HONOURS STUDENT GUIDE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CASS)

A BRIEF GUIDE TO HONOURS IN PHILOSOPHY 2013

Note: The CASS Honours Student Guide 2013 is given to all students enrolled in Honours through CASS at induction. (A PDF is available on request from the Honours Convenor.) The document you are now reading is designed as a supplement to the CASS Honours Student Guide; in order to avoid repetition, it does not cover all topics covered in the guide (e.g., extensions or academic honesty).

What is the Honours in Philosophy Programme?
The Honours Program runs for one full academic year. It is designed for students who will pursue the intensive and specialised study of philosophy. Admission to the program requires that students have done 60 credit points of philosophy (10 courses) at distinction average.

General Description of Honours:
Philosophy IV (final honours) consists of an integrated course of study as prescribed by the Honours Convenor.

Students will take three courses in total. At least two of these will be Advanced courses (of which three will be offered each year - Advanced Continental Philosophy, Advanced Analytic Philosophy, and Advanced Ethical and Political Philosophy).

The third course, if not another advanced course, will be a regular upper level course or a reading group (the latter to be negotiated on an individual basis). The essays for these courses will be between 4,000-4,500 words in length and will be worth 15% each. The sub-thesis of between 12,000 to 15,000 words will be worth 55%. (Students writing on an approved topic in Logic will normally write a rather shorter thesis, the length to be approved by the Honours Convenor).

The Honours year is oriented towards preparing students for postgraduate work in philosophy. Students will be encouraged, both through coursework essays and the sub-thesis to refine their skills of writing and argumentation. They will also be encouraged to further develop their abilities to present ideas orally through seminar presentations. Students completing the Honours program will be conversant with a broad range of philosophical topics, and will have demonstrated the ability to engage in detail with some particular subfield.

The School of Philosophy sees the Honours year as the first phase in a process of preparing students for doing research in philosophy. For this reason, it encourages Honours students to contribute to the wider academic and social life of the School by interacting with different members of the School, at different stages in their degrees, careers or research projects. There are numerous opportunities for this within the School, e.g., the various reading groups, the regular weekly seminars and the occasional conferences and workshops.

Honours students interested in finding out about possibilities for an academic career in philosophy are encouraged to speak to the School’s job placement officer (Rachel Briggs in 2013).

Assessment
Assessment will be based on:
(i) a sub-thesis (12-15,000 words) on a chosen topic (55%); (ii) **three** essays submitted for the advanced courses/reading groups (4-4,500 words each) (15% each/45% in total).
The thesis is due for submission on a date set by the College of Arts and Sciences. The dates are set from year to year and are contained in the CASS Honours Student Guide. The date this year is: 28 October.

Submission dates for the three essays are set at the beginning of the semester by the Honours Convenor. This year's dates are: for 1st semester courses: 4 June; for 2nd semester courses 28 October.

Final Examiners’ Meeting

An examiners’ meeting is held at the end of each semester. All pieces of work submitted by Honours students during the semester are double-marked in advance of the examiners’ meeting and a final mark is agreed upon at the meeting.

Examiners for the thesis will be selected according to topic from the members of School of Philosophy and, where appropriate, externally. As a general rule the supervisor will not be an examiner.

For students completing their honours in the semester in which the meeting is held, a final overall mark and grade (for the entire honours year) is agreed upon.

The Honours Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honours I</td>
<td>80% +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours IIA</td>
<td>70% -79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours IIB</td>
<td>60% - 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours III</td>
<td>50% -59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who receive an Honours III will have the option of taking either an Honours III or a Pass Degree.

**Who’s Who**

**Honours Program Convenor:** The Honours Program Convenor is responsible for all students enrolled in the Honours year; their grade management and Honours administration. The Convenor should be your first point of call if you have any concerns or questions. In addition, the Convenor is responsible for advising all prospective Honours students who wish to consider an application to enroll in the Honours Program.

In 2013, the Honours Convenor is Brian Garrett: brian.garrett@anu.edu.au

**CASS Coursework Officer:** please refer to the CASS Honours Student Guide

**CASS Assistant Dean (Honours):** please refer to the CASS Honours Student Guide

**Other resources**

ANU offers a number of support services for students.

**The Academic Skills and Learning Centre** provides a range of support services to Honours students from individual consultations to large group workshops. Information can be found at [https://academicskills.anu.edu.au/](https://academicskills.anu.edu.au/)

**The Counselling Centre** can help with personal difficulties. The service can be contacted on 6125 2442 (ext. 52442) or [http://www.anu.edu.au/counsel/](http://www.anu.edu.au/counsel/)

The School of Philosophy has its own library, the Benjamin Library, which contains a wide selection of useful books on philosophy. It is to be found in the School of Philosophy itself, on the second floor of
Coombs Building and is open during office hours. It contains tables and chairs for individual study. All upper-level students and higher may work in the Benjamin Library.

The Schools of History and of Philosophy have a joint Honours Thesis Library, located in Room 7002, on the first floor of the Coombs Building, just down from the Joint Office of the Schools of History and of Philosophy. This contains copies of honours students’ theses from previous years. By looking at past theses, you can get a good idea of what is expected of you in your thesis. You can access this library by requesting a key from staff in the Joint Office. The staff in the Joint Office can provide access to the library. It is a read-in library only, i.e., you may not borrow any thesis.

There is a photocopier in Room 1002, just near Coombs Seminar Room A, between the Joint Office of the Schools of History and of Philosophy and the Honours Thesis library. You may use this photocopier free of charge for small copying jobs. A charge will be imposed for larger jobs. In order to use this photocopier you must see the staff in the Joint Office.

**Expectations and Thesis Standard**

The following guidelines are to assist students unfamiliar with what may be expected of an Honours thesis. It is highly recommended that you look at previous years’ theses held in the joint Honours Thesis library of the Schools of History and of Philosophy—see above.

(a) A thesis topic should be selected by the student and accepted for supervision by a member of staff before the beginning of the semester of the student’s fourth year. To this end, students will be required to attend a meeting with the Honours Convenor and/or other staff members in October of their third year. Students are strongly encouraged to begin considering possible Honours theses topics during their third year.

(b) Honours theses are treated as the work of students (i.e. “trainee” philosophers) and not as the work of experienced researchers. They are not judged by the same criteria as research Masters or Doctoral theses, or articles submitted to learned journals. They are seen as a student’s first real opportunity to develop a range of skills and analyse a body of knowledge and thus to demonstrate the potential to succeed at more advanced levels.

(c) You are expected to display familiarity with an area and competence in dealing with it, rather than being expected to make a "significant" contribution to the field.

(d) You should demonstrate ability to find and assess information and particularly to assess the relevance of arguments and methods for your specific problem. This involves a grasp of literature, but an exhaustive scouring of references in obscure journals or foreign languages is not expected.

(e) Information should be presented logically and lucidly, jargon should be avoided, but comprehension should be clearly demonstrated where jargon must be used.

(f) A high level of literacy is a reasonable expectation and you are required to present carefully proof-read, clean copies of theses for examiners to read. Where this is not done, the School may withhold grades pending corrections.

(g) Word limits are supposed to be upper limits not lower limits. Confine yourself within the limit, as excessive length may be penalised.

(h) Students are entitled to an anonymous copy of the examiners’ reports after assessment has been made and formal notice of results given.

**The Thesis**
There are no specific formatting requirements for the presentation of an honours thesis in philosophy. If, however, you should desire a format to follow, then please consult the CASS Honours Student Guide, which contains a recommended standard format for honours theses.

Sheets should be numbered consecutively.

Each submitted copy of the thesis is to include:
a title page with thesis title, the candidate’s name and the month and year of submission
a statement, to be placed at an appropriate place at the front of the thesis, that the thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Honours in Philosophy and that it is the writer’s own work
table of contents
appropriate and accurate footnotes
appendices if necessary
a bibliography
Some form of hard cover should be provided. A spring binder is acceptable.

Two copies of the thesis should be submitted. The School will retain one copy. The other will be at the disposal of the candidate on completion of examination.

The School of Philosophy requires no particular system of referencing (but all sources cited or used must be made clearly identifiable). If you desire a specific and widely-used system of references, download the Harvard System. Guidelines at http://w2.vu.edu.au/library/infolink/webref/styles/files/Harvard.pdf

Students are encouraged to learn and utilize Endnote – the referencing software which can be installed on students’ computers. The library makes installation disks available as well as conducting free workshops for beginners and intermediate users. See also http://anulib.anu.edu.au/help/faq/index.html?subjectID=23

As indicated above, the target word limit for an Honours thesis in philosophy is between 12,000 and 15,000 words, including footnotes but excluding appendices, bibliography, tables and figures. In-text references are included in the word count.

**In order to determine a suitable potential supervisor click on http://philrss.anu.edu.au/people/faculty for information on Staff Members and their research interests.**

Please note that staff can be contacted by email using the following template:

Firstname.Lastname@anu.edu.au