

Department of Gender and Cultural Studies Postgraduate Research Guide

Welcome to the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney. The department has a diverse and dynamic postgraduate research community, including some of the most promising future scholars in Gender and Cultural Studies. This intellectual community is sustained through a range of activities, and this guide provides a basic orientation to these. We are particularly proud of our postgraduate research students, and look forward to your participation in the life of the department!

This guide provides information on the activities of the department and the resources available to postgraduate research students. It is divided into six sections

Forums

Outlines the main departmental activities, venues and requirements for research students

People

Outlines the main staff and student roles you will come into contact with

Research resources

Outlines workspace availability, research funding, and other resources

Thesis: Planning and Completing

Outlines key milestones and administrative requirements that you should know about

Teaching

Outlines teaching opportunities for research students interested in tutoring or teaching on Gender and Cultural Studies courses

Other resources

Other resources and links you may find useful

The Department of Gender and Cultural Studies is part of the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, in the Faculty of Arts. This guide is intended as a supplement to the information provided by the Faculty of Arts for postgraduate research students http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/settling_in.shtml and the Arts Faculty Postgraduate Handbook http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/courseinfo/postgraduate_handbook.shtml

Both these resources contain important information on postgraduate study, and we encourage you to familiarize yourself with their contents.

In addition, the Sydney University Postgraduate Research Association website has many useful resources on postgraduate life and services available to research students from a peer perspective <http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/>

Forums

The Department of Gender and Cultural Studies hosts a number of different forums where members meet, discuss and review each others' work, and develop ideas.

Work-in-Progress Seminars

Work in Progress seminars are held fortnightly during term time, and are chaired by a member of the academic staff. At each seminar, two postgraduate research students present on some aspect of their current work. Seminars are intended to be useful for the scholars presenting – thus, you may present on any aspect of your current work where you would like feedback from your peers. After the presentations, there will be ample time for discussion, and postgraduates are encouraged to participate in a constructive and respectful manner.

Students are encouraged to use these seminars in whatever way is useful for them – presentations can be provisional (i.e. work in progress) or more complete presentations of your work. Seminars are held fortnightly on Friday afternoons and are announced on the departmental mail list.

All postgraduate research students are required to present their work at the Work in Progress seminar once a year. You are also required to attend all work in progress seminars. The seminars are regarded as a central part of the department's postgraduate life - a primary point of contact with your peers, and the basis of our postgraduate intellectual community. Attendance and participation is reviewed in your annual review.

After the seminar, students and staff usually go for drinks at the Manning Bar, which is a great chance to get to know your colleagues and discuss those ideas you didn't get a chance to raise during the seminar discussion ...or simply to discuss plans for the weekend!

Departmental seminars

On alternate Friday afternoons during the term, the department holds its seminar series, featuring invited speakers from Australia and overseas. Postgraduate research students are required to attend these seminars, which often feature the work of leading international and national scholars in gender and cultural studies, and thus represent an excellent opportunity for you to get to know your field.

Details of upcoming seminars and speakers are announced on the departmental mail list. Drinks are held afterwards at Manning Bar.

Department Mail List

The main communication mechanism for the department is the departmental mail list. Information on upcoming events and other announcements are frequently posted on this list. You can join the list by sending an email to the Chair of the department. Please make sure your email contact details are kept up to date for this list, as it is the primary means of departmental communication.

Research students are welcome to post to the list and can do so by sending their email to gcs@mail.usyd.edu.au

Department Website

Postgraduate Research students can showcase their research on the department website. Students should email Julie Ann Robson (julie-ann.robson@usyd.edu.au) with an up-to-date paragraph describing their research interests and project, as well as details of any relevant papers, publications, and university activities.

Postgraduate Annual Reviews

All postgraduate research students are required to attend a Postgraduate Review meeting once a year. The purpose of the Annual Review is to provide a venue to discuss your progress and your plans for the next year, including your supervision relationship and any difficulties that may be affecting your progress. The review is intended to be constructive for students and a source of support. We want to help you finish your thesis to the best of your abilities!

Annual Reviews are conducted by a committee comprised of academic staff members of the department, chaired by the Postgraduate Research Coordinator. Your supervisor(s) may be in attendance, but there will also be a period during the review where you will have an opportunity to discuss your work in the absence of your supervisor(s). Prior to the review, you must complete a form which will be sent to you by the Faculty. On the form, you are asked to review your progress over the past year and outline your plans for the next year. The form is then forwarded to your supervisor for them to complete their section. Once the committee has met with you and commented on your progress, you will be given a copy of the form to sign, before it is returned to the Faculty Office.

It is important to detail any circumstances which have affected your progress on your Annual Review form, including periods of illness or other relevant circumstances. If an extension is required towards the end of your candidature, the form may be used as an official record with which to claim for special consideration.

At the Annual Review, your progress is deemed satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If your progress is deemed unsatisfactory, you may be put on probation, required to meet particular goals, or otherwise show cause as to why your candidature should be continued.

Publications

Each year, Australian universities submit information on the research publications produced by their staff and students in the preceding year to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). This process is called the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC).

If you produce a book, book chapter, journal article or published conference paper it is important to provide details to the Postgraduate Research Coordinator at the time of publication so that it may be included as part of the HERDC submission.. Publications can even be counted when you are no longer a student at the University of Sydney, as long as the publication is the product of the research you undertook as a postgraduate student at this university.

People

The Department of Gender and Cultural Studies has 12 academic staff members and over 30 postgraduate research students. Here are some of the key roles associated with postgraduate research:

Supervision

As a postgraduate student, your main contact in the department is your supervisor. All students are also assigned an Associate Supervisor, who provides an additional source of advice and support.

You should meet with your primary supervisor regularly (at least once a month) about your progress and the work you are doing. Your supervisor should provide feedback that is timely, constructive and positive; providing advice on the content, style, presentation and production of your thesis, including resources available for the research.

You should discuss with your supervisor how progress will be monitored (written work, seminars, annual progress reviews, etc.) and work with them to develop a work program for the entire candidature and specifically for the year.

Your supervisor is there to help. If you are having problems, the sooner they know about it the sooner they can help you overcome them. Seeking feedback from your supervisor can be reassuring and help you to have a realistic appraisal of your progress.

Further information on the supervisory relationship can be found in the SUPRA guide at <http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/>

Postgraduate Research Coordinator

This person coordinates the administrative and internal aspects of postgraduate research in the department. It is who you need to see, in addition to your supervisor, to sign off on forms requesting alterations to your candidature, intention to submit, etc. The postgraduate research coordinator also plays a 'pastoral' role for postgraduate students, and provides another source of information and academic support in addition to your supervisor. You are welcome to contact the coordinator to discuss any aspects of your progress or candidature, or if you have questions of an administrative nature.

Sometimes it is useful to discuss how things are going with a staff member who is not your supervisor, especially if you are having any difficulties. A thesis is a long project, and even the best supervision relationship encounters obstacles. It is often helpful to discuss such problems with another member of the department, and the postgraduate coordinator can help you find ways to address any problems professionally and confidentially. The Postgraduate Research Coordinator is your first port of call if any such issues arise. If the postgraduate coordinator is your supervisor, you should speak with the Chair of the department. If the issue remains unresolved, you may wish to meet with the Head of School.

Please also remember to keep the PG Research Coordinator informed of any changes to your enrolment or contact details. It's important for the department to be able to contact you over the course of your candidature.

Kane Race (Postgraduate Research Coordinator)

Ph: 9351 3662 E: kane.race@usyd.edu.au

Fiona Probyn-Rapsey (Chair of Department)

Ph: 9036 5342 E: fiona.probyn-rapsey@usyd.edu.au

Postgraduate Research Student Representative

Each year, postgraduate research students elect a student representative. The PG research representative advocates on behalf of postgraduate research students' interests and concerns at academic staff meetings and may raise related issues with the Postgraduate Research Coordinator and/or the Chair of the department. The PG representative should be informed of any issues or ideas that you would like to see advanced at a departmental level.

Faculty of Arts Office – Postgraduate Section

Questions of an administrative nature – i.e. those to do with your enrolment and Faculty policy – should be directed to

Mark Try (Postgraduate Manager) 9351 6675 Mark.Try@usyd.edu.au

Joshua Boxx (PG Research Officer) 9351 4807 Joshua.Boxx@usyd.edu.au

Resources

A range of resources for postgraduate research are available from the Faculty of Arts.

Workspace

Desk space for postgraduate students is available through the Postgraduate Arts Research Centres

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/pgarc.shtml

PGARC1

Any student enrolled in a postgraduate research degree in the Faculty of Arts is eligible to apply for access to PG ARC 1. This facility is located on Level 4 of the Woolley Building. It provides 65 non-dedicated carrels, 120 dedicated secure lockers, and access to a photocopier and printer.

Each of the 65 non-dedicated carrels is fitted with access points to the University computing network, including email and internet. You may wish to bring your laptop computer if you have one.

Students in PG ARC 1 also have access to the staff kitchen (with fridge, microwave, coffee and tea making facilities), and the staff common room, a place where students can talk and socialise in a casual setting.

Entry to PG ARC 1 is gained by a CARDAX card. This card allows entry 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

PGARC2 – The Completion Space

PhD students in the final year of writing their thesis are eligible to apply for a place in PG ARC 2. This newly refurbished, air-conditioned centre is located in the western wing of the Main Quadrangle. PG ARC 2 provides 28 dedicated work-stations each with shelves and generous space for papers, books, etc, together with a file drawer with a lockable drawer.

Each student has their own desk, however, if your routine is such that you don't need to use it full-time, you may be offered a desk to be shared with another student (e.g. two students might use their desk on different days, or at different times of day).

There are also kitchen and WC facilities, a telephone and a quiet sitting area.

Access is by CARDAX swipe-card, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You can pick up an application form for PG ARC 1 or PG ARC 2 from the Faculty of Arts office in the Main Quadrangle, or download the forms from http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/forms.shtml

Research funds

Postgraduate Research Support Scheme

The main source of research funds for postgraduate students is the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme, which is administered by the Faculty of Arts.

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/ro/training/prss.shtml>

Applications are called for once a year, and are announced over the departmental mail list. Funding can be awarded for future costs, or retrospectively for that year (upon the provision of receipts). Postgraduate research students can apply for funding each year - up to a maximum of three successful applications for PhD students and one successful application for MPhil students.

This scheme is competitive, and has regard to satisfactory progress, track record, and category of funds being applied for. Your application should therefore be supported by a statement of how the expenses relate to the aims of your research, as well as details of any publications or achievements over your candidature.

Applications may be made in relation to the following categories:

1. Conference expenses, national or international, including travel, where the applicant is presenting a paper.
2. Use of specialist services or facilities essential to research
3. Field expenses
4. Purchase of specialist books, journals, or software which are not carried or able to be ordered from the library.
5. Thesis production/binding expenses (not available to scholarship holders where that scholarship provides for these expenses)
6. Computers or other equipment essential to the student's research and not otherwise funded by the university.

Awards are for a minimum of \$200 and a maximum of \$1200 (but up to \$3000 for conferences in Europe, Africa, North and South America; and up to \$2000 for other overseas conferences).

Please note, there is often a shortfall between applications received and funds available, in which case funds are prioritized in the above order.

In these circumstances, incomplete applications, including those without the relevant signatures, are ruled ineligible.

So, as you can see, PRSS funding is competitive and it is worth taking the time to work with your supervisor to make sure that requests are fully justified on the application in relation to the aims of your research, and that the form is properly filled in. Secondly, the committee does seem to have regard to your publications and papers when ranking applications, so if you have these (either published, in press, or in preparation), make sure they appear on the application. Finally, it is worth remembering that the amount received from the scheme will often be less than the amount requested.

PhD Research Travel Grant Scheme

This scheme is for full time PhD candidates only and covers expenses incurred for research undertaken outside Sydney. Applicants must be undertaking essential research during the specified period that cannot be completed without significant travel outside Sydney. Applications usually close in early September and will be announced over the departmental mail list.

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/scholarships.shtml

GCS Bursaries

At the end of each year, Honours, Masters and PhD students will be invited to apply for a GCS bursary. In 2008/9 there were 4 worth up to \$500 each for travel to conferences or for other costs towards improving your research experience in this department. You may either produce receipts for expenses incurred in semester 2 or provide a detailed budget for expenses in the upcoming semester 1 (although you will then need to provide receipts to claim the money). While this is still a very modest amount of money we hope that it will make some further activities available to our students. You may use this bursary to supplement another grant, but only if you can demonstrate that any other funds obtained were inadequate to your expenses. The Department give preference, in order, to Honours or Masters by coursework students (because they do not have access to other grants to aid their research), to international students (who have more limited access to local support networks), and to Masters by research students (who are often disadvantaged in local competitive research grants). You may apply if you have been successful before, but we may consider that in reaching a decision. You will be advised by email when applications are open (usually Oct/Nov) and you should apply to the Chair of Department. Your email should provide details about the activities you are claiming for, necessary costs, and other funds available for these activities.

The Library

The university has a number of research libraries which students have access to, and departments are allocated a certain amount each year to make suggestions for book, journal, and audiovisual purchases. The department has a library officer who is happy to hear your suggestions about potential library acquisitions.

The library relies on you to keep our gender and cultural studies resources exciting and up to date. If there is anything missing from the catalogue, let us know!

Thesis: Planning and Completing

A postgraduate thesis is a significant and substantial piece of work, and it is important to set milestones in order to make the task more manageable. Under current funding schemes, the government expects PhD students to complete their thesis in a maximum of 4 full-time years (70 000 – 100 000 words), and M Phil students to complete in a maximum of 2 full-time years (40 000 – 60 000 words).

There are a number of useful resources available for thinking about how to manage your thesis, including SUPRA's Thesis Guide:

http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au/Pub/Thesis_Guide.html

And the Learning Centre's guide on Writing a Proposal:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/stuserv/documents/thesisproposal.pdf>

Rather than providing a full guide to completing a thesis, this section outlines a number of administrative processes you should know about.

Notice of Intention to Submit

Three months prior to the submission of your thesis, you must complete a Notice of Intention to Submit form, found at

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/docs/postgraduate_forms/NoticeofThesisSubmission.pdf

This enables the Faculty to appoint examiners and schedule the examination process. The main reason for the form is to schedule examiners, who may only be available during a certain part of the year to examine your thesis. Therefore, it's important to get the timing right on this. Failure to deliver in roughly 3 months will result in annoying letters from the Faculty.

Appointment of Examiners

Your supervisor will approach experts in your field to examine the thesis. While students can make suggestions as to who might be appropriate examiners, you should not know the names of the examiners appointed. This process is outlined on the Notice of Intention to Submit form.

Thesis Preparation and Binding

Theses should be formatted in a consistent font, 12 point size, with 1.5 or double spacing. The School admits both Harvard and Chicago referencing styles, as long as you are consistent throughout the thesis. For further information on formatting your thesis, consult the SUPRA thesis guide. For further information on how to reference, visit the Write Site

<http://writesite.elearn.usyd.edu.au/>

Binding requirements are outlined on the Notice of Intention to Submit form. Initially, temporary binding is most appropriate as you may be required to make revisions. PhD students must submit 4 copies of their thesis, MPhil students three copies. Reimbursement of binding costs may be provided by your scholarship, or else can be applied for through the PRSS (see Research Resources).

Thesis Milestones “7 Steps to Completion”

The Faculty of Arts offers the following rough guide to milestones that may help you to structure your work:

PhD (over 7 semesters) – 70,000 – 100,000 word thesis

MPhil (over 3.5 semesters) – 40,000 – 60,000 word thesis

For a 3.5 year PhD candidature who produces 70-100K word thesis
(This model excludes fieldwork/archival research/ extensive interviews – PTO for another model)

1. 3 months

- review of topic and methodology
- review of supervision relationship

2. 6 months

- submission of full chapter or equivalent (15k words or as agreed with Supervisor and Associate Dean)

3. 12 months

- completion of required coursework
- Annual Review including presentation of research to date
- probationary status reviewed and permission to continue must be approved by Associate Dean

4. 24 months

- submission of 50% of final thesis
- Annual Review including presentation of research to date

5. 36 months

- complete full draft
- all data has been collected,
- all field work completed, etc.
- all but introduction and conclusion in draft
- Annual Review including presentation of research to date

6. 39 months

- completion of full draft
- supervisor reviews the draft and makes final recommendations.
- Notice of Thesis Submission

7. 42 months

- submission

Thesis Milestones Alternative 7 Step Model

Recognising that not all disciplines involve the same type of research or progression, the steps proposed above should be seen as flexible in terms of clear milestones to be attained. A fieldwork/archival-based degree will clearly require a different implementation of these steps.

Steps of progression for a fieldwork/archival degree:

1. 3 months

- review of topic and methodology
- review of supervision relationship

2.

- at 6 months

- completion of all bureaucratic tasks such as finding field site/locating archival material, securing visas, equipment etc
- literature review
- proposal of specific research questions
- begin fieldwork/archive research

- at 12 months

- completion of required coursework
- Annual Review including presentation of research to date
- probationary status is reviewed and permission to continue must be approved by Associate Dean.

3. 18 months

- most field recordings/transcriptions/archival data collection done
- submission of chapter(s) or equivalent of 20K+ words
- presentation of research project.

4. 30 months

- 50% of thesis should be completed.

5. 36 months

- all data has been collected,
- all field work/archival work completed, etc.
- all but introduction and conclusion in draft
- submission of complete draft
- Annual Review including presentation of research to date

6. 39 months

- Notice of Thesis submission
- supervisor reviews draft and makes final recommendations

7. 42 months

Teaching

The Department of Gender and Cultural Studies offers tutoring/teaching to Postgraduate students after the completion of their first year. Teaching is a rewarding experience and an important skill for academics to develop, and the department encourages you to take advantage of this opportunity. To apply for tutoring within the department contact the Chair of Department, or respond to the annual email sent out via the GCS List at the end of every year – October/November announces tutoring available in the coming year.

Tutoring skills

The Department runs an introduction to tutoring at the commencement of each year. Some staff and PG tutors attend to offer support and advise on the tasks, roles and requirements for tutoring undergraduate students.

The Faculty of Arts also offers a teaching induction and tutors program, the Tutors' Development Program. The program is jointly designed and run by the Faculty of Teaching and Learning Committee and the University's Institute for Teaching and Learning. Your participation will be recognized with a certificate that can be added to your CV.

Modules offered are:

- * Peer Observation of Teaching
- * Group Work
- * Assessment

For more information and to register for the Tutor's Development Program, please go to the Arts Tutors' Development Program website - <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/tdp/>

Basic information for tutoring:

Once allocated a course by the department:

- Contact the Unit Convenor (if they haven't already contacted you a couple of weeks prior to the course commencement)
- Check the **course timetable** – lectures and tutorials (when these are made available by the coordinator). You are expected to go to lectures as well as tutorials (this is calculated in your contract hrs – not as a separate hourly rate but overall).
- **Convenors will organize a teaching meeting** for all tutors in their course a few weeks prior the commencement of the subject to discuss course information; content, assessment, tutoring requirements for assessments, marking and the bell curve requirements. You should also receive your class lists, room information for classes and some course guides. If you have any questions about the course, tutoring or where you can access appropriate resources – this is a good time to ask them.
- **Photocopying** for teaching is available either in the department or the SOPHI office facilities room. Your Unit Convenor will provide you with a pin number. The staff in the SOPHI Office are available to assist if you have difficulties, including if you forget your photocopier pin.
- **Student consultation:** You may book one of six meeting rooms in Brennan MacCallum to consult with students. Meeting rooms are located at rooms 509, 542, 644, 726, 746 and 814. To book a meeting room, simply record the necessary details on the booking sheet affixed to the door of the room.

- **Casual Tutors room** is available for all SOPHI tutors at room 820 Brennan MacCallum. It has limited desk space and so works on a rotating desk system whereby you occupy a desk only for the time that you are in the room. You must keep in mind that this is a tutors room not a PG research room and is to be shared with all SOPHI tutors so you cannot set up house here and you can report any issues with others doing this to your PG rep. Sharing this room is a way to get to know other tutors in other departments as well as your own. To obtain a key, contact the SOPHI office at sophi.enquiries@usyd.edu.au or on 9351 2682. If emailing, please provide your name, the name of your Unit Convenor, details of the unit of study (unit code and title) and a contact phone number and email address. Keys are usually ready to pick up from Security within one week. Please return the key to Security at the end of the semester.
- **Staff cards** are also available to casual tutors. These give you a few more benefits than the student card does - for example, the library provides a little more access to audio visual material etc. You can pick up your staff card by taking a copy of your contract and some photo ID to the University Card Centre, downstairs on level 2 of Fisher Library.
- **Teaching Contracts** - Maria Cortez or Jing Chen arrange the casual teaching contracts. They will contact you via email when your contract has been drawn up and you need to go into their offices to sign it before you such the teaching session.
- **Web CT.** Many undergraduate courses have a WebCT component which is usually administered by the course convenor. Introductory training for WebCT is provided by the university eLearning centre http://www.usyd.edu.au/elearning/staff/teach_online/workshops/index.shtml. To contact the eLearning Helpdesk call 9351 8728.
- If you have any questions or issues at any time about teaching you can contact your Unit convenor, PG Coordinator in the dept or Student representative.

The Gender & Cultural Studies Department is recognized for its excellence in teaching as well as for being a fantastic and fun department to teach in.

SOPHI contacts for teaching contracts:

Maria Cortez: Ph: 9351 8675 Maria.Cortes@arts.usyd.edu.au

Jing Chen: Ph: 93512863 jing.chen@arts.usyd.edu.au

General enquiries related to teaching administration:

<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/school/sophi/staff/administration.shtml>

Other resources

The Learning Centre

The Learning Centre runs a range of workshops and courses on research skills, oral communication, and academic reading and writing. Details can be found here

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/writing.shtml

In addition, the Faculty of Arts offers a Postgraduate Academic Writing Adviser, Dr Bronwen Dyson, who can work with you one on one on a piece of academic writing, to improve expression, structure and style.

All postgraduate students in the Faculty are encouraged to make use of this service and an effort is made to fit in all students who request assistance. Priority, however, is given to research students.

Dr Dyson may be consulted by appointment:

Telephone: +61 2 9351 7514

Email: bronwen.dyson@arts.usyd.edu.au

Location: Room 250, Transient Building (F12)

The Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association

SUPRA provides assistance to postgraduate students for any issues that may confront them over the course of their candidature, and is run by postgraduate students, for postgraduate students. Their website provides a range of useful resources and links, including a Survival Manual and a Thesis Guide.

<http://www.supra.usyd.edu.au>

Services for students

The University provides a range of services for students, including counseling, health and welfare, and accommodation advice. Visit

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/stuserv/index.shtml>

Faculty of Arts Information and Dates

The Faculty of Arts provides important information for postgraduate research students, including enrolment dates, links to scholarship information, assistance with university email, and links to the Faculty handbook.

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/settling_in.shtml

In particular, you can download a number of **forms** for this website to apply for variation to enrolment (suspension of enrolment, intention to submit, and so on).

Forms http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/current_students/PGresearch/forms.shtml