

Victoria University of Wellington



MASTER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAMME

STRA 520

THESIS

(Full Year – 90 points)

2005 COURSE OUTLINE

Co-ordinator:

Dr Amanda Wolf

Room RH 812, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus

Phone: (04) 463 - 5712

Fax: (04) 463 - 5454

Email: Amanda.Wolf@vuw.ac.nz

Administrator:

Darren Morgan

Room RH 802, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus

Phone: (04) 463 - 5458

Fax: (04) 463 - 5454

Email: Darren.Morgan@vuw.ac.nz

Course Overview and Aim

In this course, students complete a focused investigation in a public sector area of interest to them, through which they learn something new about research or analysis working independently under supervision, at a level appropriate to a Masters degree work. The investigation will include a careful review, understanding, and synthesis of *relevant* research and scholarship; the collection, presentation, and/or analysis of issue- or problem-specific data or evidence; and an argument, leading to a conclusion or informed judgement that may add to the existing store of knowledge, challenge existing assumptions and theories and provide the basis for new insights, confirm popular wisdom, *or* suggest changes in practice or areas for further research.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should have:

- Demonstrated the ability, at a high academic standard, to design and conduct an investigation that contributes to public sector understanding;
- Developed an in-depth understanding of a body of theoretical or conceptual material and/or its applicability in a public sector arena;
- Acquired skills in the fresh and critical examination of public sector issues;
- Become well-informed in the subject area(s) investigated for the paper.

Additional Information

Please refer to the 2005 version of the *Guidelines for Participants in Masters Part 3 Research*.

Course Structure

This is an individual course of study, resulting in a thesis. There are no set readings or class meetings.

A research workshop is offered three times a year. In 2005, these workshops are scheduled for:

- 25 February, from 8.30am to 5.30pm
- 12 August, from 8.30am to 5.30pm
- 11 November, from 8.30am to 5.30pm

It is recommended that you enrol in the workshop preceding the due date for your proposal (e.g. 25 February for proposals due 13 June).

Your research proposal is developed with the guidance of the course coordinator. When your proposal is approved, you will be assigned a supervisor. You should meet with your supervisor as soon as possible after your plan is approved, to discuss your workplan, timeframe, and the desired frequency and nature of supervision. You should plan to provide at least one complete draft, at least 3 weeks prior to the thesis due date, and other draft chapters as necessary or requested by your supervisor.

Assessment

Research Proposal

You must complete a research proposal, of approximately 5 pages, in accordance with the information set out in the *Guidelines*.

Your research proposal is due on:

- 13 June, 2005, for those who enrol in trimester 1
- 10 October, 2005, for those who enrol in trimester 2
- 10 February, 2006, for those who enrol in trimester 3

The research proposal carries no marks, but is a mandatory course requirement. It must be approved prior to the start of your research.

In most cases, you will need to write more than one version of your proposal, with advice from the course coordinator and others, and you should allow sufficient time in advance of the due date.

You are assigned a supervisor at the time your proposal is approved.

You are encouraged to submit your proposal early. This will avoid a crunch at the end of the trimester, and provide you with more time to carry out the proposal.

Thesis

The thesis is worth 100% of your grade for the course. It should be completed in accordance with the information set out in the *Guidelines*, with your approved proposal, and with the advice of your assigned supervisor.

Your thesis is due on:

- 17 February, 2006, for those who enrol in trimester 1
- 16 June, 2006, for those who enrol in trimester 2
- 17 October, 2006, for those who enrol in trimester 3

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 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 VUW website at: 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.

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 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.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

‘Someone else’s work’ means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students and staff, information from the Internet, software programs and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organisation or structuring of any such materials.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk.

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning,
- suspension from class or university,
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University’s website at: www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

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, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6070, Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz.

The name of your School’s Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant.

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.

	<u>Staff</u>	<u>Location</u>
FHSS	Ann McDonald	Student Support Coordinator, 2 Wai - te - ata Road
Law	Kirstin Harvey	Old Government Building, room 103
Science, and Architecture and Design	Liz Richardson	Cotton Building, room 150
Commerce and Administration	Colin Jeffcoat	Railway West Wing, room 119
Kaiwawao Maori	Liz Rawhiti	Old Kirk Building, room 007
Manaaki Pihipihinga	Melissa Dunlop	14 Kelburn Parade, room 109D
Victoria International	Anne Cronin	10 Kelburn Parade, room 202

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/ Email student-services@vuw.ac.nz.

VUWSA employs two Education Co-ordinators 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, Telephone: (04) 463 - 6983 or (04) 463 - 6984, Email education@vuwsa.org.nz.