



THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**HONOURS STUDENT GUIDE
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CASS)
2008**

HONOURS IN SOCIOLOGY GUIDE

Note: CASS' 2008 Honours Student Guide is given to all students enrolled in Honours through CASS at induction. It can also be downloaded from:

<http://cass.anu.edu.au/sss/Honours.asp>

What is the Honours Program?

The Honours Program runs for one full academic year. It is designed for students who will pursue the intensive and specialised study of sociology. Admission to the program requires that students meet prerequisites, that is a Major in Sociology plus four additional later-year Sociology units. These ten points of sociology must contain:

- (i) at least one theory unit (SOCY2040 or SOCY3014) and
- (ii) at least one methods unit (one of SOCY2038 or SOCY2043).

General Format:

The honours program is made up of three parts:

- (a) Honours Theory Seminar 25%
- (b) Honours Research Seminar 25%
- (c) A sub-thesis 50%

The methods seminar is normally conducted in the 1st semester; and the theory seminar in the 2nd semester. The due date for submission in these courses is negotiated with the class.

The sub-thesis is not to exceed 20,000 words and is due for submission on a date set by the Faculty of Arts (see below). Students are expected to provide an abstract on a separate page (500 words).

Assessment

(a) The assessment procedures for the theory and methods seminars will be worked out in consultation with students, though each include a final essay of 5,000 to 6,000 words. Students are expected to provide an essay abstract on a separate page (300 to 500 words).

(b) Examination of the Sub-Thesis

(i) Each thesis will be independently examined by two people. A single examiner, external to Sociology, School of Social Sciences, will read and grade all theses. This will guarantee that there is at least one independent overview of the entire class. Another examiner, appropriate to the topic of the thesis, will be chosen from within the Graduate Program in Sociology in the ANU.

(ii) As a general rule the supervisor will not be an examiner.

(c) The Honours Grading System

Honours I — 80% +

Honours IIA — 70% - 79%

Honours IIB — 60% - 69%

Honours III — 50% - 59%

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

(d) Final Examiners' Meeting

The final overall grade allocated to each student is a matter to be determined at the final examiners' meeting. A copy of all Honours essays will be retained for the examiners' meeting in case anyone wishes to view them.

There is one grade awarded for the whole year. However, the mark for the Semester One course will be released to students in June. In addition, students will be given qualitative feedback on their work as the year progresses. Written comments on each essay and essay abstracts will be provided to all examiners in time for the examiners' meeting.

Critical dates

Friday 06 June 2008 **END OF SEMESTER ONE**

Friday 10 October 2008 **LAST DRAFTS TO SUPERVISORS.** You may make other arrangements with supervisors but the latter are not obligated to accept drafts after this point.

Tuesday 21 October 2008 **THESIS DUE**

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 2008, the Honours Convenor is Dr Rachel Bloul, ext. 55178,
Rachel.Bloul@anu.edu.au

CASS Coursework Officer: The CASS Coursework Officer in the Faculty of Arts Office can help students with degree enrolment administration. Students should consult Penny Swan Penny.Swan@anu.edu.au ext 55710 or Jenny Borscz Jenny.Borscz@anu.edu.au ext. 55708.

CASS Assistant Dean (Honours): The Assistant Dean (Honours) has the ultimate responsibility for all Honours matters. The AD will make decisions regarding issues like thesis extensions, applications to move to part-time or for program leave. These decisions may often be made in consultation with supervisors and the Honours Convenor. In 2008, the Assistant Dean (Honours) is Dr Christine Helliwell, ext 58226
Christine.Helliwell@anu.edu.au

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 <http://www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/honours/index.php>

The Counselling Centre can help with personal difficulties. The service can be contacted on ext. 52442 or <http://www.anu.edu.au/counsel/>

The Thesis Library is located in the School of Social Sciences and is a resource for Honours students to view and borrow Honours theses from past years.

Expectations of 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 School.

- (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 Coordinator 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 (ie "trainee" sociologists) 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. Pretentiousness and 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.

Supervisor–Student Relationship

This relationship involves obligations on the part of both parties. Your supervisor will assist you with advice, guidance and criticism and help you to achieve your personal academic goals. At the same time, your supervisor can only guide your efforts, and then only if you are receptive to his/her advice. You must take the responsibility for the final results of your work. So that you will know what to expect of your supervisor and what your supervisor will expect of you, the following indicates some of the responsibilities entailed in student/supervisor relations.

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

(a) Assist the student in selecting and defining the scope of a suitable thesis topic or problem; assist the student in devising a schedule for the year's thesis work.

(b) Guide the student in the selection and application of appropriate data collection and analysis procedures and advise on the solution of any difficulties which arise.

(c) Advise on matters of thesis content, organisation and writing, including the prompt provision of comments, written and oral, on drafts of portions of the thesis.

(d) Meet frequently with the student to discuss and evaluate each stage of the thesis project. Where there are joint supervisors, the student should arrange for joint meetings with both supervisors.

(e) Monitor student progress and advise the student when progress is unsatisfactory.

Responsibilities of the Student

- (a) To approach members of staff and ascertain their willingness to supervise a thesis on a mutually agreeable topic
- (b) Produce material in accordance with the schedule agreed on with the supervisor.
- (c) Consider advice seriously. If advice is not taken, the supervisor should be informed and given the reasons for the decision.
- (d) Consult regularly with the supervisor. Students should prepare in advance for consultations, by determining the help they require and the areas in which advice would be useful.
- (e) Fulfil all the requirements of the Honours course.

Students who encounter difficulties should first attempt to resolve them with their supervisor. If this does not produce satisfactory results, they should then consult the Honours Co-ordinator and then, if the matter remains unresolved, the Head of School.

Faculty Ethics Committee

Any research involving human subjects (including surveys and interviews) requires review by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee. This review procedure can require a great deal of preparation and clearance can take some time. Should a student wish to apply for ethics clearance in order to conduct interviews, this should be arranged as early as possible. Information regarding the Ethics Committee can be located at: <http://arts.anu.edu.au/intranet/committees/ethics/procedures.asp>

It is the student's responsibility to gain the necessary clearance.

The Thesis

The following guidelines have been adopted by Sociology for the presentation of Honours theses, and you are advised to follow them where possible:

- (a) The thesis should be typed double spaced on one side of A4 paper only.
- (b) The first page should indicate the title of the thesis, the candidate's name and the month and year of submission. It should also carry a statement indicating that the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Honours in Sociology and that it is the writer's own work.

- (c) Sheets should be numbered consecutively.
- (d) Margins: Left hand 40mm
Right hand 35mm
Top 30mm
Bottom 30mm
- (e) Duplicating by any method that gives a clear, clean copy may be used.
- (f) Each copy is to include:
- a title page (see point b)
 - table of contents
 - an abstract
 - appropriate and accurate footnotes
 - appendices if necessary
 - a bibliography
- (g) Some form of hard cover should be provided and to this end a spring binder is acceptable.
- (h) 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.

Extension of Time to Submit Essays, Etc

At a Sociology Departmental Committee Meeting held on 22 November 1982 the following policy was adopted. The policy, set out below, will apply to all written work that is required for assessment in any BA or BA(Hons) course, including fourth year Honours, other than designated examinations, in Sociology, School of Sciences.

- (a) Written work submitted after its designated submission date (without an extension) will have marks deducted at the rate of 2% of the total possible mark per day.
- (b) Written work submitted fourteen calendar days after the designated submission date (or extension date) will be given a zero mark.
- (c) An extension of time for the submission of written work may be sought from the lecturer/tutor-in-charge in the event of unforeseen circumstances preventing timely submission of work. (The appropriate Extension request forms are available from the drawers outside Departmental Office COP2147).
- (d) Extensions of time for periods greater than seven days will require a medical certificate.

- (e) Students having difficulty meeting deadlines should consult their lecturer/tutor.
- (f) Only under exceptional circumstances will extensions be granted for the sub-thesis. Extensions on the thesis should be regarded as applications for Special Examination and should be made through the Dean's Office with supporting documentation.

Plagiarism and Associated Problems

(i) The Faculty of Arts is concerned to establish the principle that university students should develop the ability to think independently and to express themselves clearly and cogently in their own words. This principle is expressed in the Faculty of Arts section of the Faculty Handbook under "Assessment".

"Students are expected to be able to express themselves and to sustain an argument in their own words, and may not submit written work containing improperly acknowledged transcription or excessive quotation of the work of others. The Communications and Study Skills Unit is available to help students who have problems with expression".

The Faculty of Arts considers plagiarism a most serious academic offence, and severe penalties will be imposed on anyone found guilty of it. The Faculty recognizes, however, that students sometimes offend in this way inadvertently, through inexperience or failure to understand the aims and methods of university study. The attention of all students is therefore directed to the following explanation. Apart from the question of deliberate deceit, the practices described here often impede sound thinking: learning to avoid them is part of a training in the skills and methods of good scholarship.

Plagiarism can be defined in general as "the appropriation, by copying, summarizing or paraphrasing, of another's ideas or argument, without acknowledgment'. There are two elements, the act of appropriation either, in the most naïve instances, amounting to direct copying or, in the most clever and unscrupulous instances, to intelligent editing used to conceal origins, and the intent to deceive, the deliberateness of which was hard to determine.

The most direct form of plagiarism is copying: the reproduction of another author's expressions, word for word, without acknowledgment. Direct quotation is sometimes necessary, but it is only permissible when indicated by quotation marks or indentation, and acknowledged by exact references. It is not sufficient to make a general attribution or to give references selectively for only some but not all the passages reproduced.

References should be to the work in which the material was actually found: lifting references or footnotes referring to a third work (as if it had been consulted when in fact it has not) is not acceptable. The only exceptions to the rule that all sources must be acknowledged are such things as items of common knowledge or irreplaceable expressions in wide use.

Paraphrasing the work of another author means rendering that author's meaning in different words. This too is permissible only when full and exact references are given. A common form of plagiarism combines copying with paraphrase, repeating some words from the original text and substituting different words for others. The more fully the wording is changed, the more fully the copyist may have understood and assimilated the material, but it is still necessary to acknowledge the source of the ideas, as well as to acknowledge any direct quotations as such. The inclusion within a paraphrase or summary of any portion of the wording of the original text requires reference. Very loose paraphrase may be difficult to describe as plagiarism, but insofar as the work is derivative the need to cite its source remains. This sort of grey area, where the extent of indebtedness is hard to determine, is especially troublesome, and the onus is on the student to ensure that all debts are properly indicated.

Neither quoting nor paraphrasing another author's work, even with full acknowledgements, can be an adequate alternative to the student's own thought. Quotation and paraphrase are pointless unless the material is offered as evidence or as the basis of further analysis.

Summarising the argument of another author (for example, by fastening on the main points and tracing their connections) is a legitimate and sometimes indispensable scholarly activity, provided it is made clear that this is being done. To summarise another person's arguments, ideas or information as though they were one's own, however, is not acceptable. It is another form of plagiarism.

Cobbling is a term sometimes used to describe the practice of stringing together ideas and expressions from several different texts or authors. This may produce an argument different from those in any of the sources, but it remains necessary to acknowledge each particular debt by exact references. Even where due acknowledgements are made, essays cobbled together in this way are seldom of much value.

Reproduction of material from secondary sources should be sparing, and for a purpose which is clearly relevant to the argument being conducted: for example, as an economical way of providing background, to show the current state of discussion of the subject, or to introduce arguments or opinions which the essay proposes to amplify or dispute.

(ii) Where there is evidence of plagiarism or other malpractice, examiners will deal with it in their assessment of the work submitted. It is Faculty's view that the piece of work in which plagiarism occurs should be failed, and that automatic failure in the unit may well be appropriate. The Head of Department will be informed and will call the student in for counselling and warning (or will write if the student has left Canberra). The Dean and Sub-Deans will be informed.

(iii) The Dean will consider the particular circumstances to decide whether formal action should be taken by way of the issue of notice under Rule 4 of the Misconduct in Examination Rules. Such action is likely where, in the opinion of the Dean, the offence is

aggravated by repetition or by indications of a systematic attempt to deceive the examiners.

(iv) If a student disputes action taken to fail work or to record a failure in a unit in terms of Section 3, then the Dean will, on written request by the student, issue a notice under Rule 4 of the Misconduct in Examination Rules, thus instituting an inquiry pursuant to those Rules.

(v) These rules define misconduct to include cheating, plagiarism, improper use of another person's work, and submission for assessment of any work previously submitted for assessment. A range of penalties is provided for, including suspension or termination of a student's course of study. Referral to the University's Discipline Committee is also provided for. Under the Discipline Rules a student may be excluded from the University. There is provision for appeals.

A copy of all rules, including the "Misconduct in Examination" rules, may be consulted in the Faculty Office.

Recommended Reading

Becker, H. (1986) *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book or Article*, Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Becker is a sociologist and discusses writing within a sociological perspective. This book has been ordered into the bookshop.

Lewins, F. (1993) *Writing a Thesis: A Guide to its Nature and Organization* (4th ed.) Canberra, ANUTECH.

Lewins discusses issues in the methodology of the social sciences from a sociological perspective.

Current Research Interests of Members of Staff Available for Supervision

Rachel Bloul

- Transnational migration and identity politics
- Racial & Ethnic Studies
- Genocide Studies
- Gender Studies (esp. men's studies)

- Islam & Globalisation

Alastair Greig

- Industrial and organisational sociology;
- Urban Sociology;
- Globalisation

Andrew Hopkins

- Occupational health and safety

Al Kløvdahl

- Social networks (ie. personal networks and social support; community and social networks; social networks and disease)
- Computers and society/ information technology revolution and society
- Urban society (sociological aspects; problems in the development of modern urban society)
- Environment and society (sociological dimensions of the interaction of human society and its natural environment; environmental problems as social or sociological problems)

Joanna Sikora

- economic attitudes and social inequality in comparative perspective,
- survey research methodology.

Kevin White

- Health, illness and social structure
- Qualitative methods: theory and practice
- Historical sociology of health
- Sociology of professions

