Macquarie's philosophy research is of high international standing. In the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2012 evaluation our philosophy and religious studies research received a rating of 'performance above world standard' as did our research in the sub-discipline of philosophy. Additionally, our research in the sub-discipline of applied ethics received a rating of 'performance at world standard'.

The philosophy program at Macquarie has long-standing research strengths in European philosophy, ethics, metaphysics, philosophical psychology, philosophy of mind and social philosophy. More recently it has also developed specialisations in bioethics, medical ethics and moral cognition.

A distinctive feature of philosophy at Macquarie is our research focus on human agency, mind and self. Our philosophers are at the forefront of research in these fields, with expertise in extended cognition, memory, moral responsibility and moral cognition, and philosophy of agency. These are areas in which, increasingly, philosophical research proceeds in partnership with the psychological and cognitive sciences and which require a range of skills that the higher degree research program at Macquarie is uniquely placed to develop.

Much of this research is conducted within the Macquarie University Research Centre for Agency, Values and Ethics (CAVE), an interdisciplinary centre involving researchers from cognitive science, law, medicine, philosophy and psychology, with strong links to national and international partners. CAVE researchers are involved in significant international collaborations with researchers at universities in Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, the UK and US.

The many workshops, conferences and visitors associated with CAVE, and its research connections with the Australian School of Advanced Medicine, and the ARC Centre of Excellence in Cognition and its Disorders, provide you with an especially rich and lively research environment.

AREAS OF SPECIALISATION

Ethics and applied ethics
- Bioethics; clinical, surgical and public health ethics; reproductive ethics and parenting; research ethics; animal ethics
- Moral psychology, autonomy, moral responsibility, diachronic agency, selfhood
- Neuroethics, neurolaw
- Normative ethics, normative political philosophy

Mind, metaphysics and meaning
- Metaphysics
- Naturalistically oriented philosophy of psychology, memory and distributed cognition, moral cognition
- Philosophy of language, epistemology, relationship between natural language and logic

Social philosophy and continental philosophy
- Existential phenomenology and hermeneutics, social and political philosophy particularly in the Hegelian and post-Hegelian tradition, continental aesthetics, post-structuralism, and critical social theory in the Frankfurt School tradition
- Philosophy of film
- Philosophy of work

RESEARCH HUBS
- Macquarie University Research Centre for Agency, Values and Ethics
Highlights

• Our researchers sit on editorial or advisory boards of leading journals including Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Bioethics, BMC Medical Ethics, Critical Horizons, European Journal of Philosophy, Memory Studies, Neuroethics, Philosophical Explorations, and Philosophical Psychology, and have served on national research councils in Australia, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, UK and USA.

• Current research being conducted by Macquarie philosophers and their collaborators include projects on addiction and moral agency; animal ethics; embodied virtues and expertise; innovative surgery; Kantian conceptions of dignity; neurolaw; psychopathy; the metaphysics of causation; self-development; vulnerability, autonomy and justice; and work.

Support

We give HDR candidates strong academic and administrative support. This includes:

• Annual philosophy postgraduate showcase
• Commencement and completion programs
• Discipline-specific research training units, including workshops in research communication, presentation skills, academic writing skills, thesis planning and poster preparation
• Experienced supervisors and department-based higher degree research directors
• Financial support for eligible candidates for a range of research-related activity
• Opportunities to present and discuss projects with international visitors
• Regular opportunities for informal staff/student interaction
• Regular progress reports and interviews
• Work-in-progress workshops in which research candidates receive feedback on their work from their peers and supervisors
• Visiting speakers

Research leaders

Macquarie is home to many internationally renowned researchers, including:

Professor Jeanette Kennett has published extensively in ethics and moral psychology. Her current research focuses on the contribution the sciences can make to our understanding of the cognitive and affective underpinnings of moral agency, moral judgment and moral reasoning.

Professor Catriona Mackenzie is director of the Centre for Agency, Values and Ethics. Her research expertise is in applied ethics, feminist philosophy, moral psychology, and social and political philosophy. She has received numerous awards including a Eureka Prize for Research in Ethics.

Professor Wendy Rogers is researching at the forefront of medical ethics. Her research focuses on the intersections between practical issues in health care, health policy and theoretical ethics, and she has particular expertise in a range of areas in biomedical ethics including feminist bioethics, organ donation, public health ethics and research ethics. More recently, she has developed a program of research on the ethics of new surgical interventions and surgical research.

Professor Nicholas Smith has research expertise in modern European philosophy, philosophical anthropology, and social and political philosophy. His current research focuses on work and the ethics of recognition. He is the author and editor of several books, most recently New philosophies of labour and Recognition theory as social research.