

VICTORIA MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

MGMT 404 / MMMS 505

RESEARCH METHODS

Trimester 1, 2006

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE COORDINATOR & LECTURER

Dr Bob Cavana

Room: RH 904, Rutherford House
Phone: 463-5137
Email: bob.cavana@vuw.ac.nz
Website: www.vuw.ac.nz/vms

LECTURER

Dr Todd Bridgman

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ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

Mrs Tricia Lapham

Room: RH 919, Rutherford House
Phone: 463-5381
Email: tricia.lapham@vuw.ac.nz

LECTURE TIME AND LOCATION

The class will meet each week on **Thursday** from **1:40-4:30pm**, in the Railway Building **RLWY 129**.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, we expect that students should be able to:

- Have an overview of the purpose of business and management research, the qualities of a good researcher, types of research, the research process and the characteristics of a good research project.
- Have a broad understanding of conceptual & philosophical issues as they relate to the research process including research paradigms and related methodologies.
- Be able to understand and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative research in the business and management fields.
- Search relevant literature and develop appropriate research designs for their own research questions.

- Understand practical issues as they relate to the research process including ethics, negotiating access and relationships with stakeholders.
- Prepare a research proposal.
- Understand and be able to apply a range of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection, data analysis and interpretation.

COURSE CONTENT

The learning approach on this course will be through a combination of lectures, class discussion, workshop activities and student presentations. The course content is summarized in the schedule below.

MGMT 404 / MMMS 505 Research Methods Course Schedule – 2006

| Week | Date | Topics | Lecturer (1) | Readings (2) | Assignments |
|------|-------------|--|--------------|---|--|
| 1 | Mar 2 | Intro & course overview Intro to management & business research Ethical issues Scientific research & research process | BC | ABR, ch 1 & 2 | |
| 2 | Mar 9 | Research reporting Evaluating research Case – Sutton & Rafaeli AMJ article | BC | ABR, ch 14 & 15 Reading 6 (Case) Frost & Stablein, pp 113-140 | |
| 3 | Mar 16 | Prelim info gathering & problem definition Framework development & research objectives | BC | ABR, ch 3 & 4 | |
| 4 | Mar 23 | Research design & planning Student topic analyses | BC | ABR ch 5 | Short presentations |
| 5 | Mar 30 | Measurement of variables Scaling, reliability & validity Questionnaire design | BC | ABR, ch 8, 9 & 10 | |
| 6 | Apr 6 | Sampling Intro to descriptive statistics | BC | ABR, ch 11 ABR, pp400-413 | |
| | | <i>Mid - Trimester Break</i> | | | |
| 7 | Apr 27 | SPSS workshop – descriptive statistical analysis | BC | ABR, ch 13 & App I | Assignment 1 due – Res Prop |
| 8 | May 4 | SPSS workshop – inferential statistics & hypothesis testing | BC | ABR, ch 13 & App I | |
| 9 | May 11 | Research philosophies | TB | Handouts | Assignment 2 due – Critique quant res article |
| 10 | May 18 | Qualitative data gathering | TB | ABR, ch 6 + Handouts | |
| 11 | May 25 | Qualitative data analysis | TB | ABR, ch 7 + Handouts | |
| 12 | Jun 1 | Other research issues Course overview | BC / TB | | Assignment 3 due– Critique qual res article |
| | June 5 - 25 | Exam period | | | Exam |

(1) lecturers: BC = Bob Cavana & TB = Todd Bridgman

(2) textbook: ABR = Applied Business Research; Refer to readings & handouts as necessary.

TEXTS AND READINGS

The **required textbook** which can be obtained from the University bookstore for the course is:

Cavana, R.Y., Delahaye, B.L., & Sekaran, U. (2001). *Applied business research: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. Brisbane: John Wiley and Sons.

A **supplementary textbook** (not compulsory) that students may find useful is:

Frost, R. & Stablein, R. (1992). *Doing exemplary research*. Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage.

Additional Material: Additional readings, articles, chapters, and workshop exercises will be distributed in class.

ASSESSMENT

The course will be assessed as follows:

| | <u>Max Marks</u> | <u>Due Date</u> |
|--|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Research Proposal | 20% | <i>in class, April 27</i> |
| 2. Evaluation of Quantitative Research Article | 20% | <i>in class, May 11</i> |
| 3. Evaluation of Qualitative Research Article | 20% | <i>in class, June 1</i> |
| 4. Final Examination | <u>40%</u> | <i>6 – 25 June Exam Period</i> |
| TOTAL ASSESSMENT | <u>100 %</u> | |

Overall, the pass mark will be 50% of the total marks available in the course.

Except for work related to the research proposal, all work submitted for assessment is to be your own, although you are encouraged to discuss your ideas as they develop with other students.

Assignment 1. Research Proposal

(Due in class, 27 April)

In the 2nd trimester students will undertake a small guided pilot research project, as part of the course prescription for MGMT 430 & MMMS 530 (Research paper on a selected aspect of management).

However, for the purpose of this assignment, we would like you to assume that you will be undertaking a research project that requires a questionnaire for primary data gathering. Work should commence from week 2 onwards on preparing a *Research Proposal* for this project. The first major step in preparing a proposal is to gain the approval, for your *Topic Analysis* (or client brief) from the course coordinator (to be presented briefly in class on March 23 together with a brief (1-2 page) written summary handin). Generally the Topic Analysis demonstrates two major points: firstly that you have identified an interesting and worthwhile problem for investigation and secondly, that you have a means of conducting a viable investigation within the time frame available.

The topic analysis will form the basis of your Research Proposal, which could serve as a working plan for your Research Project. This should be a maximum of 3000 words (excl. appendices). The research proposal could follow the guidelines (Reading 12) outlined in detail by John Davies, David Smith and Mike Underhill (1989) in “*A Guide to Writing a Research Proposal*”, FC&A. or summarised on pp 123-127 of the textbook, ‘*Applied Business Research*’. Or you may use other guidelines for preparing a research proposal if appropriate.

The research proposal for this assignment will require you to:

- prepare an introduction;
- select a management or business issue to investigate;
- collect any preliminary information and undertake a literature review for the area;
- develop a theoretical framework, define your research objective(s) and formulate at least three hypotheses;
- outline the research design for the project;
- prepare a questionnaire for primary data gathering and attach it to your proposal;
- include a research budget & research schedule;
- attach also a draft VUW human ethics committee research agreement form.

The research proposal may be undertaken individually or jointly in groups of up to 3 students. All members of the group will receive the same mark unless their contributions are unequal, in which case the course coordinator will make an equitable adjustment. A statement should be provided with each proposal outlining the percentage contribution of each group member.

If it becomes clear that the group dynamics will preclude the group from submitting an effective group research proposal, group members should discuss the matter immediately with the course co-ordinator. If necessary to ensure that no student is unfairly disadvantaged, the co-ordinator will permit some or all members of the group to submit an individual analysis of a defined subset of the project.

Assignment 2. Critical Evaluation of a Quantitative Research Article

This assignment requires the critical evaluation of a predominantly quantitative research article (*due in class on 11 May*). (max 2,500 words, typed or prepared on a word processor).

A couple of articles will be provided in class and one should be selected. Guidelines for the critical evaluation of research articles are provided in the textbook, and supplementary readings. Students can use these guidelines as a basis for their critical evaluations.

The critical evaluation must be undertaken individually.

Assignment 3. Critical Evaluation of a Qualitative Research Article

This assignment requires the critical evaluation of a predominantly qualitative research article (*due in class on 1 June*). (max 2,500 words, typed or prepared on a word processor).

A couple of articles will be provided in class and one should be selected. Guidelines for the critical evaluation of research articles are provided in the textbook, and supplementary readings. Students can use these guidelines as a basis for their critical evaluations.

The critical evaluation must be undertaken individually.

4. Final Examination

(to be scheduled between 6 to 25 June 2006)

This will be a 3 hour 'closed book' final examination covering all aspects of the course. Students will be required to obtain a minimum of 40 percent in the final exam to pass. Further details will be provided later.

HANDLING ASSIGNMENTS

Handing in assignments

Assignments should be submitted, in hard copy form in class or in the course coordinator's Post Box no. 23 on the Mezzanine floor of Rutherford House on the due date. Assignments received after that time will be deemed to be late, and must be handed to the lecturer concerned or to Patricia Lapham (RH 919), the Administration Assistant for this course.

Format for assignments

All assignments must be typed or word-processed. They all should have: a cover sheet stating your name, the course name, course coordinator name, assignment name and number, a word count and due date. You should also put page numbers on each page, and use in-text referencing and include a list of references at the end (see pp 72-75 of the Textbook (ABR)).

Students will prepare two copies of each hand-in and keep the second copy for their own reference. Students must also keep an electronic copy of their work.

All assignments will be marked for writing - that is, correctness, clarity, organisation, referencing - as well as for meeting the specific assignment objectives.

Referencing

There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide. You can also access the information from the online VUW library site (<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/library/resources/virtualref.shtml#style>).

Penalties for lateness

We expect that deadlines will be honoured. In fairness to students who complete on time, work submitted after the due date will incur a penalty for lateness. The penalty is 5% of the original grade per day (or part of a day) late. Please let the course coordinator know as soon as you can if you think you might be late handing work in. In the event of unusual/unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement), please discuss waiver of the penalty with the course coordinator.

Penalties for exceeding word limit

Assignments exceeding the word limit will have 2.5% of the original grade per 100 words over the word limit. This is to reinforce the importance of 'accuracy, brevity & clarity' in business/management report writing!!

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Unless you have received the prior approval of the course coordinator, you must:

- (i) attend a minimum of nine of the 12 sessions,
- (ii) submit all the assignments by the due dates,
- (iii) attend the final exam, and achieve a minimum of 40 percent of the marks available for the exam.

In order to pass this course, you must satisfy the mandatory requirements and obtain at least 50% of the overall marks available (maximum of 100).

- Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements [(i) to (iii)] for this course but who obtain 50% or more overall, will be awarded a "K" grade.
- Standard fail grades (D or E) will be awarded when the student's overall course mark falls below the minimum pass mark, whether or not the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied.

For example, a student who obtains an overall course mark of 35 and does not fulfil one or more of the mandatory course requirements will be given an E grade. A student who fails to sit an examination will have their course mark calculated with an entry of Zero for the exam and their grade determined in the usual way.

- Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Requirements will be posted on Blackboard or on the Mezzanine Floor Notice-board. Students will be expected to check both places for notification.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Notices for this paper will be circulated by email. Please provide your email address to the course coordinator. For students unable to attend a session, please contact the course coordinator.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student Administration Office

The Student Administration Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce & Administration and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building - it includes the ground floor reception desk (EA005) and offices 125a to 131 (Level 1). The office is available for the following:

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- FCA Student Administration forms (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

Check with the Student Administration Office for opening times (04) 463 5376.

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.

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 (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.

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 or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

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 penalized 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, or phoning 463-6070, email: 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, please contact the relevant Course Co-ordinator, or Associate Dean who will either help you directly or put you in contact with someone who can.

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/ or email 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.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Maori and Pacific Mentoring programme (Faculties of Humanities and Social sciences and Commerce and Administration).

- **What:** Academic Mentoring for Maori and Pacific students studying at all levels in the above faculties. Weekly sessions for an hour with a mentor to go over assignments and any questions from tutorials or lectures. Registered students can use the faculty's study rooms and computer suite at any time at Kelburn and Pipitea.
- Mature student and Post grad network

If you would like to register as a mentor or mentee please contact the coordinator.

Where:

Melissa Dunlop
Programme Coordinator
Room 109 D
14 Kelburn Parade: back courtyard
Ph: (04) 463 6015
Email: Maori-Pacific-Mentoring@vuw.ac.nz

Please Note: A mentoring room will also be running at Pipitea Campus starting January. Please contact the Programme Coordinator for details.