Subject: POLS30028
Oncountry Learning: Indigenous Studies

Subject Guide

Semester 1: Summer Intensive Subject

Sunday 21, February – Friday 26, February 2016

The website for this subject is available through the Learning Management System (LMS) at: http://www.lms.unimelb.edu.au/login/ which is linked to Oncountry Materials at: http://waynera.wordpress.com/

The LMS is an important source of information for this subject. Useful resources such as lecture / seminar notes, lecture recordings and subject announcements will be available through the website. It is your responsibility to regularly check in with the LMS for subject announcements and updates.

You will require a university email account (username and password) to access the Learning Management System. You can activate your university email account at: https://accounts.unimelb.edu.au/manage
Teaching Staff

Subject Coordinator: Dr Wayne Atkinson

Brief Profile: Dr Wayne Atkinson is a Senior Lecturer-Fellow in Indigenous Studies, within the School of Social and Political Science. As an elder of the Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung Indigenous Nations of the Murray Goulburn and Central Victoria region, he has worked in Indigenous Affairs for most of his life. Wayne has travelled extensively throughout the world teaching and researching Indigenous history and culture, and was one of the principle claimants in the Yorta Yorta Native Title Case, 1994-2002. Dr Atkinson Coordinates and teaches the Oncountry Learning subject which is taught in Yorta Yorta country in February each year. The course, is now in its 13th Year and was formally recognized for the teaching excellence it has achieved by the ‘Australian Office of Teaching Awards for Teaching Excellence’, 2013.

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Tutors: Shane Charles and Andrea James
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Shane Charles:

Shane is a Yorta Yorta educator, artist and administrator with a distinguished career in Indigenous Affairs. He has worked as a professional teacher, educator, and cultural officer, graduating from Swinburne and Deakin Universities in the fields of business, economics, governance, cultural heritage and community- regional development. He is now the CEO of Moloka Pty Ltd, which he founded in Shepparton, and also worked as Cultural and Training Consultant with the Yorta Yorta Nations Aboriginal Corporation and the Yenbena Education Centre, Barmah. Like other members of the teaching team Shane has a broad based knowledge of Yorta Yorta history culture and language, and is a proud member of the Yorta Yorta community.

Andrea James

Andrea James is a Yorta Yorta/ Gunai playwright and teacher. She graduated from LaTrobe University with a Bachelor of Arts in Drama in 1991 and a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1996. Andrea is best known for her work in writing and directing Yanagai! Yanagai!– a play about her father’s people, the Yorta Yorta, and their struggle for land rights justice.
James was dramaturge to Lou Bennett’s one-woman cabaret *Show us ya Tiddas!* Produced by the Melbourne Workers Theatre and wrote a short play *The Forever Zone* for White Whale Theatre at Downstairs 45 in Melbourne. She is currently the Aboriginal Arts Development Officer at Blacktown City Council and has developed a cross-art new work entitled *To Soothe the Dying Pillow* while in residence at Performance Space in Carriageworks in December 2011.

Most recently James directed *Bully Beef Stew* with three Aboriginal men at PACT Theatre and co-wrote *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country* with Giordano Nanni produced by La Mama and Ilbijerri Theatre. She is currently writing a short play entitled *Winyanboga Yurringa* inspired by Hyllus Maris and Sonia Borg’s iconic *Women of the Sun*. Andrea will be drawing on much of her live theatre experience and stories to enrich the learning experience for Oncountry Learning students this year.

**Guest Speakers**

Yorta Yorta guest speakers, elders and former students involved in the Yorta Yorta Struggle for land justice and the Barmah-Millewa National Parks and Traditional Owner Land Management Agreement-TOLMA, will be engaged in the teaching of the course. [https://waynera.wordpress.com/national-parks-joint-management-land-justice/](https://waynera.wordpress.com/national-parks-joint-management-land-justice/)

**Consultation hours:** Tutors available while oncountry

**Subject Overview / Subject Description**

The Indigenous Studies ‘On Country Learning’ course is unique in that it is a community based course that is taught by Indigenous people in Yorta Yorta country located on the Murray River in northern Victoria. Using a ‘Story Line’ approach the subject provides an in depth study of the historic Indigenous political struggle for racial equality, land justice, heritage control, and self determination, by drawing on the knowledge of the Yorta Yorta Nation as a case study. It focuses on range of relevant Indigenous political and historic themes covering: pre and post contact history, colonisation, government policies and administration, land/heritage management, and the Yorta Yorta politico-legal struggle for their inherent rights to land, heritage, water and self determination.

**Student evaluation of this subject:**

The following are some of the ratings this subject received from the Quality of Teaching questionnaire:

Question 2 ‘This subject was well taught’ – rating of 4.9 out of 5 in 2010; 4.9 out of 5 in 2011, 5. out of 5. in 2012, 5. out of 5. in 2014-15.
Question 3 ‘This subject was intellectually stimulating’ – 4.9 out of 5 in 2010; 4.8 out of 5 in 2011, 5 out of 5. in 2012, 5. out of 5. in 2014-15.
Question 9 ‘Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of the learning experience in this subject’ – 5 out of 5, 2010; 4.8 out of 5 in 2011, 5. out of 5. in 2012, 5. 2014-15.

A previous version of this course was taught in 2012 and 2013.

Comments made by students, 2013-2015 include:

‘This is a most outstanding learning experience’
‘There should be more field based courses in Indigenous studies like this’
‘It is a more tangible form of learning being oncountry and learning from the people’
‘I would highly recommend this subject’
‘Our Indigenous teachers and mentors provided stimulating and engaging discussion’
‘This subject was well structured and all components were interesting’
‘This subject changed my life’
‘This is the best subject that I have done’
‘The course is stimulating; challenging ad is truly multidisciplinary, spanning history, politics, health, and ecology from an Indigenous viewpoint.
‘Our teachers were great, always incredibly engaging and very happy to discuss all of our questions and queries’

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this subject, students are expected to:

- Understand the nature and extent of Indigenous occupation and connections with the ancestral lands -past and present.
- Demonstrate an ability to work more effectively with Indigenous communities.
- Be able to articulate a more informed view of Indigenous history culture in regional Australia.

Subject Structure

The course is taught as field based subject in early February each year. It is run over a week and involves site visits and visits to local community based organisation within the Goulburn and Murray region of Victoria.
Subject Timetable:

1. Briefing Session: Compulsory for Course Participants

Wednesday, 17th February, 2016: 2pm sharp

Linkway Meeting Room, 4th Floor, John Medley Building
School of Social & Political Sciences.
In preparation for the briefing students are required to read the 'Cultural Protocols' and the 'Briefing Notes'

Both are essential readings for course.

Oncountry Learning Program:
Sunday 21st to Friday 26th February 2016

2. Sunday 21 Feb, 2016: Travel Details

Leave University of Melbourne (front of John Medley Building) by bus at 10 am sharp
(be at pick up point by at least 9-30am). Travel from Melbourne to Moama on the Murray Resort Camp, Distance=260 Ks: 3.5 hours drive with stop to buy food.

Organise accommodation and food arrangements.

BBQ tea provided and prepared by students.

Welcome to Country

3. Monday 22 Feb: Yorta Yorta Occupation & Connections

3.1 Morning: Introduction to course and study area.

   Explanation of course expectations.

   Outline of study areas.

   Overview of Yorta Yorta occupation and connections with ancestral land and waters.

3.2 Afternoon:

   Visit study area and reconstruct a timeline of Yorta Yorta occupation.

   View evidence of Yorta Yorta occupation
Examine nature and origins of inherent rights.

Return to camp and work on journals

Group discussion.

3.3 Evening:

Groups organise own cooking arrangements

4. Tuesday 23 February: **Land, Water & Cultural Matters**

4.1 Morning:

Visit and learn of significance of water and wetlands to Yorta Yorta on Kingfisher boat.

Lunch at [Dharnya Centre](http://waynera.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/lecbarmill04.pdf)

4.2 Afternoon:


Visit [Dharnya Centre](http://waynera.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/lecbarmill04.pdf) and learn of its current status from Yorta Yorta speakers.

Assess extent to which the Yorta Yorta enjoys equality in their rights to practice their Cultural Heritage and the benefits of the Cultural Tourism Industry.

Return to camp, work on journal.

4.3 Evening:

Groups organise own food

5. Wednesday 24 February: **Yorta Yorta Political Struggle**

5.1 Morning:

Visit Yorta Yorta Nations Inc and Elders Council at Yenbeena Education Centre

Lunch at Yenbeena Education Centre
5.2 Afternoon:

Visit Cummeragunja (1889-Present) and Maloga (1874-1888)

Discuss history and origins of reserve system and political struggle including current day issues

5.3 Evening:

Screening of Film: The Sapphires.

Groups organise own food

6. Thursday 25 February: Community Organisations & Self Determination

6.1 Full Day:

Visit: Aboriginal Organisations in the Goulburn Valley Region

*Academy of Sport Health and Education (ASHE)*

*Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative*

*Rumbalara Football, Netball Club*

Examine history of movement from Cummeragunja to local towns.

Discuss the importance of Indigenous Education in the region.

Assess the extent to which Indigenous groups have achieved self determination under government policies

6.2 Evening:

Reflections on issues covered in course.

BBQ, Music and Entertainment with Special Guests.

Musicians invited to bring instruments and songs.

7. Friday 26 February: Evaluation & Reflections

7.1 Morning:
Group presentations of journals

Evaluation and reflections on Course

Clean up and return to University of Melbourne at 5-30.

Note:
Please note that the program is not set in concrete. The program focuses on major themes and particular issues relevant to the Oncountry learning experience. It also caters for other Oncountry activities that may be happening at the time, which can be utilised to enhance the learning process. This year’s course will focus on land issues and the Barmah Millewa National Park discussions on Joint Management and the Traditional Owner Land Management Agreement, TOLMA, 2010.

Readings
All required readings for this subject are listed in this guide and included in the subject reading pack, which will be available either on-line or for purchase from the University Bookshop. Online links to all required readings and most recommended readings are available from the ‘Readings’ section of the subject LMS site. Required readings represent the minimum expected for you to participate effectively in class.

Further recommended readings are listed in this guide and on the LMS. You are encouraged to augment your understanding of the topics discussed by drawing on this list. In addition, it is expected that you will develop your own learning and knowledge through wider reading and research, particularly with regard to completion of assessment items.

* Students are required to read the *essential readings before course commences.


Bolt,A. *The Bolt Case*, Federal Court, 2011


*Cooper, William, Australian Aborigines League, AAL, 1937-1950.*


Dodson. P. Lingiari- *Until The Chains Are Broken*, Paper Presented at the 4th Annual
Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecture, Northern Territory University, 27 August 1999


Hawker, C. *Why are Blackfellas so darn good at Footy?* Research Essay from Oncountry Learning course, 2009.


Langton, M. *Recognising Indigenous Cultures* as a Valid Part of Australian Heritage,
Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Publications.


*Ramsar Wetlands Report* - February 2, 2009


Wood, Caitlin. *Institutional Racism and the Dharnya Centre*: Student Essay from 2012 visit to Dharnya Centre.


*Yorta Yorta v State of Victoria and Ors (1998): The Olney J. Decision.*

*Yunupinga, G. We know these things to be true*, Third Vincent Lingiari Memorial Lecture, August 1998.

Lecture Materials and Websites:

*Sovereign Union Website Readings*

*New Materials on Hunter Gatherer Farming Debate*

*Barmah-Millewa National Park, 2005*

*The Dharnya Centre Materials*
**Yorta Yorta-Bangerang:**

Yorta Yorta-Bangerang is a term used to describe the Indigenous ancestors and their descendants who continue to occupy the ancestral lands and to assert their rights as the original sovereign nation. Yorta Yorta Nations Inc is the umbrella organization that represented the rights and interests of the traditional owners in the recent Yorta Yorta Native Title Claim, 1994-2002 (YYNTC). Those who identify as Yorta Yorta-Bangerang belong to the same ancestors who are often described collectively as being one and of the same group (Transcript of Proceedings, Yorta Yorta v State of Victoria & Ors, 19 Nov, 1996: Exhibit A35). To avoid issues associated with nomenclature usage and for the purpose of this examination, except where specific reference is made of Bangerang, the term Yorta Yorta will be used.

**Key Indigenous Websites**


http://www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/culture.cfm#h

http://www.koorimail.com


http://www.ilb.unsw.edu.au/

http://www.abc.net.au/message/

Assessment

Assessment for this subject comprises of:

1500 word Reflections Paper: This allows students to reflect on their learning experience for the week while on Yorta Yorta country. Students are encouraged to be more creative in their writing of this paper and there are some good ‘Reflective Papers’ online that provide guidelines for this exercise -see Student Reflections Page on Wordpress.

2500 word Research Essay: Topic is to be worked out in consultation with the course Coordinator. The topics chosen need to be relevant to the issues covered in the Oncountry course. Some students may want to focus on current issues happening with the creation of the National Park and Joint Management being discussed, and the extent to which they deliver land justice to the Yorta Yorta as the Traditional Owners. There are many other relevant issues that students may choose to research and write about from the Oncountry course.

Dates for Submission of Essays will be on the Assessment page of the LMS site

Hurdle Requirement: Fieldtrip attendance and regular participation including a short individual or group presentation on last day is required.
Grading system

A standard grading system applies across all Faculties of the University, as follows:

N 0%-49%  **Fail - not satisfactory**  
- Work that fails to meet the basic assessment criteria;
- Work that contravenes the policies and regulations set out for the assessment exercise;
- Where a student fails a subject, all failed components of assessment are double marked.

P 50%-64%  **Pass - satisfactory**  
- Completion of key tasks at an adequate level of performance in argumentation, documentation and expression;
- Work that meets a limited number of the key assessment criteria;
- Work that shows substantial room for improvement in many areas.

H3 65%-69%  **Third-class honours - competent**  
- Completion of key tasks at a satisfactory level, with demonstrated understanding of key ideas and some analytical skills, and satisfactory presentation, research and documentation;
- Work that meets most of the key assessment criteria;
- Work that shows room for improvement in several areas.

H2B 70%-74%  **Second-class honours level B - good**  
- Good work that is solidly researched, shows a good understanding of key ideas, demonstrates some use of critical analysis along with good presentation and documentation;
- Work that meets most of the key assessment criteria and performs well in some;
- Work that shows some room for improvement.

H2A 75%-79%  **Second-class honours level A - very good**  
- Very good work that is very well researched, shows critical analytical skills, is well argued, with scholarly presentation and documentation;
- Work that meets all the key assessment criteria and exceeds in some;
- Work that shows limited room for improvement.

H1 80%-100%  **First-class honours - excellent**  
- Excellent analysis, comprehensive research, sophisticated theoretical or methodological understanding, impeccable presentation;
- Work that meets all the key assessment criteria and excels in most;
- Work that meets these criteria and is also in some way original, exciting or challenging could be awarded marks in the high 80s or above.
- Marks of 90% and above may be awarded to the best student work in the H1 range.
Assessment Submission

Students must submit all assessment electronically through the Turnitin function, via the online submission portal on the LMS site of the subject. This will act as an electronic receipt of the time and date of assessment submission. All assessment should be typed in double-spacing in 12 point font.

Subject coordinators may also request hardcopy submission of assessment. It is the student’s responsibility to check the submission requirements for each subject.

- Requested hardcopy assessment should be submitted to the School office, 4th Floor John Medley Building, and include a correctly completed School Assessment Coversheet. The cover sheet includes a student declaration, which students must sign. The declaration relates to the originality (lack of plagiarism, collusion, etc.) of student work. Essay Coversheets are available from relevant subject LMS sites and can also be found in the ‘Student’ section of the School’s website.
- Hardcopy assessment should be typed in double-spacing in 12 point font on one side of the sheet only, and with a margin of at least 4 cm on the left hand side of the page. All assessment submitted through the School office will be collated and passed on to the relevant tutor/lecturer within 24 hours.
- Please note: students are required to prepare their assessment (ie. properly collated and a completed coversheet) prior to submission. Stationery will not be provided at the School office.

Assessment will not be accepted via fax or email to staff. Students are expected to retain a copy of all work submitted for assessment.

Extension Policy and Late Submission of Work

Extensions for assessment other than the final piece will be handled by tutors / subject coordinators in accordance with the current policy outlined below:

Students are able to negotiate a short-term extension of up to 5 working days with tutors for in-semester assessment. Longer terms of up to 10 working days can only be approved by the subject coordinator. Extensions are not granted after due dates have passed. An extension of time after a deadline has passed will be given usually only for a reason that falls within the guidelines for Special Consideration. A specific date will then be agreed upon and enforced unless evidence for additional Special Consideration is produced. To apply for an extension, students must complete an Assignment Extension Request form available from relevant subject LMS sites (and from the ‘areas of study’ sections of the School’s website) and email it to their tutor/subject coordinator, along with any supporting documentation where possible, prior to the submission date. Students will then be notified of the outcome of the application by their Tutor or Subject Coordinator via the student’s university e-mail account. Extensions for the final piece of assessment due during the examination period may be granted by the subject coordinator on the provision of some documentation for a maximum of TEN working days (two weeks) and on the condition that the work will be marked in time for a final grade to be returned by the results submission deadline set by the School. Special Consideration forms should be
submitted for issues which impact on the whole of semester work and for issues affecting assessment where more than a two week extension is requested.

Penalty for Submission of Late Assessment

*Undergraduate and Graduate Subjects*

Essay-based assessment (or equivalent) submitted late without an approved extension will be **penalised at 10 marks per working day**. In-class tasks missed without approval will not be marked. Tests and exam-based assessment submitted late without an approved extension will not be accepted. All pieces of written work must be submitted to pass any subject.

Special Consideration

Students can apply for Special Consideration via the Student Portal. Special Consideration applications should be submitted no later than 5pm on the third working day after the submission/sitting date for the relevant assessment component. Students are only eligible for Special Consideration if circumstances beyond their control have severely hindered completion of assessed work. Appropriate response to Special Consideration depends upon the degree of disadvantage experienced by the student. This may vary from an extension in the case of slight disadvantage to additional assessment in the cases of moderate or severe disadvantage. Consideration of special consideration applications will be by a Faculty Special Consideration Committee (SCC), working within guidelines established by the Special Consideration Policy Committee (SCPC) and coordinated by a Student Centre. Arts Student Centre Staff will contact students with the outcome of their application, copied in to appropriate School staff. Subject coordinators or other staff (academic or professional) may submit advice directly to the Special Consideration committee if they wish. Final decisions in line with University policy will be made by the Committee. Students should be advised not to apply for special consideration unless the relevant circumstances have delayed their study by at least 2 weeks. Applications for special consideration detailing delays to study for a shorter period will be refused and the student will be referred to their subject coordinator for an extension. If students are experiencing difficulties and are not sure whether to apply for special consideration, it is important that they discuss the matter with the lecturer / subject coordinator or a Student Advisor at the Arts Student Centre. For further information on Special Consideration, please refer to the following link: [https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1297](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1297)
Student Equitable Adjustment Procedure (SEAP)
Please refer to: https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1297

Elite Athletes and Performers, Army Reservists, Emergency Volunteers

Equitable adjustments such as for elite athletes, elite performers, defence reservists, emergency volunteers can be found at:
https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1297

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a copyright offence, which the University regards as cheating and it is punished accordingly. Students are warned to be careful to guard against it occurring consciously or unconsciously in essay writing. It is therefore important that students spend time ascertaining how their own work differs in its assumptions and methodology from that of the critics they have read or engaged with (including lecturers and tutors!). Students should not repeat material used for another piece of work in the same subject or in any other subject that they have studied, as this also constitutes plagiarism in the terms of the University’s guidelines. Students should refer to the Schools’ Essay Writing Guide which provides clear guidelines for referencing.

Plagiarism is academic misconduct, and is taken very seriously by the School, Faculty and University. Any acts of suspected plagiarism detected by assessors will be followed up, and any students involved will be required to respond via the Faculty and/or University procedures for handling suspected plagiarism. For more information and advice about how to avoid plagiarism, see the University's Academic Honesty page at http://academic dishonesty.unimelb.edu.au/advice.html Students should be aware of how to appropriately acknowledge sources in their assignments and what referencing style is expected in a particular subject. Students should ask their tutor or subject coordinator if unsure. The Academic Skills Unit (ASU) has a number of free online resources on referencing at: http://services.unimelb.edu.au/academicskills/all_resources#research-referencing

For further information, please refer to the School’s 2016 SSPS Academic Programs Policy and Procedure Guidelines document, provided in subject readers and LMS sites, and the Melbourne Policy Library website: http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/