MECO 3672 - Internship Project

A Guide to the MECO3672 Research ‘Cycle’

Edited by Steven Maras

All of the materials for MECO3672 are the by-product of the work of the numerous lecturers who have worked on this unit. Foundational work by Kate Crawford, elaborated upon by Steven Maras, Marc Brennan, Tim Dwyer, Joyce Nip, Teresa Rizzo and Joseph Brennan.

For distribution only to students enrolled in the unit MECO3672 Internship in the Media and Communications degree, University of Sydney.

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Preface

The units of study MECO3671 Media and Communications Internship and MECO3672 Internship Project form a compulsory core component of your 3rd/4th year. Together, they are designed to help you integrate the vocational aspects of the internship with the practical and theoretical aspects of the rest of the degree, as well as the high-level research skills expected of 4th year media and communications students. Both units have unit of study outlines that you should be familiar with, and which contain essential information.

MECO3672 is based around the production of a 4,000 word critical research essay drawn from issues encountered during and after the internship. A primary focus of MECO3672 is the 'research cycle', a defined sequence of seminars, explained in this document. Why is research important? Because it is a skills set often neglected at undergraduate level, but which is increasingly seen as desirable by employers, but more importantly essential to digital and information literacy in an age when an abundance of material is more accessible than ever before.

This unit is structured around a research cycle rather than a standard 12 week unit structure. This is because we want to take you through a process focused on your research, and the cycle provides an intensive way to do this. The Department feels there are benefits in working on a research project in a tight timeframe rather than spreading it out across 12 weeks. One of these benefits is sustained focus. Another is that it gets students accustomed to delivering a research output in a shorter time period, more akin to that you might find in media or communications company. A 6 week cycle does not mean you do half the work of a 12 week semester. That said, because MECO3672 is integrated with MECO3671 you already have a head start on your research project, namely in the form of your reflection journal and specifically the questions you proposed at the end of that journal. It is advisable you re-read your Reflection Journal before starting MECO3672 and think about it in light of this document and the reading from Jane Stokes. Following these steps you should be well prepared to commence and excel in MECO3672 Internship Project.
Week 1: ‘The Process of Translation’ - Designing a Research Project

Aim: Defining your object of study. Understanding what makes a great research question

What makes a great research question?

- The scope of the project must be realistic and achievable in the time frame. Choose a topic or area you have the resources (time, access to contacts, etc.) to explore.

- Something you are INTERESTED in. Play to your knowledge strengths and your internship experience.

- An applied outcome. Think about problems you can explore or solve in the workplace.

- Bringing existing analytic frameworks to bear on new problems, debates and developments

- Bringing new theoretical frameworks to bear on existing media and cultural practices.

- Intervening in a current debate. That might mean countering a dominant position with a minority voice, for example. Who is silenced by the discourse around a particular debate?

There are many sites on the web and textbooks that explore research and the formation of questions. But here our focus is on research in terms of a process of translation – you’re translating your experiences in the workplace into the identification of a research area. Which of your internship experiences stood out as problematic, interesting, complex, under-theorised or over-determined? If you feel that little useful information came from your internship (which is a rare case), what broader issues about the industry strike you as compelling or potentially transformative?

Words of advice

- don’t be afraid of matching your academic and personal interests. Think about what interests you and then inform yourself about what other people have done in this field. It also makes for more interesting research if you’re fascinated with a subject area.

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think back on your studies (look at old readers!)
think about current developments: one of the best ways to come up with new 
research that hasn’t been done to death already is to look for areas of change. 
For example:
  o technological: media technologies and their implications (social networking, 
    mobile phones, net, digital or IPTV, peer-to-peer networks etc.)
  o regulatory: how recent legislation or media charters may have an impact.
  o social: how new cultural phenomena are forming, including new workplace 
    practices.

There are two equally necessary processes involved in coming up with a great 
research question: ‘opening up’ and ‘narrowing down’. The aim is to strike a 
balance between capturing the creative energy generated at the beginning of a 
research project and the discipline of planning and argumentation.

**Opening Up**

  o Brainstorming – an easy way of encouraging new ideas and broadening out 
    the scope of existing ideas. Write down all the possible topics you can in ten 
    minutes. Assess what you’ve come up with: what works best? What appeals 
    most to you? What looks achievable within the word and time limit? Which is 
    the most targeted?
  o Connect ideas – what patterns emerge for you in the chaotic lists developed in 
    brainstorming.
  o Discuss your ideas – Aim towards posting the two clearest, most interesting 
    questions you have on the Week 1 discussion board. Look at others’ postings 
    and comment on them.
Narrowing Down

Once you have got the creative juices flowing, you then need to narrow your focus in order to nail down the parameters of a manageable project. There are a number of ‘devices’ you can use in order to do this that don’t necessarily quash the creative process.

- Cut the crap. Get rid of the stuff that is distracting you. It might be interesting and useful for a later project, but put it on the back burner for now. Isolate the ideas that really will form the focus of your research.
- Framing your argument. Like any work of art, your project will ‘work’ better (i.e. flow, read, convince) if you fit it within a frame. A frame effectively narrows down your argument, eliminating distracting questions, factors, interest groups etc., that are beyond the scope of this particular piece of research.

It doesn’t matter that you can’t solve all the problems of a particular media industry, fully overcome an ethical dilemma or cover all the implications regarding the reforms to media ownership legislation. You just need to make sure that you say – explicitly – what it is you CAN do.

So, how can you narrow your research interest down into a manageable project?

The key is your question which serves as a kind of ‘brief’. Incorporate directives into your question:

- ‘compare’
- ‘contrast’
- ‘critically discuss in reference to x theory/theorist’
- historical time frames
- specific case studies
- specific policy analysis

Think of Jane Stokes’ distinctions again:
- technological
- regulatory
- social, cultural, political

A Question of Politics

- Every framing device – while useful – will determine the particular perspectives you can include in your argument.
- Your project should be exploratory. You shouldn’t know what your conclusion will be before you start the research. If you do, this is an indication that you may need to start adjusting the phrasing of your question in order to raise the intellectual integrity of your project.

How can I support my argument?

Start thinking now about methodology.

- Does the phrasing of your research question require a particular methodological approach?
Think of the research paradigms: positivist/post-positivist, constructivist, Marxist, feminist, cultural studies/sociological, queer theory.

- Then think of the classic approaches in media studies: political economics, structuralist and poststructuralist textual analysis, ethnography, production analyses, sociological content analysis.

You may discover some newer approaches but consider whether they will be appropriate for your project: e.g. action research and ethnography require too long a time-frame for your inquiry.

- What methods of research will I use?

You may have encountered qualitative, interpretative methods – direct observation, biographical or historical documentation, interview, textual analysis (narrative, discourse, semiotic). This does not mean you cannot use other quantitative measures such as content analysis, but you will need to keep these simple and supportive of other evidence.

- Can you satisfy those requirements within your timeframe?
- The key is to put your research method, your research question and research object into an effective ‘alignment’.

Look at examples of research projects

- Go to media journals and read current research papers in your field.
- Look at other researcher projects online and post interesting URLs to the discussion board for us to share.

After class …a checklist for your research question

Consider questions such as:

- Does the question make sense?
- Is the problem compelling – address the ‘so what?’ factor
- Could you make the question more precise?
- Have you consulted existing literature and research design?
- Does your question build on previous research?
- Is the project feasible within the word limit and available time?
- Do you have access to the primary material?
- Have you located sufficient secondary sources?
- Have you discussed your question in seminars/online?

Summary for Week 1

Come along ready to discuss your internship. How do we translate experience into research material? Think about experiences and work practices: what stood out as problematic, interesting, complex, under-theorised, or over-determined? Mine your journal: what thematics/concerns/patterns emerged? Could you reflect on these more deeply, or in a different way?

Think about your object of analysis. Does it have a strong link to your internship experience. Gather and make notes on the case studies/interviews/materials that
you’ll use that were gained from your internship. Think about the questions at the end of your reflective journal. What object of analysis is described there? You may be invited to split into smaller groups of 3-4 to do this.

After class, polish up your research question/s. Send to Blackboard (‘Draft Research Questions’)

Take a preview of the Research Proposal which is due next week.
Week 2: The ‘Process of Consolidating’ your Research Question

**Aim:** *Your have posted your questions. You now need to move to the Proposal stage when you begin to plan out your essay and start to research your topic in the library and in the field.*

There are so many research sources available in the area of media and communications that the usual problem is choosing the best ones. The first issue to make sure you can get access to the materials you need for your question. If you’re using interviews, do you have easy access to the people you intend to interview? If you’re using case studies, do you have all the information that you’ll require? Then it’s time to consider your secondary sources – will you only be using the established literature in media and communications, or will you go further afield to include texts from cultural studies or philosophy or sociology? Narrow down your area, then go to the library and begin looking for relevant books and journal articles.

A few research questions may require more journal articles than books as resources, or vice versa, so in these cases you can change the formula. But there must be four academic research sources in total in your proposal (two books, two refereed articles). Of course, you’ll be using many more research sources in your essay (most bibliographies at this level would have 15-20 references). The four you choose to post will give everyone a better idea of the direction of your research.

And now for a quick word on **time:** *you’ll never have enough of it.* Everyone has competing demands for their time – other subjects, family and personal life, or work commitments. The trick is managing it. You need to invest serious amount of time to a major research project. There’s time designing your question, researching your area in the library and online, planning your essay, writing and then redrafting it, completing your bibliography, checking your references and the accuracy of your quotes. They’re impossible to fake the weekend before it’s due! So plan to work on your essay every day – even if it’s just for an hour or two. Try to integrate working on your research as part of your daily routine: it’s a tactic used by postgraduates and academics, and it’s worth applying to your research essay. It’s a more efficient approach than allocating a period of time before something is due, as unforeseen events or other commitments could get in the way. This is independent research, so you don’t have someone learning over your shoulder or checking up on you. That’s why seminars are so handy. They will keep you in touch with how you are going relative to other researchers, you can discuss any breakthroughs or problems, and it keeps you on track.

**Using the Library**

OK, it’s hardly new to you by fourth year. But it’s worth getting to know what the library has in your research area very early on in your schedule.

Talk to the librarians about relevant search terms for using the databases. There may be books you need to recall, which can take a week, or you may need something on inter-library loan. Academic journals are going to be an important source for you, so get to know what’s around. And check out the Media and Communications resources home page set up by the Library:

http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/media.html
Notes on journals and databases

- Only use the quick search by JOURNAL category in the library catalogue when searching for a specific journal title (e.g. Cultural Studies Review; Media International Australia).

- For a more general keyword search through a range of journals in your field, you will have to select one of the resources on the DATABASES & ELECTRONIC RESOURCES link on the library homepage. Electronic databases are search engines – usually focused on a particular research field or discipline – which allow you to search through thousands of journals at once. This is where you should be heading in the early stages of your research. You have three options. You can use the ‘CrossSearch’ function at http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/ Or you can choose your database by going to the A-Z index. This is great if you already know the name of the database you want to search (e.g. Expanded Academic Index – just click on ‘E’). But why don’t you try – initially – searching by subject at http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/ ? This might inform you of some databases that you don’t know about, or haven’t bothered using before.

- Identify a number of useful keywords before you start searching databases. Try these in different combinations – don’t give up if your first few attempts fail to provide you with useful sources. Check the database ‘help’ function to see whether it requires you to use ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘not’... Factiva does, for example.

- Have you found a useful book, but no journal articles yet? Mine the book’s bibliography for author names and useful journal articles. Try putting author names into database searches. You might find others using their work, or working in your field.

- Subject searches. Searching by subject is tricky. Subject terms are difficult to anticipate and can often be American – spelling and words we wouldn’t use in a particular context. That said, if you know a book, you can backtrack by finding the subject it is listed under and seeing what other books are listed under than subject heading.

- Think about what sort of sources are appropriate for your project. Some databases will ask whether you want to find full-text articles and/or refereed articles. I would advise you don’t select the full-text option in the early stages of your research. Even if the database can only retrieve an article title or abstract, there is a good chance the library carries the journal, either electronically or in hard copy.

- The ‘refereed article’ option is a bit trickier. When a scholar sends an article to a journal for publication, they will usually send the article out to two or three highly qualified experts in the field. This is a sort of ‘quality assurance’ strategy, lending greater credibility to the article. Nearly all academic journals use referees – you should be very wary if they don’t. Magazine and newspaper articles – even your higher brow quarterlies such as The New Yorker and Harpers – will not be refereed. Decide whether this is an important factor in your research. For a lot of you, you will be looking for a combination of refereed and non-refereed texts.
Useful Journals – a small sample

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<td>Local</td>
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<td>Quarterly Essay</td>
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<td>Cultural Studies Review</td>
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Useful Databases

- Expanded Academic Index
- APA-FT: Australian Public Affairs – Full Text (Contains APAIS)
- Informit Online (meta-database)
- Factiva
- ABI Inform (advertising, business, industry and management)
- ASSDA: Australian Social Science Data Archive
- Mediascan
- Communication and Mass Media Complete via Ebsco
- Sage e-journal collections via CSA.

Other Resources

- Individual subjects
- Trade unions
- Trade journals/newsletters
- Peak bodies and umbrella organisations
- Government policy and discussion papers
- Administrative and regulatory bodies
- Annual reports/corporate plans
- Book reviews
- Archives (e.g. media, government)
- Expert blogs
Theory and definitions
Be adventurous – try using new theoretical concepts as a way to examine your question, e.g. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s multitude and empire, Scott Lash’s informationisation, Brian Massumi’s theories of affect or processual media. Defining your terms is critical and will require some thought about the history of the concept and the differing perspectives from which it has been considered. If you do not define your key terms in your essay you can expect a reaction from your examiner.

Researching Media Institutions and the Culture Industries - methods
There’s a terrific chapter on this topic in How to Do Media and Cultural Studies by Stokes. She also talks you through content analysis and different types of textual analysis. She discusses archival research, focus groups, oral history interviewing and more. This is your supplementary textbook - access it and use it.

Interviews, surveys or focus groups?
Are you relying on interview data to support your argument? Now is the time to start setting up interviews for next week. Media workers lead busy lives and often are booked weeks in advance. You need to know now whether you will be able to access key informants and to get their informed consent for the interviews. If you do not have your interview lined up by the end of week two it is going to be very hard to conduct them and analyse them carefully.

Informed consent
As part of the University of Sydney’s commitment to ethical research procedures, all students conducting research with human subjects must secure informed permission from those subjects. In your case this means you will have to obtain informed consent for any interviews you conduct.

In the normal rough and tumble of media work this process is usually done informally and might involve identifying yourself, who you work for, the purpose of your interview, where the material will be published (if relevant). You must make sure that you are confident you have your source’s informed consent before conducting an interview. In this unit this will normally involve a formal participant agreement. You must make sure that you are confident you have your source’s informed consent before conducting an interview. Draw on the processes you have learnt in your previous units of study.

Summary for Week 2
This week’s seminar is about workshopping and honing your draft questions. You will have a number of questions to think about. Could it be more focused geographically? Does it involve historical analysis or is it all in the present time? Could it focus on a single case study, or does it need more? Is it based on a series of moments or just one? How does it connect with materials, case studies, interviews that you already possess or can obtain?

What methods are you going to use to collect your own original data about your object of study? Do you need to do interviews? A focus group? A content or textual analysis?

(*If you are going to interview or observe people at work, you must obtain their informed consent, using the Participant Information Letter and Consent Form)

All of this informs your Research Proposal document.
Week 3: The ‘Process of Engagement’: Structuring Your Argument

Aim: Post your proposal prior to your seminar. You will have posted two comments on other proposals. In this session we look at the methodological and conceptual issues raised by your proposal. We’ll be thinking about significance (what is at stake) and theoretical frameworks. After class you should be in a position to plan out your essay more carefully. Get stuck into writing at least the first half of your essay so that you are ready to present your draft next week.

Summary for Week 3

Come along to talk about your research proposal. How does the established literature shed light on your question? Are there counter-arguments that you can engage with? Who are the key thinkers in the field? Which books are useful and why? Remember that this is very focused research, so you can’t get across the entirety of a field, but you need to address some key current research. You are taking a position in this essay, and you must be able to justify it.

What problems might you strike in using your research methods? What is an ethical research process and how can you obtain informed consent from any human subjects you might encounter (see above)?

Afterwards, plan out your essay and submit a draft of the first half of your essay, following your plan and keeping a close eye on your chosen question. Are you answering it fully? Are your stanzas (see below) tying back directly to your question?
Week 4: The ‘Process of Completion’ Redrafting Your Essay

Aim: You will be working in small groups of 3-4 of fellow students hopefully working on similar areas to go through your draft in detail. Everyone will take turns working through their draft in order to get feedback on what works and what could be improved.

Aim: Where you should be at by now:
- first draft skeleton of your essay complete (or almost) + about 50% of writing
- introduction and literature review/background written
- all evidence attributed/cited
- paragraphs/subheadings established

What you need to do now:
- finish any analysis (thinking about theory/methods)
- redraft your essay
- reference your sources

Essay Planning

Are you a detailed planner, or someone who thinks-it-through-as-you-write? No matter which, given the length and depth of this project AND your tight deadline, you don’t have much ‘adventure time’. Planning is essential. Remember to leave sufficient time to redraft, and lots of time – good writing is all in the editing. Your first draft will never be your best representation of your research. It will require reworking, and in some cases, quite major restructuring.

You shouldn’t feel constrained by the need to plan and structure. A plan isn’t something that necessarily needs to remain fixed. You may find in the course of research that you need to adjust your plan, introducing a new section or switching them around to ensure your argument unfolds in a logical way.

As with the process of brainstorming, laying out the structure of your argument is a way of mapping your thoughts – you can see how they do or do not fit together. Perhaps you planned a killer section for your project that in fact needs saving for your Honours thesis next year, or an article that you will write over the summer for SMH or an industry/academic journal. Planning enhances the creative process – it doesn’t dampen it. It’s also beneficial for your general sanity.

Once you have an idea for structure you will need to implement it by effectively organising the key elements of your argument. This is where a ‘stanza’ approach becomes useful.

A ‘Stanza’ approach
- A stanza suggests ‘movement’, like we find in music and poetry. It allows us to consider not only the strength and design of our argument, but also issues of pace, tone, character and space.
- Stanza size – your mileage may vary: For a 4,000 word essay, you might plan for 400 words (approx..) for intro and conclusion, leaving eight 400-word
sections. Or, alternatively, six 500-word sections, with a 500-word intro and conclusion. That’s just as a guide – they will inevitably vary. Each section needs its own structure: introducing a point or theme, and addressing it, and completing your engagement with it. Breaking things down in this approach can make it much easier for you – you can check which points will be made in paragraphs, and monitor how your argument flows.

- Writing a research project is similar in other ways to crafting a story. We need some crucial information: context, characters, tension, resolution. These elements themselves should be suggesting stanzas to you.

**Some key points to keep in mind as you plan:**

1. How does each stanza help answer my research question?
2. Is my argument persuasive?
3. Have I adequately supported my claims?
4. Is the ‘SO WHAT?’ factor addressed in my intro?

- **Plan your stanzas first, then work out how much space they need.** You may find you do not have room to include everything you wanted to in the way you initially planned. This is a constant process of negotiation.

- **Integrate your stanza outline into your schedule.** You might need to write a stanza a day for a week. Isn’t this better than simply having an entire essay hanging over your head in a blur?

- **The intro dilemma – to do it first or last?** This time, try writing your introduction first. Once you have your stanza plan, your introduction should be suggested to you. You want to use the intro to introduce the reader to your project – the question you will explore, your motivation and the progression your argument will take. By writing your introduction first, the key points I outlined above will be etched into your mind. It will make the writing process so much faster and more focused. Of course, by the end you will need to come back and revise your introduction.

**The Re-Drafting Process**

As you go over your draft there are some key questions that you can ask:

**Introduction**

- Does this clearly state your research question/issues you’re investigating?
- Does it illuminate why your question is interesting/relevant/timely (the *so-what* factor)?
- Do you introduce your academic framework or theoretical perspective on the topic?
- Do you contextualise and explain the industry/sector of your organisation?
- Does it link to your internship experience (even as a ‘trigger’)
- Do you introduce your main characters/players?
- Do you contextualise your argument historically, politically or socially?
- Do you clearly indicate (sign-posting) the direction and structure of your argument?
**Background/lit review**
Do you further explain/locate your argument with: definitions, a guide to your theoretical lens, conflicting/contradictory proposals on the topic/problem.
If you are writing a descriptive/informative paper do you classify different examples of the phenomenon you are describing? Compare and contrast different industry practice examples?

**Method**
Restate your question in terms of how you approached the research design, the data collection and the analysis. Note any problems that arose and how other research could address these.

If you are writing a persuasive paper do you indicate the structure of your logic:
  - Inductive: infer a general principle from a group of examples
  - Deductive: infer a group of effects given a general principle

Multiple methods are often useful: e.g. content analysis + textual + industry or policy analysis.

**Findings/Key points – what did you discover?**
Have you broken down your argument into key points? Subheadings tend to be very useful.
Do you have strong evidence to back up each claim you make?
Have you considered the opposing arguments?
Have you addressed any flaws in the research design?

**Conclusion**
Sum up – without being repetitive:
  - Why does your reader need to understand your key points?
  - Why does your essay have relevance to the industry/world beyond?
  - Is it a call to action?
  - Is it part of a larger societal debate?
Do you have a quote or anecdote which serves these purposes?
Ensure that you have included all your sources in your reference list.

**Some tips**
There are a few helpful techniques for this stage of your research. Try talking through your structure with a friend. Explain to them what your argument is, and how you’ll be evidencing that argument. What are your findings? By talking them through your essay, you’ll get a sense of where the structure could be improved.

Think about whether certain points could be taken out:
  - Are you over-complicating matters?
  - Are you including irrelevant sub-arguments into your essay?
  - Does your listener look confused?

OR should new points be added in:
  - Are you being overly simplistic?
  - Are you lacking counterpoints?
Are you being repetitive to the point where your listener is slowly drifting into a doze? (These are all warning signs.)

Ideally, your argument should be easily conveyed in conversation, and yet be interesting and engaging to your listener. Are they learning things they didn’t already know? That’s a good sign that you’re using ideas and arguments that are innovative and compelling, particularly if your chosen audience is another MECO student.

**Week 4 Summary**

Come along prepared to discuss your draft essay and its structure. You should have at least 50% written and a skeleton of the remainder.

How are you structuring the argument? How are you introducing it? How are you using case studies/interviews/theory? What about your conclusion? Post a copy of your draft on Blackboard for feedback.

**The Importance of Editing**

As stated, good writing is all in the editing. Here are some useful steps in the redrafting process:

1. Print and read
2. Remodel at a structural level – have you answered the question?
3. Upgrade – value add/consolidate argument
4. Revise – work on flow at a paragraph level
5. Edit – word level

Don’t forget to proofread your work!

Other strategies include:
- Read aloud to yourself
- Read aloud to someone else
- Use Don DeLillo’s ‘paragraph to a page’ technique
  http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1887/the-art-of-fiction-no-135-don-delillo
- Keep your research question on hand: does each paragraph contribute to your question?
- Alternating time and space can change our perspective on our writing. Try reading over your work somewhere other than where you write – go to a library, a park, your favourite café.
- Once you have finished a first draft, leave it for a short while then come back and look over your previous work.

**Discussions and Forums**

The Blackboard site is designed to facilitate your progress through the MECO3671 Research Cycle. Upon enrolling in the unit, and being allocated a cycle, you ‘sign up’ manually. This gives you access to forums, a different one for each week of the cycle.

**The Role of Feedback in the Cycle**
A research cycle can be challenging. The description of the cycle above documents the various stages. It misses one aspect however which is that the cycle is also a feedback structure. Starting from the Reflective Journals in MECO3671 you are guided to relate your question to experience and also narrow it down. At times, students are asked to resubmit their journals. The process of posting a research question will also involve gaining feedback from your lecturer but also your peers, in order to gain a manageable topic. Feedback to your is given on a weekly basis during seminar hours in a group setting. In addition to the required weekly seminars, an additional period of time per group is set aside for this, on top of individual consultations you might arrange with the lecturer for one-on-one consultation. In the final week students may divide into smaller groups to discuss drafts etc. So the feedback loops are comprehensive.

Students in MECO3672 engage with different concepts, using different methods. Sometimes we will encourage you to use interviews whenever appropriate, which is a technique you have used in their news writing units. Others might do a simple content analysis. Where possible we tailor our feedback to your project and suggest specific journal articles that may be useful as models to follow. Additional readings can be found in the unit of study outline, each addressing research about media production, media production, etc. You may even seek advice from other members of the Department on specific specialized areas, but at the same time students are expected to do independent research on the concepts that they use.

In general terms, much of the feedback will be around your research question, and ensuring you have a project that is manageable and achievable. This aspect of research design is a highly prized skill in itself that will be explored again in MECO3609 Critical Practice in Media.

**Managing Your Work Over Six Weeks**

Six weeks isn’t a long time to develop, research, write and redraft a major essay. How do you approach it? This document has explained how the seminars and research cycle intersects guides you through to completion. But how this works in practice will be partly up to you and your learning style. Remember, people in seminars may be at different points in the seminar cycle, so as you talk us through your current stage of research, you may also be able to help others who are just beginning the cycle.