About the Obligations Group

The Obligations Group at Melbourne Law School supports research and scholarly discourse on the law of obligations, which includes the law of contract, tort, unjust enrichment and restitution, equity and trusts, property, remedies and private law theory. The group provides a forum for academic discussion of these topics and facilitates interaction between academics and practitioners on issues of current interest.

People

Professors Elise Bant and Matthew Harding continued in their roles as joint convenors of the Obligations Group in 2015.

The members of the Obligations Group in 2015 were:

- Associate Professor Katy Barnett
- Emeritus Professor Michael Bryan
- Mr Arlen Duke
- Mr Matthew Bell
- Mr Andrew Godwin
- Dr Linda Haller
- Dr Rosemary Langford
- Professor Ian Malkin
- Associate Professor Jeannie Paterson
- Professor Andrew Robertson
Graduate Research Students

MLS Research Higher Degree students affiliated with the Obligations Group in 2015 included Michael Crawford, Tobias Barkley, Robyn Honey, Kate Galloway, Grant Reithmuller and Paul Collins.

Visitors

In 2015 the Obligations Group hosted a number of international scholars working in the field, including Professor Andrew Gold of De Paul University, Dr Eric Descheemaeker of the University of Edinburgh, and Professor William Swadling of the University of Oxford.

Research and teaching

Obligations Group members teach in the areas of Equity and Trusts, Property, Private Law Theory, Consumer Law, Contract Law, Remedies, Tort and Restitution.

Members also produce a substantial number and range of publications each year. Members draw on their research also to contribute to public debate on topical issues arising in this field. Below is an indicative list of publications produced by members of the Obligations Group over 2015.

Selected books


Selected peer-reviewed articles


Selected book chapters and other publications

Elise Bant and Jeannie Paterson, ‘Limitations on Defendant Liability for Misleading or Deceptive Conduct under Statute: Some Insights from Negligent Misstatement’ in K Barker, W Swain and R Grantham (eds.), The Law of
Misstatements: 50 Years on from Hedley Byrne v Heller (Hart Publishing, 2015) 159-190.


Selected conference presentations


Rosemary Teele Langford, ‘Challenges Posed by Directors’ Duties’, panel presentation at joint seminar of the Centre for Corporations Law and Securities Regulation and Commercial Bar Association of Victoria, 3 May 2015.


Matthew Harding, ‘Disgorgement of Profit and Fiduciary Loyalty’ presented by invitation at the Compensation and Disgorgement Remedies Workshop, University of New South Wales, August 2015.


Matthew Harding, ‘Fiduciary Undertakings’ to be presented by invitation at the Contract, Fiduciaries and Status Symposium, McGill University, November 2015.
**Engagement activities**

The events calendar of the Obligations Group has been expanding each year. The lunchtime seminar series has continued to provide a regular focal point for Group members and colleagues. This year the Group hosted members of the judiciary and the academic community in its first roundtable event in July 2015. The format proved highly successful and two roundtable events are planned for 2016 to be co-hosted by the Obligations Group and the Victorian Court of Appeal on the invitation of President Chris Maxwell.

Below is an indicative list of events and activities hosted by the Obligations Group in 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>Lunchtime seminar</td>
<td>Dr Jason Varuhas of the University of New South Wales led a seminar on 'Recognising the Distinctiveness of the Common Law of Review'. Co-hosted with CCCS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>One day conference held at MLS on the theme 'Equity in the Age of Statutes'. Papers were presented by Obligations Group members Emeritus Professor Michael Bryan and Associate Professor Katy Barnett, Professor Matthew Harding, and Associate Professor Jeannie Paterson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Lunchtime seminar</td>
<td>Obligations Group PhD student Michael Crawford led a seminar on 'The Peculiarity of Property'.</td>
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<td>July 23</td>
<td>Lunchtime seminar</td>
<td>Dr Eric Descheemaeker of the University of Edinburgh led a seminar on 'Wrong and Harm: Two Models of Tort Law'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>Lunchtime seminar</td>
<td>Professor Andrew Gold of De Paul University led a seminar on 'Disgorgement and the Right to Do Wrong'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 28</td>
<td>Roundtable</td>
<td>Evening roundtable event on fiduciary duties attended by members of the judiciary and colleagues from other universities. Presentations by visiting Professor Andrew Gold, Professor Matthew Harding and Dr Rosemary Langford.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 6</td>
<td>Public lecture</td>
<td>Professor William Swadling of the University of Oxford gave a very well-attended public lecture on 'Substance and Procedure in Equity'.</td>
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<td>August 11</td>
<td>Lunchtime seminar</td>
<td>Professor Ben McFarlane of University College London led a seminar on 'Equitable Estoppel as a Cause of Action'</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>Lunchtime</td>
<td>Professor Sarah Worthington of the University of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>Lunchtime</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12</td>
<td>Lunchtime</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2-4</td>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Conference</td>
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Report finalised October 2015