

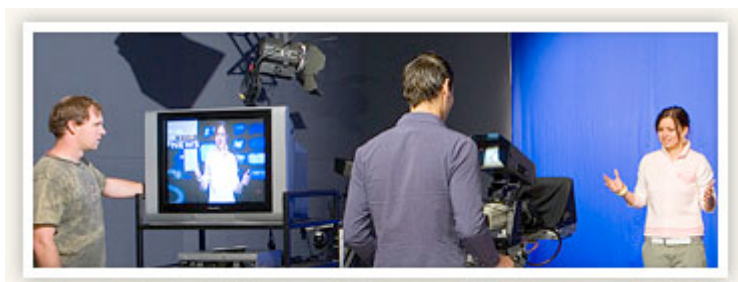
**Global Environmental Journalism Initiative, GEJI,
At
Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia**



Bush Court at the Murdoch Campus



Working for sustainability



Reporting on environment in all formats

<http://www.murdoch.edu.au/About-Murdoch/Take-a-tour-of-our-campus/>

Welcome to Murdoch University. The university is named after author and philosopher Sir Walter Murdoch. The university opened in 1974. Murdoch University has close to 15 000 students of which 3000 are international students.

Journalism at Murdoch has a focus on investigative reporting. Reporting the environment can be time-consuming and complex, hence the bulk of the learning is done in the Investigative Reporting unit. This is a third year unit, although second year students may enroll. However, experience shows that the third year students get more out of the course.

MCC301/601 Investigative Reporting (Semester 2, late July to early November)

Unit description:

‘Students pursue one topic of investigation during the semester. They conduct background research, draw up a plan of investigation and frequently reflect on the project process during the course of the unit. They consider the differences between investigative and explanatory reporting. Students identify the topics for investigation, however some emphasis will be placed on environmental reporting. The main assessment component is the final investigative/explanatory story that may be produced in either written or broadcast formats.’
(from the Murdoch University Handbook: <http://handbook.murdoch.edu.au/>)

You will work in teams of two-three students. Experience has showed that the learning and end-quality of the final story is greatly enhanced by working in teams.

Most of the learning is done via editorial conferences where the tutor/teacher becomes the editor and the progress of the stories is discussed.

The assessment is based on two reflective seminars, one progress report, a peer assessment and the final story. The story is complemented with ‘enhancement material’ such as reports, extended interviews, etc that was collected during the research phase.

Examples of previous topics of investigation:

‘Seeds of doubt’ – GM food in Australia

‘The recycling stinker’

‘The Emissions Trading Scheme explained’

‘The asbestos pits – hear nothing, see nothing’ (disposal of blue asbestos used in building products)

‘Going solar – with our without government support’

The final story can be produced in any format (print, radio or TV) and will be published on our web news site: <http://emunews.murdoch.edu.au/>. Various media in Perth are also interested in reviewing the stories for publication.

The editorial statement of eMU News is as follows:

'eMU News is a news portal produced and maintained by journalism staff and students at Murdoch University.

The online publication provides an alternative voice to mainstream news writing and reporting, adhering to the highest standards of ethical responsible journalism. Our goal is to provide readers with high quality stories characterised by independent research and proper verification.'

There is one more journalism unit that has an element of environmental reporting in it:

MCC240/540 Journalism and Society (S2)

Unit description:

'The unit considers the relationship, roles and functions of the journalist in modern society. Students will investigate a range of issues which highlight the political and cultural significance of journalism.'

This is a theory unit that cover a number of specialty reporting areas such as politics, business and the environment. As both politics and business are integral to environmental policy making, the unit is well suited for GEJI students.

To make up a full study load you need to be enrolled in three units. You can choose one or both of the units above or any of the units in sustainability below.

ISTP

‘The Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy is dedicated to relevant, interdisciplinary action research the study of sustainability, planning and innovation. The ISTP was established in 1988 to foster better understanding of the roles and effects of science and technology for the benefit of all sectors of society. It has since grown to become Australia’s leading research institute for sustainability and one of the largest in the world. ISTP research focuses on integrating policy for simultaneously creating a better economy, an improved environment and a more just, participative society.’ (from: <http://www.istp.murdoch.edu.au/>)

The following unit would be particularly suitable for GEJI students and are all offered in second semester:

ENV212 Global and Regional Sustainability

Unit description:

‘Rapidly growing population, the spread of cities, the energy crisis, global warming, deforestation, desertification, the loss of species and toxic chemicals are examples of global environmental challenges with a social and economic basis that invite regional solutions. This unit will provide a global and regional perspective on the interconnections between these concerns; their solution in a sustainable development framework; and the role of technology, community values and global and regional sustainability institutions in managing our future.’

STP370 Policy, Technology and Democracy

Unit description:

This unit analyses policy-making processes in policy areas that involve significant elements of science and technology. Policy decisions on issues such as sustainable development, urban transport, technological risk and information technology often involve scientific expertise and/or complex technological systems. The unit first examines the current limits to democratic decision making in these fields, before turning to the more constructive task of how to democratise policy, the practice of science and the management of technology.

STP330 Cities and Innovation

Unit description:

Presents new thinking on how cities are performing in the global economy; examines policies to improve the innovative capacity of regions, cities and companies; explores the impact of intensified economic competition on ordinary citizens. Topics: cities in the global knowledge economy, national and regional systems of innovation; 'place marketing' and competition between cities; social capital and social exclusion; inequalities between and within cities;

creativity and culture in city revitalisation; economic development and environmental sustainability; local and community economic development.

ENV228 Environmental Policy and Law

Unit description:

This unit is intended to introduce students to environmental policy and the role played by the legal system in environmental protection, planning and management. Students are introduced to the nature of legal systems and the consequent limitations and possibilities for the implementation of environmental policy. Emphasis is given to the Australian and particularly to the Western Australian situation. The development of written communication skills is a priority.

STP256 Marine Conservation and Coastal Sustainability

Unit description:

This unit covers the main policies and issues related to conserving marine habitats and care of the coast. It analyses the Federal marine and coastal policies that have developed in the last decade. Through these policies, the unit examines movements towards community involvement in coastal management and stewardship, towards an ecosystem-based approach to policy and management, and towards a comprehensive marine protected areas system. Key to the unit is practical and conceptual work with a local coast care group.

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