

SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTING & COMMERCIAL LAW

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ACCY 404: PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTING & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Trimester Two 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

<i>Course Co-ordinator and Lecturer</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Email</i>
Rose Anne MacLeod	RH 702	463 5044	RoseAnne.MacLeod@vuw.ac.nz
<i>Co - Lecturers</i>			
David Macdonald	RH 601	463 5938	David.Macdonald@vuw.ac.nz
Philip Colquhoun	RH 716	463 5776	Philip.Colquhoun@vuw.ac.nz
<i>Admin Assistant</i>			
Michelle Sainsbury	RH 708	463 5775	Michelle.Sainsbury@vuw.ac.nz

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures

Course Commences 8 July 2008

Tuesday 1.40pm to 4.30pm, RLWY 128

Course concludes 7 October 2008

Tutorials

None

Course Objectives

The main objectives of this course are, in relation to public sector accounting and financial management, to develop students:

- ability to critically evaluate different positions on issues, and communicate their findings;
- knowledge of selected topical issues; and
- understanding of the range and diversity of research.

Course Content

This course introduces students to key concepts, theories, research methods and research findings in topical areas of public sector accounting and financial management. The emphasis will be on critically evaluating the theoretical underpinnings and assumptions of accounting and financial management in the public sector.

Lecture Programme

The first two weeks lectures will be provided by the lecturers and will represent an introduction to the course, and provide background on the public sector in New Zealand in an accounting/financial management context. From week 3 to 6 students will present seminars on public sector accounting issues. In week 7 students will discuss their research idea and receive guidance from lecturers. By the end of week 8 students are to meet with their nominated/ chosen lecturer for a discussion on their research paper. In week 9 and 10 students will debate topical public sector issues. A test will be held in week 12.

The programme is shown below:

Week	Date	Topic	Lecturer
1	8 July	Introduction to Public Sector – Part One	David Macdonald
2	15 July	Introduction to Public Sector - Part Two	Rose Anne MacLeod
3	22 July	Student Presentations	David Macdonald Rose Anne MacLeod
4	29 July	Student Presentations	David Macdonald Rose Anne MacLeod
5	5 August	Student Presentations	Philip Colquhoun
6	12 August	Student Presentations	Philip Colquhoun
7	2 September	Research Idea Discussion and Discussion of Requirements for Debates	David Macdonald Rose Anne MacLeod Philip Colquhoun
8	9 September	No Lecture – Students must have completed their research proposal and met with a Lecturer on their Research Proposal by the completion of week 8.	
9	16 September	Student Debates	David Macdonald Rose Anne MacLeod Philip Colquhoun
10	23 September	Student Debates	David Macdonald Rose Anne MacLeod Philip Colquhoun
11	30 September	No Lecture	
12	7 October	Test	Philip Colquhoun
	14 October	Research Paper Due	

Seminar / Presentation

From week 3 to week 6 the three-hour class sessions will be in the form of seminars, involving discussion and critique of assigned weekly readings to be presented by students on a rotational basis. For effective discussion on the material in the class, it is very important that students read and understand the assigned articles beforehand. Students lead one session with a presentation on a particular topic.

Students select (or are assigned where appropriate) a topic of interest in public sector – possible topics include: *Accounting for infrastructure; service performance reporting; public sector auditing; public sector assets – accounting issues; government financial management issues; capital charge regimes; local government developments; analysing the government's performance, convergence of accounting standards between public and private sector; the public sector and financial reporting standard setting*

Students are to advise the topic of their choice plus an alternate topic(s) (topics will be allocated on the basis of first to request) in the first week to allow readings to be distributed with the aim of providing a minimum of two weeks for study prior to presentation date.

Seminars require:

- (a) A two to three page critique which identifies the main points (in own words) and critically analyses them. Articles must be appropriately referenced if quoted in the critique. Two discussion questions must be posed for class discussion.
- (b) Emailing of the critique to **all class members and lecturers** by midday Monday prior to the presentation.
- (c) Individual presentation of key points for a maximum of 30 minutes, and class discussion of 15 minutes. Total time allotted 45 minutes.

One seminar is required to be presented by each student.

The presentations and critique will be assessed at 15% of overall grade.

Debates

In week 9 and week 10 the class sessions will be in the form of one hour debates on an assigned topic.

Students will be allocated into teams which will argue either for a particular view on a public sector accounting issue or argue against the view. Students will be provided with readings but will be expected to research for additional material to support their position.

Each student **not** participating in the debate will be required to compile a two page précis of the main arguments in favour for and against the view. The précis is to be emailed to **the lecturers ONLY** by midday Monday prior to the presentation.

Each student will participate in two debates. Each debate will be assessed at 7.5% of the overall grade. Each précis will be assessed at 2.5% of the overall grade. The total assessment for 2 debates and 2 précis is 20% of the overall grade.

Research Paper

Students are required to undertake a Research Paper of 4,000 to 5,000 words which accounts for 40% of the overall grade. The research paper is a major project, which can be a critical and comprehensive literature review, or a detailed research proposal, or an empirical study. Topics for the project must be discussed with and approved by the assigned supervisor.

In week 7 students will present for 10 minutes on their research idea and how they intend to progress (methodology etc) / or how the research is progressing if the research has commenced (e.g. issues they are finding). This is an opportunity to for students to gain input and discussion on their research.

By the end of week 8 students are to have met with a lecturer as to their research and have a developed a research plan. Students may undertake this at any stage and need not wait until week 8 to complete.

Class Participation

Class participation for research presentation, seminars and debate will be assessed at 5% of the overall grade.

Test

A 100 minute test will be scheduled in week 12 and will be assessed at 25% of the overall grade.

Penalties – Late Submission

In fairness to other students, work submitted after the deadline will incur a 5% penalty (of the mark obtained) for each day late. Extensions may be granted with no penalty to those who meet the University's aegrotat rules (e.g. medical certificate, family bereavement).

Readings

The readings that will form the start of discussions for each session will be provided. However students are expected to develop their own reading programme to supplement that material. To aid this reading lists will be handed out during the course and students' attention is drawn to the attached list of relevant sources.

Most class sessions will be assigned readings. These are the minimum preparation required for each session. Reading in preparation for the research paper will need to be wider than the assigned readings. Students are encouraged to make full use of the library.

Legislation and authoritative pronouncements:

- Local Government Act 2002
- Public Finance Act 1989 and Amendments

- State-Owned Enterprise Act 1986
- Crown Entities Act 2004
- Public Audit Act 2001
- ICANZ Statement of Concepts
- Crown Financial Statements
- Departmental Annual Reports
- Departmental Statements of Intent

Journals available in hard copy in VUW library include:

- Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal
- Accounting, Organisations and Society
- Financial Accountability and Management
- Governance
- Government Accountants Journal
- Journal of Accounting and Public Policy
- Public Administration Review
- Public Budgeting & Finance
- Public Finance and Accounting
- Public Sector
- Research in Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting
- The Chartered Accountants Journal of New Zealand

Books:

Boston J. et al, *Public Management: The New Zealand Model*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1996

The Treasury, *Putting it Together - An Explanatory Guide to the New Zealand Public Sector Financial Management System*, Wellington, 1996 [**Note: Some of this publication is out-of-date and it must be read together with “A Guide to the Public Finance Act” (see below)**]

The Treasury, *A Guide to the Public Finance Act* (August 2005)

Norman R., *Obedient Servants? Management Freedoms and Accountabilities in the NZ Public Sector*, Victoria University Press, 2003

Pallot, June. *The Legacy of June Pallot: Public Sector Financial Management Reform* edited by Susan Newberry, Information Age Publishing, USA, 2006

Schick A., *The Spirit of Reform: Managing the State Sector in a Time of Change*, State Services Commission, Wellington, 1996

Scott G.C. , *Public Management in New Zealand: Lessons and Challenges*, New Zealand Business Roundtable, 2001

The Internet:

The following addresses contain information about aspects of the New Zealand public sector:

<http://www.govt.nz/>

NZ Government Home Page – includes links to departments

<http://www.oag.govt.nz/>

Office of the Controller & Auditor-General

<http://www.treasury.govt.nz/>

The Treasury

<http://www.ssc.govt.nz/>

State Services Commission

<http://www.wcc.govt.nz/>

Wellington City Council

<http://www.oecd.org/>

OECD – Includes many papers on Public Management

There are many sites nationally and internationally that relate to the public sector and public sector accounting - you are encouraged to surf the Internet.

Materials and Equipment

No fee will be charged for course materials.

Assessment Requirements

Seminar /Presentation	15%
Two debates (7.5% each)	15%
Two précis (2.5% each)	5%
Class participation	5%
Research Paper (around 5,000 words)	40%
Test (100 minutes)	20%

Mandatory Course Requirements

Students must:

- attend and satisfactorily contribute to 75% of sessions;
- complete and gain a satisfactory grade for the research paper, presentation, debates and test.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information concerning this course will be posted on Blackboard.

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 on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :

- 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.

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

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 or go to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.victoria.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

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 students or staff.

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

Note: including the work of others will not be considered plagiarism as long as the work 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:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.