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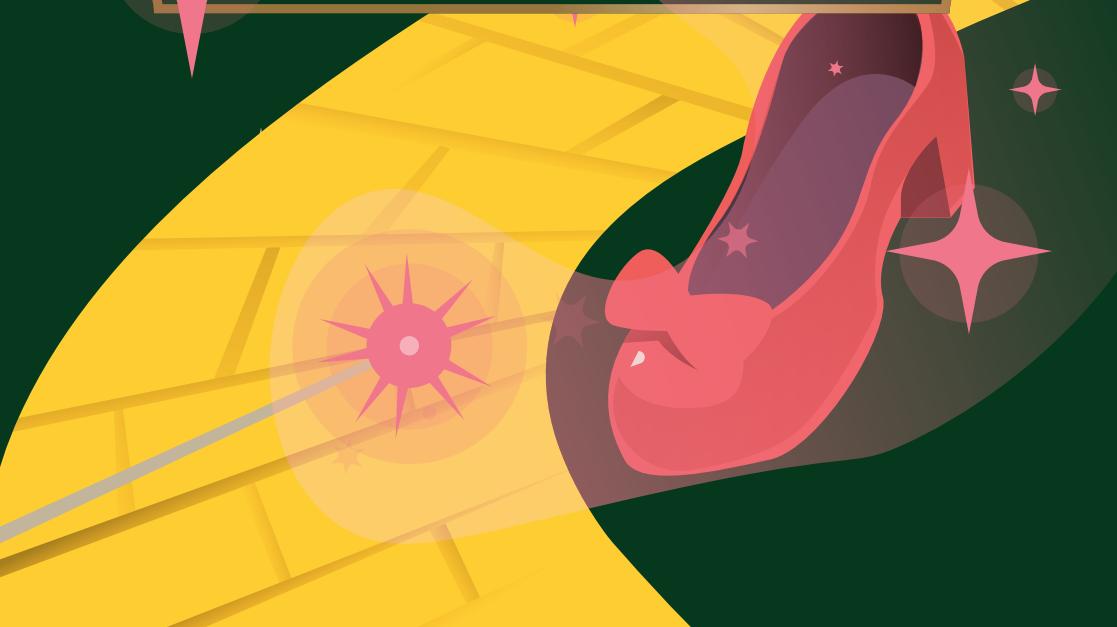
HONOURS SOIRÉE

Honours Booklet

14 August 2025

UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA

DEFY GRAVITY

WITH

BGL HONOURS

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW OF HONOURS PROGRAM

What Is An Honours Degree?

The Bachelor of Business, Government and Policy (Honours) course is designed to provide students with aone year stand-alone experience after the completion of a relevant undergraduate degree. An honours degree is highly valued by employers as graduates are known to possess exceptional ability, motivation and critical thinking skills. During this one-year course, students will do a deep dive into contemporary practical problems related to their undergraduate study area on a topic that is important to them. Examples are identifying consumer reactions to 'hidden' retail technology, designing employment service policies for refugees and reducing food waste in households. Students will gain high-level training in a variety of research software and techniques and will complete an original piece of research in the form of an honours research thesis.

Benefits of an Honours Degree

Across the study period, students will have a personal academic mentor who will assist them in the design of their research and preparation of the research thesis. Students will develop valuable professional skills that provide advantage in a competitive job market such as the ability to convey ideas clearly, evaluate information and make reasoned judgements, and develop creative solutions to complex problems. Honours students may also be offered tutoring employment and research-assistant roles within the faculty making them a valued member of staff. Honours is a dual-pathway program that can lead to a graduate position in policy, consulting firms and Australia's top 100 companies or direct entry into the PhD program (first class honours graduates).

Study Path

Duration:
One year (or 12 months) full time. Typically two years part time but you can take up to four years

Number of supervisors:
Two, a principal and associate or external.

Thesis is by publication. You and your supervisors will work toward submitting a journal article as a condition of submitting your thesis for marking by two experts at other Universities.

Semester 1 *(usually February- May)*

Commence designing your thesis with your supervisors.

Three coursework units:

- Research Methods 9505
- Reading and Critiquing Literature 10387
- Your pick of: Introduction to Statistics 6554 or Quantiative Methods in Commerce 11405 or Survey Research and Design in Psychology 7126 or Qualitative Methods in Health 9583). You will have the choice to enrol into the methods unit that is most relevant to your research project.
- Commence designing your thesis with your supervisors.

Winter term *(usually June/July)*

90 hour postgraduate internship (equivalent of 2.5 weeks of full time work). This is your elective unless there's a unit you need to complete as part of your research (to be discussed with the Program Director).

Semester 2 *(usually July-October)*

Ethics clearance, collect data, analyse findings, write up thesis (Introductory Chapter, Journal Article, Conclusions Chapter), submission of journal article, submission of thesis for marking. Results back by December.

Optional:

November Annual BGL Research Student Symposium:
Be our guest and present your work to the Faculty of Business, Government and Law's community of researchers.

Guidelines for Application

Step 1) Identify your supervisory team.

If you haven't already, have a look at the list of registered supervisors in our faculty in this booklet. Make note of the supervisors that meet your research interests. Take a look at the list of potential honours topics in this booklet; which research motivation, topic or project aligns with your interests and goals or sparkles for you the most? Note them and go to step 2 below!

Step 2) Establish your supervisory team.

Now that you've identified your prospective supervisors, it's time to meet with them! Feel free to approach your prospective supervisors now or reach out to them later by way of their contact details. Feel free to talk about your shared interests, discuss who could be a good associate/external supervisor and, if your conversation leads to a clear and shared vision, move to step 3 below. If not, it's time to

Step 3) Write your proposal.

Now that you've got a supervisory team in place and a shared understanding of what you'll be working on together, it's time to write a two page research proposal. Please draft this document and ask your supervisors for feedback before submitting it to the Honours Program Director Jean-Paul Gagnon. Please include evidence that your supervisors have agreed to collaborate on this project as part of your submission - a copy of an email from your supervisors is fine. Submissions must be received by the honours program director by end November this year.

Step 4) Receive confirmation to submit.

Wait for confirmation by email and then apply through UC's Portal when you get the green light (see last page) before 5 January 2025.

BGL REGISTERED SUPERVISORS

At BGL we have a large variety of registered supervisors. For details of supervisor research interests and expertise, visit the BGL website

https://www.canberra.edu.au/about-uc/faculties/busgovlaw/our-people

or scan the QR code

University of Canberra maintains a register of graduate researcher supervisors. This register is a quality guarantee for you with academics required to meet four requirements:

- Have a doctoral research degree. Staff with substantial industry or professional research experience, deemed equivalent to a PhD qualification, may qualify if approval is given by the Associate Dean Research (ADR). Masters by Research qualified academics are eligible to supervise Masters by Research candidates.

- Being actively involved in research.

- Have an ongoing appointment with the University (includes adjunct and emeritus staff).

- Have completed the online training on Supervising Doctoral Studies (SDS) and Research Integrity, and completed Cultural Awareness Training (workshop)

Canberra Business School

Prof. Lorne CUMMINGS
(Head of school, accounting)

Dr. Somayeh BAHMANNIA
(Organisational behaviour)

Dr. Sarvjeet Kaur CHATRATH
(marketing)

Dr. Johra FATIMA
(marketing)

Dr. Doug JACKMAN
(human resource management)

Prof. Brent JACKSON
(organisational behaviour, leadership)

Prof. Raechel JOHNS
(social marketing and services marketing)

Assoc. Prof. Habib KHAN
(accounting)

Dr. Irfan KHAN
(digital marketing)

Dr. Robin LADWIG
 (human resource management)

Prof. Jennifer LOH
(management)

Dr. Ryan PAYNE
(digital marketing and management)

Prof. Rebekah RUSSELL-BENNETT
(Associate Dean Research, social marketing, digital marketing)

Dr. Angela TAN KANTOR
(accounting)

Dr. Hao YANG
(accounting)

Dr. Tracey YANG
(accounting)

Assoc. Prof. Bomikazi ZEKA
(finance)

Canberra Law school

Prof. Maree SAINSBURY
(head of school)

Assoc. Prof. Bruce ARNOLD

Prof. Sascha Dov BACHMANN

Assoc. Prof. Cristy CLARK

Dr. Ivana DAMJANOVIC

Dr Jenny FU

Prof. Alison GERARD

Dr. Andrew HENDERSON

Dr. Alison MCLENNAN,

Assoc. Prof. Susan PRIEST,

Assoc. Prof. Trevor RYAN,

Prof. Benedict SHEEHY

(POLITICAL SCIENCE, APPLIED ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

Dr. John HAWKINS
(head of school, macroeconomics and behavioural economics)

Dr. Jane ALVER
(deputy head of school, public policy)

Dr. Craig APPLEGATE
(international economics)

Prof. Uwe DULLECK
(Executive Dean, behavioural economics)

Prof. Ben FREYENS
(labour economics)

Dr. Jean- Paul GAGNON
(political science)

Dr. Tesfaye GEBREMEDHIN
(development economics, health economics)

Prof. Xiaodong GONG
(Applied economics)

Dr. Max HALUPKA
(political communication)

Dr. Michael JENSEN
(political communication)

Prof. Peter LEAHY AC
(defence and national security policy)

Assoc. Prof. Raymond LI
(applied econometrics)

Prof. Riyana MIRANTI,
(social economics and development economics)

Dr. Jonathan PICKERING
(democracy and justice)

Assoc. Prof. Leonora RISSE
(economics and gender)

Assoc. Prof. Yogi VIDYATTAMA
(macroeconomics)

Dr. Benjamin VU
(applied economics)

Assoc. Prof. Mary WALSH
(political science)

Assoc. Prof. Michael WALSH
(political communication)

Centre for Deliberative Democracy

Prof. Selen ERCAN
(director)

Hans ASENBAUM

John DRYZEK

Jordan McSWINEY

Simon NIEMEYER

Adele WEBB

Centre for Environmental Governance
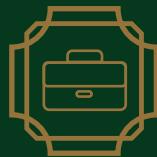
Prof. Jacki SCHIRMER
(director)

Lain DARE

Evan HAMMAN

Leonie PEARSON

Elise REMLING

Prof. Darren SINCLAIR

The Transformative Service Mediator for a strengths based approach to service delivery

Supervisor:
Professor Raechel Johns (marketing)

Raechel is a Professor of Marketing, with a specific focus in services, but also has interest in management projects. She is happy to supervise a number of topics, but is particularly interested in service for wellbeing; technology to facilitate service delivery; service quality, skills shortages and workplace productivity.

Cosupervisor(s):
Dr Janet Davey, Victoria University of Wellington (external).

Description:
The Transformative Service Mediator (TSM) was introduced in the academic literature by Johns and Davey (2019), and has emerged as a way of enabling service delivery for consumers that may need more support. However, the concept has had little empirical investigation and practical application, despite wide take-up in the academic literature. An honours project could explore research related to the TSM in contexts such as aged care, foster care, disability supports and others. The project will take a strengths-based approach to service delivery.

The use of AI and robotics in Canberra workplaces

Supervisor:
Professor Raechel Johns

Raechel is a Professor of Marketing, with a specific focus in services, but also has interest in management projects. She is happy to supervise a number of topics, but is particularly interested in service for wellbeing; technology to facilitate service delivery; service quality, skills shortages and workplace productivity.

Cosupervisors:
Dr Irfan Khan (internal) and Prof Naomi Dale (external)

Description:
This honours project extends a widescale study conducted by Prof. Johns on skills shortages in The ACT a few years ago, and the application of AI and robotics by Canberra workplaces requires further investigation. This study will explore how organisations are using AI and robotics, or what they need to be ready for implementation within the organisations.

The role of authentic leadership in fostering psychological safety within Australian SMEs

Supervisor:
Dr Sarvjeet Kaur Chatrath (management)

Sarvjeet is an award-winning scholar of management and leadership. She has over 26 years of extensive and diverse work experience academic and industry research including financial planning, marketing, and establishing institutions from start-up to sustainability. Her industry translation research harnesses academia-industry linkages she has sustained through her involvement with industry as a scholar/practitioner. This rich experience informs Dr Chatrath's impact-driven approach to research by focusing on sound methodologies to deliver tangible societal change at the individual and institutional levels.

Description:
This topic investigates the direct relationship between authentic leadership (transparent, self-aware, ethical) and the development of psychological safety within teams. The research focuses on Australian Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), examining how leaders' genuine and values-driven approaches contribute to creating a climate where team members feel safe to speak up, take risks, and express ideas without fear of negative consequences.

A Comparative Study of Sustainability Reporting Quality Before and After COVID-19: Evidence from ASX Listed Companies

Supervisor:
Associate Prof Habib Zaman Khan (accounting)

Habib is an educator and researcher having expertise in conducting research in the space of sustainability reporting, carbon reporting and their impact on firm value in the capital market, as well as multi-dimensional performance measurement. Currently holding Director role at the Postgraduate Accounting program, Dr Khan supervised multiple HDR students to completion and eager to supervise more Hons students.

Cosupervisor:
Dr Angela Kantor

Description:
This project will examine the quality and transparency of sustainability reporting by ASX-listed Australian companies (top 200) from pre- to post-COVID-19, spanning a 10-year period. Utilising a developed sustainability reporting quality index, it will assess if the pandemic, as a "stress test," altered firms' commitment to credible disclosures. The findings will highlight long-term efforts, detect symbolic compliance or greenwashing, and inform regulators and firms on improving genuine sustainability performance and transparency.

New technology and human behaviour, how does society change?

Supervisor:
Dr Ryan Payne (marketing and management)

Ryan is a specialist in online personalisation, particularly utilizing biometric artificial intelligence to capture consumer intentions through techniques like eye tracking and facial recognition. Watch 'The social dilemma' on Netflix to see Ryan presenting or 'The Great Hack' to see his work implemented. Ryan' research addresses the privacy implications resulting from surveillance capitalism and developing public policies for AI Governance. Ryan is the director of the new CanBe Lab (Canberra Behaviour Lab) as well as is a UN Delegate on AI Governance.

Co-Supervisors:
Michael Jensen

Description:
This honours topic will explore how new technology is affecting human behaviour. The project will adopt a business perspective with concepts around how technology changes consumer lives. In particular the thesis will examine topics on consumer behaviour, technology acceptance and privacy implications. An experimentalist, Ryan looks to perform research with human subjects, however, is open to the discussion of surveillance capitalisms impact on society.

The responsible use of Gen AI in social marketing

Supervisor:
Professor Rebekah Russell-Bennett (marketing)

Rebekah's research is in the field of social marketing (behaviour change) and often involves the use of technology. She has worked in a variety of contexts including preventative health, biomedical, energy, public transport, education and human services. She has supervised over 50 students and received the 2024 Best supervisor in an Australian business school award.

Cosupervisor:
Dr Ryan Payne (director Canberra Behavioural Lab)

Description:
This honours project would investigate the use of generative AI (Gen AI) in social marketing programs for behaviour change. The research would explore how Gen AI can be leveraged to design innovative "products" (e.g., personalised tools, prompts, services or resources) and optimise "place" (e.g., tailoring access or delivery channels) to facilitate desired behaviours. Critical aspects include examining the efficacy of AI-generated interventions in promoting tangible changes, assessing the ethical considerations of AI-driven influence across the entire marketing mix, and developing frameworks for the responsible deployment of Gen AI to create impactful and equitable social marketing solutions. This project would be done with the Canberra Behavioural Lab.

The impact of robot-provided social support on consumer behaviour in social marketing programs

Supervisor:
Professor Rebekah Russell-Bennett (marketing)

Rebekah's research is in the field of social marketing (behaviour change) and often involves the use of technology. She has worked in a variety of contexts including preventative health, biomedical, energy, public transport, education and human services. She has supervised over 50 students and received the 2024 Best supervisor in an Australian business school award.

Cosupervisor:
Associate Professor Kate Letheren, Australian Catholic University and Dr Chelsea Phillips, UNSW

Description:
This honours project proposes to investigate the impact of different types of social support provided by a Temi robot on consumer reactions and subsequent behaviour change within a social marketing context. Specifically, it will explore how varying expressions of informational, emotional, network, tangible or esteem support delivered by Temi influence consumer perceptions of trust, credibility, and empathy towards the robot, and ultimately, their engagement with pro-social behaviours (e.g., adherence to health guidelines, sustainable practices). The project will also examine possible unintended effects of over-reliance on automated support. This project would be done with the Canberra Behavioural Lab.

SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT POTENTIAL HONOURS TOPICS

To what extent will exporting countries "Eat" Trump's tariffs?

Supervisor:
Dr Craig Applegate

Over the years, Craig has served on the panels of 11 successful research degrees students (Doctorates and Masters) as well as several honours students.

Cosupervisor:
Emeritus Professor Anne Daly

Description:
To what extent is the U.S. able to drive down the international prices of the goods that it imports by imposing import tariffs? Use optimal tariff theory and a review of the literature to estimate what proportion of Trump's tariffs will be borne by U.S. consumers and what proportion will be borne by exporting countries? How does the answer to this question vary by industry?

Behavioural Economics of Cryptocurrency Investment Decisions

Supervisor:
Professor Uwe Dulleck, Executive Dean

Uwe is a Professor of Economics, his research (and supervision) covers behavioural economics, applied economic theory, and Game Theory. He is interested in projects that are relevant for government or organisations work with and for government.

Co-supervisor:
to be advised

Description:
This honours research topic investigates Australian retail investors' cryptocurrency decision-making through a behavioural economics lens, aiming to understand the cognitive biases and heuristics influencing their choices. The findings will inform policy recommendations for the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) on the regulation of financial services involving crypto assets, ultimately seeking to enhance consumer protection in this volatile market.

Border control as a credence good

Supervisor:
Professor Uwe Dulleck
Uwe is a Professor of Economics, his research (and supervision) covers behavioural economics, applied economic theory, and Game Theory. He is interested in projects that are relevant for governement or organisations work with and for government.

Co-supervisors:
Dr John Hawkins and Dr Raymond Li

Description:
Border control can be framed as a credence good, where the quality of the service—namely, its effectiveness in preventing illegal crossings or smuggling—is difficult for citizens to verify directly, even after the service has been "consumed." Citizens must trust that the government is providing a high-quality service, as they cannot easily assess the true number of successful illicit entries or the effectiveness of enforcement measures. This trust-based relationship makes it a compelling topic for a research project on public policy, information asymmetry, and government accountability. Read Dulleck and Kerschbamer (2006) on the Economics of Credence Goods in the Journal of Economic Literature.

Patient experience and economic disadvantage in NSW

Supervisor:
Dr Yogi Vidyattama

Dr Yogi Vidyattama has supervised more than 10 HDR students to completion and focuses his work in spatial and geographical economic analysis especially in economic growth, income and wealth distribution and inequality. The main analysis method used are microsimulation modelling, econometrics and spatial mapping.

Co-supervisor:
Dr Benjamin Vu

Description:
The purpose of this project is to explore the relationship between patient experience and socioeconomic disadvantage in NSW, by profiling the demographic composition and experience of people accessing GP, medical specialist, dental and emergency department services at small area level (ASGS-SA2). This includes mapping the spatial pattern and risk factors relating to poor patient experience and access to health care. It provides a sophisticated picture of how different cohorts of the population living in different locations experience health care related to frequency of visits, affordability, wait times and satisfaction with time spent with a health practitioner. It is the second in a series of patient experience research conducted by NCOSS with the University of Canberra that allows us to compare data estimations for 2018 and 2022.

Demographics of the ACT Supreme Court 1934-2024

Supervisor:

Associate Professor Bruce Baer Arnold.

Bruce has a background in legal history, biography, enlightenment, sovereign citizens, animal rights, rights of nature, vetting and de-extinction.

Description:

Judges in Australia are typically assumed to be male, straight, white, protestant, from a professional family, educated at a private school and sandstone university, and with experience at a Big Five law firm. This project builds and analyses a biographical database covering judges of the ACT Supreme Court. An anticipated outcome is publication in multiple law journals demonstrating continuities and movement to a more inclusive judiciary as a reflection of evolving perceptions of justice. The project would provide a base for a larger-scale doctoral dissertation. Models are provided in work by Ronald Syme, Thomas Piketty and Lewis Namier.

Disinformation and foreign influence targeting Australia and society

Supervisor:

Professor Sascha Dov Bachmann

Sascha is interested in topics that matter in terms of human security, cyber, human rights, transitional justice, war and peace. Work on what makes it to the ABC and what moves us in Australia. Motivated to know more and find answers which are based on research and the application of knowledge on real world problems.

Cosupervisor:

Dr Michael Jensen

Description:

Our democracy and our political system in Australia is under constant attack by domestic and foreign actors trying to undermine our trust in our democratic institutions and bodies. Disinformation and foreign influence are mostly intertwined and often interconnected. New technologies and communication applications in the mass social media are opportunistically exploited by our adversaries to influence various sections and demographics in our society. The challenge is to respond to these multifaceted and often multidomain malicious operations aimed at our society's resilience and confidence. This honours project would look into the mechanisms of disinformation and foreign influence from a multi-disciplinary angle of politics, law and society, war studies and technological advancements of both threats and responses.

AI and participatory democracy

Supervisor:
Dr Hans Asenbaum

Hans is interested in supervising projects in deliberative, participatory or radical democracy, social movements, democratic innovations and: *AI, digital platforms, technology * gender, feminist, queer studies * race, decolonial theories * nonhumans, animals, nature * new materialism, assemblage theory * play, arts, nonverbal participation * participatory and action research.

Co-supervisor:
Dr Adele Webb

Description:
As generative AI tools rapidly change how we work, live and think, we urgently need to assess what this means for democratic participation. This honours project brings together insights from the rapidly expanding literature and practice of employing AI in public engagement, democratic innovations, social movements and other forms of civic engagement.

CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE POTENTIAL HONOURS TOPICS

Discourses of digital aid in the Pacific: explorations of innovation and resistance

Supervisor:
Dr. Kirsty Anantharajah

Kirsty is an interdisciplinary scholar whose work primarily spans climate change, justice and environmental markets in the Asia Pacific region. Her disciplinary background is in sociology, law and society, and science and technology studies. She is particularly interested in supporting projects surrounding environmental justice, and power dynamics in development contexts.

Description:
This project explores the role of digital and AI technologies in responding to climate change and relocation in Pacific Island Nations. Focusing particularly on Tuvalu's plans to create a 'Digital State' in response to escalating climate catastrophe, this project unpacks discourses of power and resistance through document analysis. The project will look at the discourses emanating from various stakeholder sources: from Tuvalu's government, particularly in international forums; from the tech innovators tasked with constructing Tuvalu's digital twin; and from civil society actors.

Impacts of Sustainability Reporting on Small to Medium Australian Businesses

Supervisor:
Dr Evan Hamman, Centre for Environmental Governance

Evan is a research fellow at the Centre for Environmental Governance. His research examines the design and implementation of environmental laws in Australia and internationally.

Cosupervisor:
Dr Hao Yang, Faculty of Business, Government and Law, University of Canberra. Dr Yang is an expert in sustainability accounting.

Description:
This honours project investigates the impacts of mandatory sustainability reporting rules on small to medium-sized Australian enterprises. Whilst big businesses are currently captured by legislation, and have had experience in negotiating other complicated regulatory frameworks, small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) have had less exposure. The impact of new rules on their activities is unknown. This project will investigate the extent to which SMEs can adapt to new sustainability reporting requirements and what support systems may need to be in place. This project would suit a law, accounting, business or policy-focused student interested in the intersection between sustainability and company behaviour.

Community attitudes to renewable energy project – insights from the Regional Wellbeing Survey

Supervisor:
Prof Jacki Schirmer, Centre for Environmental Governance

Jacki is the Director of the Centre for Environmental Governance. Her research examines the intersection of human wellbeing and changing climate and access to natural resources.

Cosupervisor:
TBD

Description:
In this project you will analyse data collected as part of the nationwide Regional Wellbeing Survey on community attitudes to renewable energy projects. The survey has collected over a decade of data on acceptability of solar and wind farms, and you will identify the factors predicting levels of acceptance using statistical analysis. This project involves analysis of large data sets and you will be provided access to training in use of the IBM SPSS software as part of your training, as well as statistical support.

Community attitudes to renewable energy project – community insights

Supervisor:
Prof Jacki Schirmer, Centre for Environmental Governance

Jacki is the Director of the Centre for Environmental Governance. Her research examines the intersection of human wellbeing and changing climate and access to natural resources.
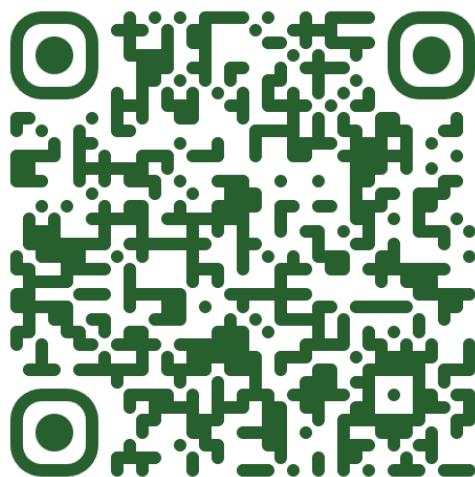
Cosupervisor:
TBD

Description:
In this project you will use qualitative techniques to identify factors that may be contributing to a decline in community acceptance of renewable energy projects in rural areas. You will use methods such as interviews and/or focus groups with rural residents (these will typically be conducted online, not requiring travel). The findings will seek to understand the experiences of rural residents and how these are shaping attitudes to renewable energy projects occurring in their region.

UC's Honours Application Portal

https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/SCH001/3/2026

Defy Gravity with BGL Honours