will be on Australian experience, we will consider it in a broad international context, paying attention for example to the American and British Sixties, and the processes of decolonization in Africa and Asia. Students will have an opportunity to engage with some of the now extensive historiography on the Sixties, and consider the influence of postcolonial, transnational, social movement theory and cultural history approaches.

The course will focus on three closely inter-related themes: politics, race, and culture. Topics will be drawn from the following list, depending on student interest.

**Politics:** The new left in Australia and worldwide; the Vietnam War and the anti-war movement; anti-nuclear peace movement; and environmental campaigns (anti uranium mining; anti-pollution, etc.)

**Race:** American civil rights movement and its influence abroad; the end of the White Australia policy; Aboriginal politics and protest; and the anti-apartheid movement.

**Culture:** Sixties music, television, film, novels, pop art, and fashion; the counter culture; sexuality and the emergence of campaigns for gay rights; changing gender relations and the emergence at the end of the decade of Women's Liberation

**Academic Staff Research Fields and Availability in 2010**  
**Go to History Department website for contact details**

Professor Robert Aldrich

Modern European and colonial history, especially France; gay history

Professor Warwick H. Anderson

History of tropical medicine and international health; medical history and anthropology; biomedical sciences and racial thought; disease ecology

Professor Alison Bashford

History of medicine, history and gender, late modern European and British history  
*On leave all year; unable to supervise theses.*

Dr Saliha Belmessous

Early modern French history; colonial history (French, European, Atlantic); history of race; European-Indigenous relations

Dr Emma Christopher

Atlantic history; transatlantic slave trade; convict transportation

Dr Frances Clarke

Nineteenth century United States history, women's and gender history, memorialization of warfare  
*On leave semester one.*

Dr Clare Corbould

United States history, African American history, transnational history  
*On leave all year; unable to supervise theses.*

Dr James Curran

Australian political and diplomatic history  
*On leave semester two.*

Professor Helen Dunstan

Premodern Chinese history, economic thought and economic policy.

Dr Nicholas Eckstein

Early Modern European history, late medieval and renaissance Italy, popular religion,

urban history  
*On leave semester two.*

Associate Professor Andrew Fitzmaurice  
Early Modern European history, intellectual history, colonization and expansion

Dr Kate Fullagar  
British history; modern imperial history; early Atlantic history; Pacific history; cross-cultural history; visual cultures

Dr Chris Hilliard  
Modern British history, history and literature, New Zealand history

Dr Julia Horne  
Australian history, oral history, higher education

Associate Professor Judith Keene  
Twentieth century European History, film and history

Professor Iain McCalman  
Eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth British and European history; popular culture and low life; uses of media for history

Dr Cindy McCreery  
Modern European History, British and Irish History, maritime history, visual representations  
*On leave all year; unable to supervise.*

Dr Michael McDonnell  
History of the Atlantic World, Colonial and Revolutionary United States history, Native Americans  
*On leave semester two.*

Associate Professor Mark McKenna  
Australian history, particularly political and cultural history and Aboriginal history; biography

Dr Kirsten McKenzie  
Australian history, colonialism, gender history, comparative colonial history

Associate Professor Dirk Moses  
Modern European history, German history, the Holocaust, comparative genocide  
*On leave semester two.*

Dr Lyn Olson  
Medieval history, religious history

Dr Margaret Poulos  
Modern Greek history; World War Two; post-war movements for democratisation

Professor Cassandra Pybus  
Australian history; American history; Transatlantic history

Professor Peter Read  
Aboriginal Australia; place; oral history

Associate Professor Stephen Robertson  
Twentieth-century United States History, history of sexuality, legal history  
*On leave semester one.*

Associate Professor Penny Russell  
Australian history, women's history, gender history, colonialism and biography and autobiography

Professor Glenda Sluga  
Modern European History, nationalism and gender history; international history

Dr Julie Ann Smith  
Medieval history, religious history and women's history  
*On leave semester two.*

Dr Jonathan Walker  
Early modern Venice; spies; crime; historical fiction; photography and history; modernization

Professor Richard Waterhouse  
Australian history, cultural history and rural history

Mr Richard White  
Australian history; history of travel and tourism

Professor Shane White  
United States history; African American history; the history of New York City

Dr John Wong  
Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Chinese History, international relations and nationalism; Hong Kong

## **Due dates**

**Wednesday 21 April:** Thesis prospectus (see p. 5 of this guide) to Kirsten, either under her door, over the counter at the SOPHI office, or by email.

Please observe Dept Guidelines to written work, as in the Presentation Guide (wide margins, double spacing etc.:  
<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departs/history/undergrad/resources.shtml>).

**Week beginning 26 April:** Meetings with Kirsten to discuss thesis. Sign up on sheets by her door.

**Friday 21 June:** Seminar papers, due 4pm at the SOPHI office with a cover sheet.

**Monday 10 May:** Thesis due for mid-year entry students.

**Friday 1 October:** Thesis, noon, Common Room, celebratory drinks provided.

**Late October:** History IV Conference: an opportunity to present the findings and arguments of your thesis in a conference setting. Dinner to follow.

**31 October:** Australian Postgraduate Award applications due.

**Mid-November:** Examiners' meeting.

**Late November:** Results available online.

### History Honours Registration, 2010

This form should be completed and given to the honours co-ordinator, Kirsten McKenzie, by 1 December 2009. Either slip it under her door (815 Brennan) or ask the SOPHI staff to put it in her pigeonhole.

<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Other name(s)</b>	
<b>SID</b>	
<b>Usyd Email Address</b>	
<b>Address (current)</b>	
<b>Address (long term)</b>	
<b>Telephone(s)</b>	
<b>Status</b>	Full Time                  Part Time

**List three seminars in order of preference:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Provisional Thesis Topic:

I have discussed supervision of this topic with the following members of staff:  
(you are required to list *at least* two members of staff):

My preferred supervisor would be (you may list more than one member of staff):