



SCHOOL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

**INFO 528: RESEARCH METHODS FOR
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
ENVIRONMENTS**

Trimester Two 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

Course Coordinator:	Name	Gary Gorman
	Room	Easterfield Building; EA 211
	Tel	+64 4 463 5782
	Email	gary.gorman@vuw.ac.nz
Course Coordinator:	Name	Chern Li Liew
	Room	Easterfield Building; EA 212
	Tel	+64 4 463 5213
	Email	chernli.liew@vuw.ac.nz
Programme Administrator:	Name	Lori Parker
	Room	121 Easterfield Bldg, Kelburn Pde, Wellington
	Tel	463 5309
	Email:	lori.parker@vuw.ac.nz

If you have questions or comments about course material and activities, the preferred “channel” is the appropriate Blackboard discussion forum, so that all students can see your message, and participate in any subsequent discussion. The Blackboard discussion forums will be checked for new messages at 11.00 a.m. each workday morning. However, if you prefer to send your message via email (particularly if it is sensitive or involves personal information), you should begin the subject line with

[INFO 528]

If you wish to send something by **post**, the address is:

Gary Gorman or Chern Li Liew
School of Information Management
Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600, Wellington

Course description

INFO 528 covers the principles of social science research as applied to library and information studies problems. The course is intended to provide students with the information and skills needed to implement the research topic option of INFO 580, and to equip them for research in the workplace. The goals of the course are to:

1. Provide an understanding of the role of research in library and information management (LIM). This role includes adding to knowledge, advancing LIM as a discipline and as a profession, and providing information essential for planning and decision-making.
2. Encourage students to be intelligent consumers of research. This involves the ability to review research literature critically, to assess the methodologies, and to understand findings and conclusions.
3. Provide an understanding of the processes and steps involved in conducting research.
4. Enable students to apply the concepts central to the research process to problems related to LIM.

Course objectives

By the end of the INFO 528 course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for the research process.
2. Review the literature on a specific topic.
3. Develop a procedure for investigating an actual problem in library and information studies.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how research is applied to problem solving in an information environment.

Course materials

The course material for INFO 528 includes a CD-ROM containing readings and study notes associated with each of the modules, augmented by material on the Blackboard website for INFO 528, at

<http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>

In addition, the Blackboard Web-based learning environment will be used to post course information notices, and enable ongoing electronic discussion forums on topics or issues introduced in or out of class. Students are also encouraged to use Blackboard for information sharing, and to post questions for electronic and in-class discussion. See 'Online information' below for further details.

The study notes for each module include a section giving work to prepare for the weekly session. **You should prepare the work listed in this section before the weekly Internet or internal session for that module.** The group discussion/tutorial sessions should not be regarded as a time to catch up on reading not done. Active participation in these sessions will be expected. Reading through 'Preparation for the weekly session' *before* starting work on the module will help you to use your study time effectively.

In the course notes you will encounter boxes that separate work to be done from the body of the text. Boxes in this format:



Required reading: Powell, R. R., & Silipigni Connaway, L. (2004). Research and Librarianship. In *Basic Research Methods for Librarians* (4th ed., pp. 1–15). Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited. (Reading 1)

provide details for a reading which you should do before continuing with the module text. These readings are either included on the INFO 528 CD-ROM, are from the prescribed course text, or are available on the Internet as an online reading. Boxes in this format:

Exercise 1

As a revision exercise for this module, try to summarise, in your own words, the main characteristics of each type of research.

- What are the particular strengths and weaknesses of each?

contain a number of activities or exercises intended to help focus your thinking, prepare you for the next module, or provide assistance with revision of a particular topic. You should consider these, and jot down your answers or conclusions, before continuing with the module text. The exercises will form part of the discussion in the weekly session, and completing them should therefore be viewed as part of the preparation for these sessions.

Time commitment and workload

To achieve a satisfactory result in INFO 528, a time commitment of at least 12.5 hours per week is likely to be needed. Students who have completed university courses in statistics or research methods in a social science discipline, or who have written a thesis, may need less time. Part of this time commitment will be taken up in your weekly internal or Internet conference session. The remaining time should cover:

- reading set texts and articles — you are expected to have read these *before* the weekly session;
- thinking about the module and taking notes on assigned practical work in preparation for the weekly session; and
- writing assignments.

Prescribed text

Pickard, A. (2006). *Research Methods in Information*. London: Facet Publishing. The price (including student discount) is approximately \$161.95.

Ordering the text

The prescribed text is available from Vic Books, PO Box 12-337 (or c/- Students' Union Building), Wellington, ph. (04) 463 5515 or freephone 0800 370 370, fax (04) 471 2124, email vuwtexts@vicbooks.co.nz. You can use any of these methods to place an order. Please give the details of the book(s) you want, your delivery address, and your daytime phone number. There is an \$8.00 handling and delivery charge. It is also possible to order texts through the Vic Books' online book ordering service at

http://www.vicbooks.co.nz/cms_display.php

Course schedule

INFO 528 will be held in the second trimester (July-October) of the 2008 academic year. There will be no sessions for two weeks during the mid-trimester break (18-31 August).

- **Internal students**
There will be a seminar on Tuesdays (from 1.10–3.00 p.m.) in the Easterfield Building, Lecture Room EA 206.
- **Open learning students (including Auckland)**
There will be two streams of up to 28 students. The weekly Internet conference sessions will be held on Tuesdays from 5.00-6.30 p.m. and 6.45-8.15 p.m. (**Please contact LIM Administration to book your preferred stream.**)

Week	Dates	Topic
1	7-11 July	Introduction to LIM research
2	14-18 July	Research process
3	21-25 July	Literature review
4	28 July-1 Aug.	Theory and ethics
5	4-8 Aug.	The research plan and proposal
6	11-15 Aug.	Quantitative methods and analysis – I
7	1-5 Sept.	Quantitative methods and analysis – II
8	8-12 Sept.	Qualitative methods and analysis – I
9	15-19 Sept.	Qualitative methods and analysis – II
10	22-26 Sept.	Mixed methods and analysis
11	29 Sept-3 Oct.	Project management
12	6-10 Oct.	Presentation of research

Assessment

None of the LIM courses has a formal final examination. INFO 528 is internally assessed, with the following assignments to be completed in order to satisfy the mandatory course requirements. In addition, there may be self-assessed exercises set for specific modules. Full details, including explanatory notes and criteria, are available under “Assignments” on Blackboard.

Assignment	Date due	Value	Length
1. Integrative literature review	23 August 2008	40%	2500 words max.
2. Project concept	23 October 2008	60%	3500 words max.

Please note that you are required to select a specific research topic very near the beginning of the course that you can use for Assignments 1 and 2, and ideally for INFO 580 as well. Although a list of general topic areas will be available on Blackboard from which you can develop your own particular research question, you should also be reading from the material on your CD-ROM, textbook, and other literature, as well as consulting colleagues, with this in mind. Some class time as well as group exercises will be used to hone your topic; you should have decided on a specific research topic before studying Module 3. Either course lecturer may approve your topics — **but you must obtain this approval before beginning any substantive work on the topic.**

Late assignments

Note: This response to late assignments supersedes any equivalent statement noted in the LIM Administration Handbook.

Assignment 1: Assignments submitted or postmarked up to one week after the due date will have a 10% penalty imposed, unless an extension on the grounds of medical emergency or family circumstance has been granted in writing in advance by the course coordinator. Assignments submitted or postmarked more than one week after the due date will NOT be accepted without prior written approval of the course coordinator.

Assignment 2: Any assignments received after the due date will NOT be accepted, except in cases of medical emergency. This is because

- funding bodies do not give extensions;

- you will be able to start work on the draft project concept for INFO 580 during the break; and
- many of the module exercises are designed to build up to Assignment 3.

If you keep up with the course work, you should have no difficulty getting this assignment in on time.

Presentation

The following items are meant to help you do well on your assignments. Please refer to this list before submitting your work.

1. The word count should appear under your name.
2. Faxed or emailed assignments cannot be accepted.
3. All pages must be numbered.
4. All work is to be double-spaced and keyboarded.
5. Information professionals use information. That means that your work should indicate use of the professional literature, and should do so in the required format (see point 9 below).
6. All material taken from published work must be attributed. You should acknowledge the use of another writer's ideas or arguments, even if you have not used the same words in expressing them. All direct quotations must be attributed to the source with author's surname and page numbers incorporated into the text. (See the *LIM Administration Handbook* if in doubt about attribution.)
7. Items for the bibliography should be pertinent and recent or else they should be classics.
8. Items in the bibliography are to be cited **consistently**. For information on APA citation formats, look at "Citation Guide", which is available in the LIM Programmes Information on Blackboard, under 'LIM Resources'.
9. The standard of spelling and grammar, the facility of written expression, and the proper citation of references are evaluated when assessing every written assignment.
10. The conventions of academic and research writing may be somewhat different from your normal writing style. In particular, avoid the use of the first person; scholarly writing should be objective and detached. Avoid the use of superlatives or comparatives where these cannot be substantiated. Consider adjectives and adverbs carefully, and use them only when they attribute qualities that can be proved (for example, a claim that a result is 'surprising' or a development is 'significant' would have to be substantiated).

Plagiarism

You should read and take heed of the statement on collaboration and plagiarism on the University website at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html> and also in the *Administration Handbook*; you *must* acknowledge all sources you use. While you are encouraged to work together while preparing for the weekly sessions, assessed work must be completed individually, and collaboration confined to discussion of general points. You are expected to present information in your own words, based on your understanding of the background material you read. ***Any assignment which is extensively plagiarised will receive an automatic fail grade.***

Criteria for assessment

A standard evaluation sheet will be used when assessing Assignments 1 and 2 for this course — a copy of this appears on the following page. Note that there are eight assessment criteria, all of which are important in presenting work of high quality. Nevertheless, the first four criteria have greater weight for both assignments, accounting for approximately 60 per cent of the total mark, with the final four criteria accounting for the remaining approximately 40 per cent. In other words, we place particular value on the knowledge you display of the topic, on your understanding of theories and concepts, on the coherence and development of ideas, and on original thought and critical evaluation. Based on past experience, the criteria most likely to cause problems are development of ideas and critical evaluation — pay particular attention to these aspects in your writing.

Even though there is a 60/40 split between the two groups of evaluation criteria, it is still possible for a work that shows promise in terms of knowledge base and development of ideas to fare poorly if the grammar and expression are totally unacceptable. In other words, all criteria need to be met to an acceptable standard for the work as a whole to be acceptable. Also, bear in mind that this is postgraduate work and that it will be assessed to the high standards expected of postgraduate students of Victoria University.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
 Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



School of Information Management

EVALUATION SHEET

Student's Name:

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Course:

Assignment No:

Essay Evaluation:

- ☆ A blank space is left when an item is not applicable to the essay
- ☆ Items are assigned different weights in your total grade
- ☆ 1=poor, 2=Marginal, 3=Adequate, 4=Good, 5=Excellent

	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of topic					
Understanding of theories & concepts					
Coherence, relevance & development of ideas					
Original thought & critical evaluation					
Structure					
Presentation, layout, paragraphing, length					
Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, expression					
Adequacy & acknowledgement of sources (including footnoting & bibliography)					

Comments:.....

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GRADE:

DATE:

MARKED BY:

Submission

Electronic submission via Blackboard is required; instructions are available on Blackboard under 'Assignments'. Remember to keep a hard and soft copy of each assignment you send us, just in case the original goes astray.

Mandatory course requirements

To fulfil the mandatory course requirements for this course, you must:

- attend a minimum of 75% of the scheduled class sessions, and participate in class discussions;
- complete all of the assignments in the required timeframe.

Online information

In addition to the course material on CD-ROM, you will be required to use the resources for this course which are available in the School's Blackboard online learning environment:

<http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>

The Blackboard Web-based learning environment will be used to post course information notices, and enable ongoing electronic discussion forums on topics or issues introduced in or out of class. Students are also encouraged to use Blackboard for information sharing, and to post questions for electronic and in-class discussion. You should also read the appropriate module Web pages in conjunction with the module readings and course notes. Details on how to access Blackboard are in the *Administration Handbook*, but if you have any difficulties logging on please contact the Help Desk, at:

its-service@vuw.ac.nz

All LIM students will be automatically enrolled in 'LIM Programmes Information' on Blackboard. General announcements and information will be posted here, and students should check this site regularly.

Internet conferencing

Distance sessions are now being conducted via the Internet using the Chatterbox application; in order to participate students will need an Internet-connected PC running Windows Vista, XP or Windows 2000, microphone, and headphones/speakers. To connect, go to the Internet conferencing page (and read the “Getting Started” information) at

<https://conferencing.sim.vuw.ac.nz/>

There is also an ‘Internet Conferencing’ button linking to this page in Blackboard.

Some days before your first session, and at least 15 minutes before each subsequent session, you should test your system by going to the Echo Room. Regular classes will be held in the LIS Room; additional Discussion Rooms are available for breakout groups, and as a “waiting room” if a class is proceeding in the main LIS room. Study groups can use the discussion rooms out of regular class times. For further information, follow the help links on the Internet Conferencing page; details, including screen name conventions, are also available on Blackboard under LIM Programmes Information.

LIM Students email list

Mass communication between the school and students is via the email list. It is your responsibility to ensure you are on the email list; subscription is essential.

The `lim-students` email discussion list is used to make important announcements and to share news and ideas relating to the LIM programmes. It is vital that all staff and students are subscribed. Please make sure that your current email address is subscribed -- one that you check regularly. It is very important that students remain a member of this list until after graduation as the list is used as a main form of communication of important administration messages (including graduation messages).

Emails are sent to `lim-students` often, so if you have not had contact for a few weeks it is a good idea to check if you are still subscribed. If an email is rejected by your email account, you will automatically be unsubscribed.

To subscribe, go to:

<http://lists.vuw.ac.nz/mailman/listinfo/lim-students>

General University information

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 Office on (04) 463 5376.

Notice of Turnitin Use

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 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: 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 penalized 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