Welcome!

OASES Graduate School offers an innovative, fully accredited postgraduate program that genuinely addresses the great challenges and opportunities of our time. We provide an education more directly relevant to our participants’ lives and work, one that empowers them to imagine and bring about personal, organisational and social change.

Our program is unique within Australia for its focus on transformative learning. Transformative learning involves deep changes in the way we think, feel and act that have a profound impact on how we live our lives. It is a kind of learning that transforms your relationship with the world and enables you to imagine and work towards a more sustainable, just and joyful future.

Our participants live and work in a diverse range of places, with varied capacities and interests. These include the fields of sustainability, environment, health, politics, design, agriculture, economics, leadership, the arts, philosophy, sociology, community development, social justice and many others. Your learning at OASES will be useful and applicable in all workplaces and community arenas as well as your personal life and relationships.
We strive to...

Contribute to a world where people recognise they are part of a natural global ecosystem & live sustainably in community with all human & non-human beings.

Provide a mindful learning environment where individuals can gain a better understanding of their relationship with the world while developing the ability to live sustainably & engage in seeking solutions to the pressing ecological & social challenges of our time.

There is a wealth of knowledge, experience and wisdom amongst OASES teachers, who approach learning by way of ‘living the questions’, as Rilke would say, rather than becoming side-tracked by a search for answers.

There’s a capacity for deep listening as we explore our own learning journey and allow our project or thesis to emerge. There’s a humility demonstrated by teachers, stepping outside the role of expert and instead nurturing for each one of us our unique learning edges and challenges. OASES is an inspiration in education and I feel privileged to be part of the School.

– Nikki Marshall
Masters Program Structure

We offer a Masters Program of three to four years duration with nested exits after year one or year two.

Our program is structured around four key learning areas: the aesthetic, the social, the ecological and the spiritual.

Participants undertake units in each of these areas, drawing the threads of these areas together in the ‘double unit’ that runs throughout each full year, Integrative Conversations.

1st year (Grad.Cert) core units
- Integrative Conversations 1 (Semester 1)
- Entering the Ecological Domain (Semester 1)
- Entering the Aesthetic Domain (Semester 1)
- Entering the Social Domain (Semester 2)
- Entering the Spiritual Domain (Semester 2)

2nd & 3rd year core units
- Integrative Conversations 2 (Semester 1)
- Integrative Conversations 3 (Semester 2)

2nd & 3rd year electives (2014)
- Media Time Consciousness: Community Media Production (Semester 1)
- Philosophies of the Good Society (Semester 2)
- Myth Mapping (Semester 2)
- Co-evolving Spirituality for Life (Semester 2)

3rd & (if required) 4th year
- Research project of your choice (Semester 2)
Duration & Workload

Our course is generally taken part-time with monthly 2 to 3 day seminars/workshops & classes generally held on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays & Mondays.

This structure has been designed to minimise impact on weekday commitments, allowing people to attend while working, and those living outside Melbourne more opportunity to participate.

In first and second year there are 26 days of timetabled class time across 13 weekends each year. In the third and fourth year there are 10 days of discussion seminar classes, regular one-on-one work with a facilitator (1 hour per month for 20 months) and 2 elective units of 4 days duration each.

The expectation is that in addition to this timetabled program you will engage in private study for approximately 180 hours each year in the first and second years and approximately 600 hours over the 3rd and 4th years. This includes the undertaking of a research project of your choice.

“
I was looking to change direction personally and professionally. I had a desire for intellectual stimulation and the OASES course seemed to match my interests much more than any other course I could find. My experience so far is good. The mode of delivery of the course is conversational and it is fantastic to work in small groups.

– Sean O’Sullivan

RPL

Recognition of Prior Learning

Applications are invited for recognised prior learning from other courses or work experience of relevance to the OASES program. Credit may be awarded to successful applicants for one or more elective units.

Students and graduates of the Graduate Certificate in Sustainability at Swinburne University are particularly encouraged to apply for RPL as a pathway to entering the OASES Masters program.

For more information on entry & degree requirements visit oases.edu.au
Postgraduate Courses

How do we…?

*Respond to the ecological & social crises of our time?*
*Thrive in the face of change & uncertainty?*
*Put our values, visions & intention into practice?*

The OASES Graduate Program is for anyone looking for a place to engage deeply & rigorously with these questions.

We look at these & the many other complex dilemmas facing us as we try to live lives of integrity & make a positive difference in the world.

**Master of Sustainability and Social Change**

3 to 4 years part-time degree achieved upon your successful completion of *Graduate Diploma in Sustainability and Social Change*, a 7th core unit, 2 electives & an action research project.

Our Masters is a three to four year program whose first two years comprise the Graduate Diploma.

In third and fourth years, students complete two more elective units and participate in final *Integrative Conversations* units but your main engagement will be through your research project. Masters projects take a wide variety of shapes and are tailored to each participant’s needs and place in life.

Your choice of co-visor, a mentor from the faculty, will work alongside you as you engage in your Masters project. In general, however, your Masters project will be an application of the learning that has taken place within OASES and towards transforming some aspect of your own life, seeking to more deeply recognise your place in the world and how you can contribute towards more positive social and ecological change.

For more information visit oases.edu.au/masters
Graduate Diploma in Sustainability and Social Change

2 year part-time degree, equivalent to the first 2 years of the OASES Masters Program, achieved upon successful completion of the Graduate Certificate in Sustainability and Social Change, plus a 6th core unit and 4 electives.

The Graduate Diploma is a two-year program which follows the Graduate Certificate with Integrative Conversations 2, run over 10 days throughout the second year, and four elective units of your choice. Your choice of co-visor, a mentor from the faculty, will work alongside you as you engage in your Degree.

Electives offered in 2014 are described over page and you can find a full list of previously offered electives on our website.

For more information visit oases.edu.au/graduate-diploma

Graduate Certificate in Sustainability and Social Change

1 year part-time degree, equivalent to the first year of the OASES Masters Program, achieved upon successful completion of the first year core units.

The Graduate Certificate covers the first year of the Masters program and is centred around Integrative Conversations 1, a discussion seminar which runs over 10 days throughout the year.

Each of the four foundational units usually consist of four full-day workshops, and include two residential programs off-campus at Moora Moora and Dunkeld respectively.

These programs provide grounding in the four learning areas around which the course is structured: the aesthetic, the social, the ecological and the spiritual. Your choice of co-visor, a mentor from the faculty, will work alongside you as you engage in your Degree.

For more information visit oases.edu.au/graduate-certificate

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First Year Units (2014)

Integrative Conversations 1, with Dr Tricia Hiley & Chris Lloyd
Friday Feb. 28, Sunday March 2; Monday May 5; Sunday June 29; Monday Aug. 11; Sunday Sept. 7; Monday Oct. 13; Friday Dec. 5, Saturday Dec. 6, Sunday Dec. 7
Please note: No second semester intake.

The ways we think about language and perceive the world (consciously and unconsciously), and the worldviews that emerge, have important consequences for our actions, values and ways of being in the world. As individuals and as members of society, organisations, families etc. we are continually making decisions about how we live, what we learn and how we lead others.

In our Integrative Conversations we focus our attention on becoming increasingly mindful of our everyday choices and practice, considering them as holding the potential for transformation. Many writers argue that the great challenges and opportunities of our time (ecological, spiritual, social, political) require an engagement with transformed ways of understanding the reality of which we are a part. In a dynamic, experiential environment, you will explore the assumptions within which you learn and upon which you make choices and take action. You will experience learning as a new way of thinking and being in the world.

Drawing on the application of learning theory, chaos and complexity theory, and theories of ‘structures of consciousness’, we explore the emerging possibilities for a growing consciousness and the world that emerges. You will participate in conversations about how this way of thinking about the world may transform our actions, experiences and ways of being in the world. We will consciously and practically develop our own ‘integrative and transformative practice’, together.
Leading Minds Making a World of Difference

Entering the Ecological Domain, with Dr Peter Cock & Sandra Cock
Friday March 21, 6-8pm introduction (OASES); weekend at Moora Moora, Thursday evening till Sunday afternoon April 3–6; debriefing Friday April 11, 6-8pm (OASES)

Entering the Ecological Domain, we wish to reclaim the notion of re-enchantment. We explore the interconnections between spirit, nature and humanity at a time of increasing environmental degradation. We address the evolution of the Western disconnection of mind with the natural world and pose the question through theory and praxis: In what ways can sacred nature encounters lead to insight, personal transformation and earth-caring?

The central belief is that environmental problems are problems of the human condition, which may be addressed by a conscious reconnection of the human spirit with the spirit of nature. We explore the motivations, commitments and experiences of people involved in environmental policy, advocacy and change, at a community level, a personal level, more broadly at a cultural level and on a global scale. We develop frameworks for social, environmental and personal sustainability in a spiritual framework.

Together we delve into structures of conserver and consumer society; analyse reasons (social, political, economic, cultural) for the current ecological crisis; and address the process of recreating sacred relationships between human and earth in ways that embrace diversity, ecosystems, balance, beauty and love. The core of this domain is passion, for both environmental and social justice.

Entering the Aesthetic Domain, with Dr Kristin Diemer & Alan Browne
Sunday May 4; Sunday June 1, Monday June 2; Saturday June 28

We make visual, aural and kinaesthetic choices every moment as we navigate daily life. Entering the Aesthetic Domain, central integral questions of aesthetics are explored through media scenarios, colour, photographs, ritual interaction, visual thinking and voice. We explore the social construction and social expression of self and identity, exploring aspects in the world around us that influence and shape our identity as well as exploring how identity and perception of ‘self’ shapes our understanding of the world.

We attempt to heal aspects of the socio-culturally induced schism between the rational-logical and intuitive-creative, integrating the intuitive and the rational mind through experiential learning, art practice, and meditation, giving the mind space through which our thoughts, ideas and perceptions can be digested, or simply released. Over time participants uncover principles of aesthetic judgments, cultural preferences and prejudices, and develop their own praxis in communication for social change, identifying integrated layers of social, ecological and spiritual forces in the materialisation of aesthetic forms.
First Year Units (2014) Cont.

Entering the Social Domain, with Dr Jacques Boulet & Dr Altin Gavranovic
Saturday Aug. 9; Friday Sept. 5, Saturday Sept. 6; Sunday Oct. 12

Entering the Social Domain, participants are guided through a critical analysis of our common understanding of processes of social change, and of ways of influencing such processes. Philosophical, theoretical and methodological issues underpinning our notions of culture, organisation, development, change, innovation, progress and the like are examined and their consequences for practice reflected upon and discussed.

Our own implication in societal and organisational complexities, processes and relationships (global, institutional, every-day and ‘mental’) are reflected upon, so that practical changes can be considered. And the technical / methodical strategic discussions we have are firmly rooted in reflections about fundamental issues, to do with how we lead our every-day lives and how we relate to one another and to the world around us. The unit is essentially about eco-ethics and socio-ethics towards more sustainable community building and development.

Entering the Spiritual Domain, with Paul Sanders & Peter Ross
Friday Oct. 11 introduction (at OASES);
Weekend at Dunkeld Thursday evening till Sunday afternoon Nov. 6-9

Considering spiritual life as conscious presence in the world, we invite participants to critically reflect on the personal and social characteristics of emergent self-consciousness, which we explore through personal and group engagement, including pre-reflective consciousness, reflective consciousness and non-dual awareness.

Dialogue and self-questioning are used to open the internal and external dimensions of this awareness. We explore self-emergence as it pertains to the importance and urgency of understanding the place of the Earth-Self, including a comparative examination of spirituality as a social and cosmic reality through the windows of contemporary feminist thought and Eco-psychology.

Participants develop a variety of psycho-spiritual and eco-spiritual practices, approaches and attitudes instructive for the integration of mind and body; learning to relate, within the OASES learning environment, as an intentional commitment to others and as the reciprocal and mutual enactment of self-emergence as intentional presence.
# First Year Calendar 2014

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- **Integrative Conversations 1**: I.C-1
- **Entering the Ecological Domain**: E.E.D
- **Entering the Aesthetic Domain**: E.A.D
- **Entering the Social Domain**: E.S.D
- **Entering the Spiritual Domain**: E.Sp.D

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*Leading Minds Making a World of Difference*
The OASES Experience

What else do our students have to say about their time at OASES?

“Becoming a member of the OASES community, and a participant in the Masters program has been an immensely enriching and rewarding experience for me. Participants are encouraged to learn through more traditional means, such as reading and researching, and also through their own lived experiences and reflections – allowing an integration of learning with one’s whole self and ways of seeing and knowing the world.

This way of learning and sharing also encourages connecting our learning and development with having a positive impact in the ‘real world’.”  
– Charlotte Almond

“When I look back at my time with OASES, I am grateful for the respect and encouragement given to deep inquiry and reflection. This deep questioning was not experienced in isolation but was shared amongst the participants and facilitators, as we grappled together with the complex issues of ecology, aesthetics, social responsibility and spirituality, and their integration.

Our learning was deeply personal but collective as well. It felt organic. We lived and breathed the questions together. My previous experience of learning, in comparison, felt static and lifeless.”  
– Julie Clarke
2nd & 3rd Year Core Units

Integrative Conversations 2, with Dr Robert Hoskin & Dr Jenni Goricanec
Friday February 28; Sunday March 2; Monday April 7; Monday May 5; Sunday June 29; Monday August 11; Monday October 13; Friday December 5; Saturday December 6; Sunday December 7; Please note: No second semester intake.

Second Year Integrative Conversations, part of the Graduate Diploma, is a forum for participants to further develop new thinking and practice, as they contemplate proposals for their Masters projects. Participants engage as a group and individually, in practice and conversation about different techniques that can facilitate ongoing integrative and transformative practice.

In this year the group leadership shifts further from the facilitators towards the participants. This builds the foundation for Integrative Conversations 3, and the Masters course level generally, where participants engage in the relatively unstructured and individual work of the research project. Integrative Conversations becomes a focus of support to participants’ learning throughout their project development.

Integrative Conversations 3, with Dr Jacques Boulet & Dr Kristin Diemer
Friday February 28; Sunday March 2; Monday April 7; Monday May 5; Sunday June 29; Monday August 11; Monday October 13; Friday December 5; Saturday December 6; Sunday December 7 Please note: No second semester intake.

As participants in third and fourth years have entered the ‘project phase’ towards completion of their Masters Degree, they will be offered the assistance of a ‘co-visor’ from the faculty staff. Co-visioning is a supportive dialogue between participant and co-visor. It is established as a process within Integrative Conversations, and through individual arrangements made between participants and co-visors during second year and/or during the transition from second to third year.

Integrative Conversations continues in a modified and restricted format throughout the third and fourth years, acting as ‘Graduate Seminars/ Conversations’ where, in a mutually supportive learning environment, participants have the opportunity to share with each other their ‘progress’, blockages, findings and insights, and will maintain a sense of the dialogic enquiry approach typical of all learning at OASES.
2nd & 3rd Year Elective Units

Media Time & Consciousness, with Dr Jose Ramos
Friday April 4; Saturday May 31; Sunday June 1; Saturday June 28

In order for us to address the complex challenges of the 21st century, we must first learn how the challenges we face are framed and rendered by the media, the consciousness such media speaks to, or is spoken by, and understand how communication processes are complicit in the problems we face. From here we can begin to re-frame, re-image and reconceptualise these challenges, and develop new ways of addressing these challenges through media production and communication.

The theoretical basis of this unit rests upon the notion of ‘temporal conscientisation’, referring to our capacity to empower ourselves through a re-contextualising of our place in time. As we learn more about our histories, how our world has come to be the way it is (and the stories that offer these explanations), and as we learn about our futures (including the various challenges we are facing as people and as a planet in the 21st century and beyond), this new expanded context has the capacity to transform our actions in the present. In a sense this means opening our hearts and minds to past and future generations to expand the context of the present moment, as an opportunity for new action. In this unit you will be continuing to develop a theory-practice dialectic through undertaking a media production project.

Philosophies of the Good Society, with Dr Cristina Neesham
Saturday & Sunday September 20-21; Saturday & Sunday October 25-26

In this unit we explore the fundamental principles of the good society through three dominant paradigms of philosophical thought about social progress: the scientific-technological paradigm, the economic paradigm, and the political paradigm. The unit explores the co-ordinates of humanism and anti-reductionism in creating a ‘good society’ based on eudemonic principles, which postulate that the role of society is to facilitate (rather than obstruct) human fulfilment.

We then examine and debate the crucial question of whether such a society is possible, and if so, in what conditions. The body of knowledge informing this unit includes perspectives on the good society ranging from 18th c. Enlightenment (Adam Smith) and 19th c. political philosophy (J. S. Mill and Karl Marx) to modern and contemporary developments of holistic social projects (Hayek, Ellul, Lippman, Rawls, Hamilton). The conversation is open to a plurality of epistemological perspectives, developed in a symbiotic process of mutually beneficial relating and learning between facilitator and participants.
Co-evolving Spirituality for Life, with Dr Peter Cock & Dr Caresse Cranwell
Weekend at Moora Moora, Thursday evening till Sunday afternoon November 20–23

In this unit we explore our beliefs within the context of our personal and cultural developmental stories. We situate ourselves within an evolutionary cosmology and within the developmental history of consciousness. We own the rise of our human species’ power and a decline in the significance of ideas of God or Gods. We will explore the question of what an engaged spirituality of today looks like. Where are our evolutionary edges? How are we invited to participate more fully in the unfolding mystery of existence? How does this engagement shape our societal, ascetic and ecological worldviews and actions?

Central to human life is the desire to plumb the depths of the mystery of our existence and live according to what is true, good and beautiful. And yet, in this post-modern world all truths are partial. Truth seeking is a process of unfoldment wherein what was true in one period may be seen to be only partially true in another. The test of truth is how validly it orients us to creatively participate in the evolving world in each era. Spiritual knowing is formed within each one of us by the means we engage truth seeking, the structure of belief that we bring to each encounter with mystery and our ability to engage in the co-revelatory process.

Myth Mapping, with Dr Rob Hoskin & Eleni Rivers
Sunday & Monday September 7-8; Saturday & Sunday November 8-9

In this unit we explore several major myths that have influenced our Western consciousness as a way to understand what it means to be ‘Australian’ in the 21st Century. One of the key objectives of the unit will be to identify the myths operating in our own lives and to creatively engage with them. Myth mapping will involve us in several of the following ways:

- Start by walking the labyrinth, exploring its relationship with the journey of our lives
- Research stories and myths from various cultures and traditions using insights from Carl Jung, Marion Woodman and Joseph Campbell and other writers on archetypal psychology
- Briefly analyse contemporary Australian mythmaking and its rich history to identify some of the layers contributing to our identity as Australians, e.g. Indigenous, pioneer and recent immigrants
- Focus on issues of our relationship with land, Spirit and what it means to relate to those of different cultures
- Consider the clash of mythological realities that have occurred as a result of this experience and the inevitable conflict between Western aesthetics and its mythological structure and indigenous values and beliefs
- Consider mythological archetypes manifest in popular culture
- Relate what we have found to be our own experience through reflection and creative processes.