

School of Information Management

INFO 580 RESEARCH PROJECT

Trimesters 1, 2 & 3 2006

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Coordinator:	Name	Dan Dorner (trim 1 & 2)		
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Course Coordinator:	Name	Gary Gorman (trim 3)		
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Course Objectives

INFO 580 is a 30-point research project, and is compulsory for the Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) degree. It is an extension of work undertaken in INFO 528, which provides an introduction to the various research methodologies and research procedures; it is normally expected, therefore, that you will have completed and passed INFO 528 prior to INFO 580.

INFO 580 is designed to assess a student's ability to:

- * identify, clarify, and investigate a problem/topic;
- * locate, analyse, and integrate relevant literature;
- * gather and analyse additional data; and
- * present a coherent and well-organised argument.

Course Content

There are four stages involved in successful completion of the research project; **each of these must be completed in sequence.**

Stage 1: Topic approval and Supervisor allocation

You are required to submit a brief description of your proposed research topic to the INFO 580 Course Co-ordinator using the prescribed Topic Approval Form, which is available under "INFO 580 Materials" in the LIM Community on Blackboard and in Appendix 1 of the printed *Research Project Handbook*.

Stage 2: Research Proposal

Length: 3000-5000 words

Value: 30% of assessment

A research proposal is required as the first piece of assessment in INFO 580 and must be submitted to your supervisor by due date. The proposal must be assessed and assigned a passing mark by your supervisor **before** you proceed with your research study. If your proposal is not of a passing standard, or has major deficiencies, you may not proceed with Stage 3 until the proposal has been revised to your supervisor's satisfaction.

Please note that the revision of an unsatisfactory proposal must be completed within 2 weeks of being informed of the result (in the case of a one-trimester enrolment), or 4 weeks in the case of a two-trimester enrolment, and that such revision will not receive more than a minimum pass (50%).

The proposal should demonstrate:

- a. that you have identified an interesting and worthwhile problem for investigation.
- b. that you have the means for conducting a viable investigation within the time frame available.

Stage 3: Human Ethics Approval

If your project involves human subjects - i.e. asking people their views, or observing people doing something - you must find out whether you will require approval from the Informatics Human Ethics Committee. For relevant forms and further information, you should refer to the Guidelines and Documentation page on the SIM website, at <http://www.sim.vuw.ac.nz/research/hec/index.aspx>.

Stage 4: Completion of the Project

Length: 16,000-25,000 words

Value: 70% of assessment

Once you have been informed that the proposal is ready for implementation, you can proceed with your research study. You will be studying a problem in depth, and gaining hands-on experience of designing and conducting research on a relatively small scale. You will experience directly the difficulties inherent in research, and should gain an appreciation of the essentially tentative nature of knowledge, evidence and data available to the social sciences and the LIS/information management profession.

Although the length of the final report will vary, depending on the topic and approach, its length is likely to be in the region of 20,000 words (16,000 words minimum, 25,000 words maximum).

Readings

There is no set text; a list of suggested readings and references is included in the *INFO 580 Research Project Handbook*.

Materials and Equipment

Students should ensure they read the printed *INFO 580 Research Project Handbook*, which has additional information on Proposal and Project guidelines, a list of recent INFO 580 and includes sample copies of TAF & HEC forms. There is also material available on Blackboard, under the LIM Community.

Assessment Requirements

There are two pieces of assessment in INFO 580; a formal research proposal (worth 30% of the total mark) and a completed research report (worth 70% of the total mark), written in the format and style expected of those who undertake scholarly or applied research. Terms requirements for INFO 580 are that **both** pieces of work must achieve a pass mark.

Your supervisor will be responsible for marking both the research proposal and final research report. They may also be reviewed by another academic staff member of the School, as well as by the INFO 580 Course Co-ordinator.

Both the proposal and final research report will be assessed according to those elements in the following criteria that are relevant to your particular approach to the investigation:

- * problem statement/research question
- * literature review (coverage of relevant primary and secondary materials)
- * critical analysis of source material
- * methodology
- * data analysis and graphic presentations
- * conclusions
- * understanding of theories and concepts
- * coherence and development of ideas
- * original thought and critical evaluation
- * clarity of communication (organisation of material and readability)
- * correct spelling, grammar, citations.

Timetables, extensions and withdrawal

You will have enrolled for either one or two trimesters. If you enrol for one trimester, you should spend 20 hours per week on this course, on average. If you enrol for two trimesters, you should expect to spend an average of 10 hours per week on the project. You should think carefully about whether to enrol for one or two trimesters before you enrol.

Deadlines for 2006/2007 are shown below. Please note that a delay in submitting your proposal will seriously affect your ability to complete your project by the due date, especially if your supervisor requires extensive revisions to your approach to the project.

Your final project must be submitted on the Monday following the last day of the trimester in which your enrolment for this course concludes. **No projects will be accepted or marked after the due date, unless previously arranged with your supervisor.** If you request an extension because of ill-health, you may be required to submit a medical certificate.

If you withdraw from INFO 580 before you are half-way through your scheduled research period (i.e. by the end of the 6th week if you are enrolled for one trimester, or by the end of the 12th week if you are enrolled for two trimesters), you may re-enrol at a later date and continue working on the same topic if in the interim that topic has not been taken by another student. If you withdraw after this date, or do not withdraw and fail to submit a project, you may be required by the Course Co-ordinator to develop a new topic upon re-enrolment. If you complete but do not pass INFO 580, upon re-enrolment you may be permitted to continue with the previous topic, or you may be required by the Course Co-ordinator to select a new topic.

Withdrawal from the project requires formal notification to your supervisor, the School Office, and Faculty Office, as well as requiring the Programme Director's approval.

Due Dates 2006/07

Trimester(s)	TAF Due Before	Proposal Submission Deadline	Project Submission Deadline
1	6 March	3 April	12 June 2006
1 & 2 (F)	6 March	15 May	16 October 2006
2	10 July	7 August	16 October 2006
2 & 3 (J)	10 July	18 September	5 February 2007
3	6 November	4 December	5 February 2007
3 & 1 (K)	6 November	15 January 2007	11 June 2007

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services 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 Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education 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.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.

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 are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy 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; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in 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 at 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. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other student or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

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

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 Impairments

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as 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, 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 (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS 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 School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each Faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/.

VUWSA employs 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 (tel. 04 463 6983 or 04 463 6984, email education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

Manaaki Pihipihinga - Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme (Faculty of Commerce and Administration)

This is a mentoring service for Maori and Pacific students studying at all levels. Weekly one hour sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade, and Room 210 and 211, Level 2, Railway West Wing. Sessions cover drafting and discussing assignments, essay writing, and any questions that may arise from tutorials and/or lectures. A computer suite networked to Cyber Commons is available for student use.

To register with Manaaki Pihipihinga, please contact one of the following:

Puawai Wereta
Room 210, Level 2
Railway West Wing
Tel. (04) 463 8997
Email: Puawai.Wereta@vuw.ac.nz

Fa'afai Seiuli
Room 109 B
14 Kelburn Parade
Tel. (04) 463 5842
Email: Faafoi.Seiuli@vuw.ac.nz