

School of Marketing and International Business

IBUS 409 DISSERTATION

Trimester Three 2006

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

The course co-ordinator for IBUS 409 is Dr Elizabeth L Rose:

Office: Rutherford House, Room 1109 (Level 11)

Phone: 463 6912

E-mail: Elizabeth.Rose@vuw.ac.nz

Office hours: By appointment

In addition, each student is paired with an academic staff member who serves as a dissertation supervisor.

Class Times and Room Numbers

There are no lectures associated with IBUS 409. Each student should arrange for regular meetings with his or her supervisor during the trimester.

IBUS 409 has no final exam.

Course Objectives

IBUS 409 is a supervised research project that results in a dissertation written, individually, by each student.

Course Content

Each student undertakes a research project that utilises learning from other courses in the Honours programme.

Expected Workload

Students should expect to devote 15-20 hours of independent study, per week, to this course. This time is best allocated throughout the term, rather than intensively at the end.

Group Work

IBUS 409 does not include any group work. Each student will write a dissertation individually, with guidance from his or her supervisor.

Readings

Readings necessary for completing the dissertation research will be identified by the student, with guidance from the academic supervisor.

Materials and Equipment

There is no standard list of materials and equipment. Students have access to an Honours grant of up to \$500, to reimburse research-related expenses incurred in the development of the dissertation. Original receipts for approved expenses should be submitted to Jessie Johnston, in the School of Marketing and International Business Reception area.

Assessment Requirements

The final mark for IBUS 409 is based solely on the assessment of the dissertation. Each dissertation is assessed by two academic staff members, one of whom is the supervisor.

A complete draft of the dissertation must be submitted to the supervisor no later than **Friday, 2nd February 2007**. This will allow time for the supervisor to provide feedback and the student to make revisions. The due date for the final version of the dissertation will be **Monday, 19th February 2007**.

Penalties

Late work will be accepted without penalty with good reason (e.g., a medical certificate) and prior permission. In other cases, five marks will be deducted (out of 100) for each day, or part day, the assignment is late.

Late submission of the final dissertation is likely to result in delayed reporting of the final results for the Honours degree.

Mandatory Course Requirements

Students must obtain a passing mark on the final dissertation, in order to pass IBUS 409.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional announcements will be communicated via e-mail. Students should make sure that the course co-ordinator has their current e-mail addresses.

Some Considerations for Writing

Your written work should be clear and direct. Writing that is sloppy and imprecise conveys an image of cloudy thinking, and you should be working toward clarity in both your thinking and your writing. The following points are intended to assist you in communicating more effectively.

1. Spell-checking and proof-reading are crucial, despite the fact that they are extremely annoying tasks. Be careful to leave yourself sufficient time to complete these important tasks prior to submitting your work. Do not simply ignore Word's grammar-check notifications. While they do not always mean that a sentence must be changed, they do indicate that change should be considered.
2. Make sure that you are writing to the proper audience. The IBUS 409 dissertation should be written for an academic audience, and follow the format of an article in a top-tier journal. Exemplar journals are *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Strategic*

Management Journal, *Academy of Management Review* (especially for conceptual dissertations) and *Academy of Management Journal*.

3. Avoid using contractions in formal writing. The IBUS 409 dissertation should be considered formal writing.
4. The use of complete sentences is extremely important. It is often the case that phrases beginning with gerunds (e.g., 'Meaning that...') are difficult to make into complete sentences.
5. Proper punctuation makes your writing much easier to read. Remember to use commas to separate logical thoughts, and that the semicolon (;) should be used to separate two phrases that are each standalone sentences.
6. The typical convention is to spell out integers less than 10 (e.g., 'two', rather than '2'), and to use digits for integers greater than or equal to 10. In addition, it is best to avoid starting a sentence with digits (e.g., '59 percent of the respondents...').
7. Be sure that you have agreement with respect to numbers and verb tenses throughout your writing.
8. The proper use of possessives is not complicated. Simply remember that the apostrophe (inverted comma), followed by the letter 's', generally replaces 'belonging to'. Thus:
 - company's = belonging to the company
 - companies = more than one company
 - companies' = belonging to more than one company
 - MNE's = belonging to the MNE
 - MNEs = more than one MNE
 - MNEs' = belonging to more than one MNE.
9. English, of course, has its grammatical oddities. One that is the source of many errors is 'it's' vs. 'its':
 - it's = it is (see note 3, above)
 - its = belonging to it.
10. When choosing between 'which' and 'that', a useful rule of thumb is that 'which' generally follows a comma (e.g., 'the results, which were...').
11. Many words assume rather specific meanings in particular contexts. When writing about the results of empirical analyses, you should be aware of the following:
 - 'Variance' is a specific measure of variation. Variance and variation are not equivalent concepts. To make things even more confusing, "variance" has different specific meanings in the finance and accounting literatures.
 - 'Significant' should be saved for the situation in which you have conducted statistical testing and found a statistically significant result. Avoid using 'significant' as a synonym for "important".
 - 'Correlate' has a particular meaning in empirical analysis. It refers to a linear relationship between two variables, not a generic relationship.

12. Information taken from other sources **must** be properly cited and referenced. Failure to do so represents intellectual dishonesty, which is taken very seriously in the academic community. Cited references should be listed at the end of the paper, in a format that provides complete information, allowing the interested and motivated reader to delve into the finer details of your argument. Please note that this pertains to specific information. Obviously, you do not need to reference the Field book from IBUS 405 every time you refer to statistical analysis. However, if you are using a particular section of a book as the justification for an argument, then you should point the reader to that part of the book.

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

The Pacific Support Coordinator is also available on the Pipitea Campus, Room 212, Level 2, Railway West Wing, every Thursday, 1-4pm. No appointment is necessary. You can either come in, email or phone with any issue that you need help with. Fa'afoi links Pacific students to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria.