

# VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

*Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui*



## SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING AND COMMERCIAL LAW

*Te Kura Kaute, Ture Tauhokohoko*

*Telephone 463 5365, Facsimile 463 5076, Email sacl@vuw.ac.nz*

### **ACCY 401: Methodology in Accounting**

**1st Trimester 2005**

*Master of Commerce and Administration / Bachelor of Commerce and Administration (Hons)*

### **Course Outline**

#### **Course Content**

This course aims to provide students with a solid foundation for research methodology for accounting research. The course focuses on research with a positivist flavour, and examines a number of ways of gaining reliable evidence about an assumed real (but socially constructed) world in which accounting is performed. It thus complements ACCY 421, which explores other ways of conceptualising research in accounting.

#### **Lecturers**

	Office	Telephone
Dr Melvin Roush	Tuesday 11.30-12.30	463 5968
Professor Keitha Dunstan	Monday 9.00-11.00	463 6957

#### **Course Coordinator**

Professor Keitha Dunstan

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Read a typical accounting research article and understand its approach.
2. Construct an appropriate research experiment.
3. Use typical statistical approaches to hypothesis testing and estimation in accounting, whether the data come from experimental, quasi-experimental, or survey sources.
4. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of different methods for gaining evidence about accounting issues.

**Assessment**

Assessment will be based on the following:

- |                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| (a) Presentation      | 10% |
| (b) Participation     | 10% |
| (c) Critiques (2x10%) | 20% |
| (d) Assignment One    | 20% |
| (e) Assignment Two    | 40% |

**Class Times**

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. in GB LT1.

**Tutorials**

None

**Terms Requirements**

None

**Presentations**

Each student will make two group presentations on papers to be assigned by the lecturers from the list of readings for the course. Your group should prepare a précis of the article to be presented (1-2 pages) and distribute it to other members of the class and to the lecturer by noon on the Monday before presentation.

**Critiques & Assignments**

There will be four pieces of assessment due in class on the dates shown.

Critique One (due 8<sup>th</sup> March).

Critique Two (due 22<sup>nd</sup> March).

Assignment One (due 19<sup>th</sup> April).

Assignment 2 (due 7 June; to be confirmed).

**Course Materials and Additional Handouts**

A fee will be charged for course materials.

**Lecture Programme**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecturer</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	22 February	KD	Reading and understanding research
2	1 March	KD	Philosophy of science
3	8 March	KD	Philosophy of science (cont)
4	15 March	KD	Experimental design
5	TBA	KD	Experimental design (cont) & survey methods
6	22 March	KD	Survey methods (cont)
7	19 April	MR	Statistics for estimation – cross-sectional studies
8	26 April	MR	Statistics for estimation – time-series
9	3 May	MR	Scale problems in accounting data
10	10 May	MR	Modelling methods
11	17 May	MR	Experiments
12	24 May	MR	Case studies

### General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

### Student Conduct and Staff Conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct).

### Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the Associate Dean (Students) of your Faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievances Policy which is published on the VUW website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances).

### Plagiarism

Victoria University defines plagiarism as the copying of ideas, organisation, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate reference or acknowledgement so that it appears to be one's own work. This includes published and unpublished work, the Internet and the work of other students and staff. Plagiarism is an example of misconduct in the Statute of Student Conduct. Students who have plagiarised are subject to a range of penalties under the Statute. See the website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct).

### Students with Disabilities

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, then please contact the Course Coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building, or phoning 463-6070, email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz). The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant or the School Prospectus.

### Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, the following staff members will either help you directly or quickly put you in contact with someone who can.

Staff	Faculty	Room number
Sue Dover	Student Support Coordinator, FHSS	2 Wai-te-ata Road
Kirstin Harvey	Law	Old Gvt Building room 103
Liz Richardson	Science and Architecture and Design	Cotton Building room 150

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at [www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/) or email [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz).

VUWSA employs two Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building, phone 463 6983 or 463 6984, email [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz).

**READING**

*This list is likely to evolve somewhat during the course,  
particularly as new articles come to hand. Copies will be provided.  
You should read all articles before the assigned class unless otherwise advised.*

**1: Reading and understanding research**

NA

**2: Philosophy of science**Chalmers, A.F. 1976. *What is This Thing Called Science?* University of Queensland Press

Chapters 1 to 6

**3: Philosophy of science (cont)**TBA Chalmers, A.F. 1976. *What is This Thing Called Science?* University of Queensland Press

Chapters 7 to 13

**4: Experimental design**Cook, T.D. and D.T. Campbell. 1979. *Quasi-Experimentation: Design & Analysis Issues for Field Settings.*

Chapters 1 to 3.

**5: Experimental Design (cont) & Survey Methods**

TBA

**6: Survey Methods (cont)**

TBA

**7: Statistics for estimation – cross-sectional studies**Bannister, J.W. and H.A. Newman. 2003. Analysis of Corporate Disclosures on Relative Performance Evaluation. *Accounting Horizons* 17(3): 235-246.Blundell, B, H. Sayers and Y. Shanahan. 2003. The Adoption and Use of the Balanced Scorecard in New Zealand: A Survey of the Top 40 Companies. *Pacific Accounting Review* 15(1): 49-74.[Background: W.J. Conover. 1999. *Practical Nonparametric Statistics* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.: 68-92. Wiley.S.W. Huck. 2000. *Reading Statistics and Research* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.: 139-159. Addison-Wesley.]

**8: Statistics for estimation – time-series**

Lovell, M.C. 1983. Data mining. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* **LXV**(1): 1-12.

D. Campbell. 2004. A longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis of environmental disclosure in UK companies – a research note. *The British Accounting Review* **36**(1): 107-117.

**9: Scale problems in accounting data**

Lev, B. and S. Sunder. 1979. Methodological issues in the use of financial ratios. *Journal of Accounting and Economics* **1**: 187-210.

Barth, M.E. and S. Kallapur. 1996. The effects of cross-sectional scale differences on regression results in empirical accounting research. *Contemporary Accounting Research* **13**(2): 527-567.

**10: Modelling methods**

Dutta, S. 2003. Capital Budgeting and Managerial Compensation: Incentive and Retention Effects. *The Accounting Review* **78**(1): 71-93.

Dunmore, P.V. and H. Falk. 2001. Economic Competition between Professional Bodies: The Case of Auditing. *American Law and Economics Review* **3**(2): 302-319.

**11: Experiments**

Schulz, A.K-D. and M.M. Cheng. 2002. Persistence in capital budgeting reinvestment decisions – personal responsibility antecedent and information asymmetry moderator: A note. *Accounting and Finance* **42**(1): 73-86.

Ashbaugh, H., K.M. Johnstone and T.D. Warfield. 2002. Outcome Assessment of a Writing-Skill Improvement Initiative: Results and Methodological Implications. *Issues in Accounting Education* **17**(2): 123-148.

**12: Case studies**

Azofra, V., B. Prieto and A. Sanditrián. 2003. The usefulness of a performance measurement system in the daily life of an organisation: a note on a case study. *British Accounting Review* **35**(4): 367-384.

Lukka, K. and E. Kasanen. 1995. The problem of generalizability: anecdotes and evidence in accounting research. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* **8**(5): 71-90.

Nilsson, F. 2002. Strategy and management control systems: A study of the design and use of management control systems following takeover. *Accounting and Finance* **42**(1): 41-71.

## ACCY 401 Marking Schedule for Presentations

**EACH STUDENT IN THE GROUP WILL RECEIVE THE SAME MARK**

Student's Name:

Paper presented:

<b>Presentation quality</b>	<b>Possible %</b>	<b>Your Mark %</b>
Strength of opening	5	_____
Pitched at appropriate level	5	_____
Adherence to time limits	5	_____
Appropriate use of visual aids	5	_____
Contact with audience	5	_____
Strength of close	5	_____
 <b>Content quality</b>		
Clarity and correctness of research context and findings	50	_____
Clarity and correctness of description of methodology		
Incisiveness of analysis of methodology		
 <b>OR</b>		
<b>Clarity of interpretation and depth of understanding of authors ideas</b>		
<b>Insightfulness of analysis and originality of ideas</b>		
<b>Application of the ideas to other research or experiences</b>		
Appropriate, justified conclusions drawn	10	_____
Discussion questions handled well	10	_____
		_____
 <b>TOTAL</b>	 100%	 =====