

School of Marketing and International Business

IBUS 409 DISSERTATION

Trimester Two 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Co-ordinator

Dr Joanna Scott-Kennel
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Office hours: By appointment

Supervisors

Prof Peter Dowling (Tim Roots, Tanya Vester)
Dr Audra Mockaitis (Emma Jenkins)
Dr Thomas Borghoff (Mayank Pandey)
Dr Joanna Scott-Kennel (Tim Horne)

Trimester Dates

The dates for trimester two are 7 July - 9 November 2008.
IBUS 409 has no final examination.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Seminars are to be held on the following Tuesdays 10-1pm, RH1114

15 July (draft proposals)
12 August (progress report 1)
16 September (progress report 2)

In addition each student should arrange for regular (weekly or fortnightly) meetings with his or her supervisor during the trimester.

Course Content

Each student undertakes a research project that utilises learning from other courses in the Honours programme, combined with individual research on a topic agreed upon by the student and his or her supervisor.

Course Objectives

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

Expected Workload

Students should expect to devote approximately 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

There is no formally assessed group work, but all students enrolled in IBUS 409 are expected to participate in and prepare for all three seminars during the term.

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.

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 AND prepare for and attend all three seminars in order to pass IBUS 409.

Dissertation

Due Dates

A complete draft of the dissertation must be submitted to the supervisor no later than **Friday, 10th October 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 in early November, with the exact date to be advised.

| Schedule (guide only) | <i>to be completed by</i> |
|---|---------------------------|
| Selection of topic and initial research questions | June 30 |
| Research questions, method | Mid-July |
| Literature review (first draft) | July 30 |
| HEC application | August 1 |
| Data Collection | September 15 |
| Writing up | October 5 |
| Review, proofing etc. | October 9 |
| Submission | October 10 |
| Review, revise, submit | <i>tba</i> |

Format

In terms of length your thesis should aim for quality rather than quantity! 30-40 pages (plus any appendices) – on the order of 10,000 words is about right. Please use 12 point font and double space your text. For more details on content and structure see the Perry (1995) article (below), and for tips on writing style see page 4 of this course outline.

Perry, Chad (1995) *A structured approach to presenting PhD theses: Notes for candidates and their supervisors*. Paper presented to the ANZ Doctoral Consortium, University of Sydney, February 1994 (with later additions to 18 September 1995).

Seminars

Seminars are mandatory and will be held three times during the semester. Each student will present (10 minutes), receive comments from the class and supervisors (10 minutes) and then hear the commentary from another class member (5 minutes).

Preparation

Preparation prior to the seminar will involve the following tasks:

- 1) draft and circulate the work you have done on your thesis to-date to other members of the class, supervisors and the course co-ordinator on the Thursday prior to the seminar the following week;
- 2) read all drafts circulated by the class;
- 3) prepare a 5 minute commentary on one draft thesis (see schedule and tips below); and
- 2) prepare a 10 minute presentation on your progress to-date to be given in class.

Tips for Commentaries

- Read over the draft in plenty of time.

- Comment on the feasibility and appropriateness of the research eg. Methodology, literature chosen etc. Outline any areas you believe need more explanation or more refinement or more supporting literature.
- Critically assess the arguments, research questions or hypotheses given.
- Be as specific as possible as to things that could be changed for the better. Make constructive suggestions.
- Highlight areas that don't seem right are not clear or you think will not work. Write your comments either on a copy of the draft or on an extra sheet of paper (these will be given to the presenter).

| Seminar | Content | Presenter | Commentary |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 15 July 10-12noon RH1114 | Draft proposal | Tim Roots Tanya Vester Tim Horne Mayank Pandey Emma Jenkins | Emma Jenkins Tim Horne Tanya Vester Tim Roots Mayank Pandey |
| 12 August 10-12noon RH1114 | Progress Report 1 (Literature) | Tanya Vester Tim Horne Mayank Pandey Emma Jenkins Tim Roots | Mayank Pandey Emma Jenkins Tim Roots Tanya Vester Tim Horne |
| 16 September 10-12noon RH1114 | Progress Report 2 (Data collection, preliminary results) | Tim Horne Mayank Pandey Emma Jenkins Tim Roots Tanya Vester | Tim Roots Tanya Vester Tim Horne Mayank Pandey Emma Jenkins |

Communication of Additional Information

Additional announcements will be communicated via e-mail. Each student should make sure that the course co-ordinator has his or her current e-mail address.

Some Considerations for Writing

Your written work should always 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 to do. Be careful to leave yourself sufficient time to complete these important tasks prior to submitting your work. While the MS Word grammar-check is certainly not infallible, it is generally a good idea to have a second look at wording that the software has identified as problematic.
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. Reports and papers that you submit in postgraduate classes 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.

13. Referencing should take the form adopted by the *Journal of International Business Studies*, although other referencing styles are acceptable as long as they are used correctly and consistently.

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.