

School of Government

PADM 504

DECISION MAKING UNDER UNCERTAINTY
(24 Points)

Trimester 2 / 2009

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

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Trimester Dates

Monday 13 July to Saturday 14 November 2009

Withdrawal Dates

Notice of withdrawal must be in writing / emailed to the Senior Programme Coordinator, School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington. Ceasing to attend or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a notice of withdrawal.

Class Times and Room Numbers, Course Content, Course Learning Objectives, Course Delivery, Expected Workload, Group Work, Readings, Materials and Equipment, Assessment Requirements, Mandatory Course Requirements, Class Attendance, Deadlines and Failure to Meet Due Dates, and Communication of Additional Information

Refer to the subject outline supplied by ANZSOG.

Other Information

For the following important information, follow the links provided:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General University Policies and Statutes

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/academic.aspx>

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/Contactus.aspx>

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/



Subject outline

Overview of the subject

This subject examines the use of evidence to support policy and decision-making in the public sector. The course assists students to become more critical users of information and evidence and to develop skills in commissioning research and analysis to inform decision-making.

George Argyrous, g.argyrous@unsw.edu.au, is the subject leader for this course. The broad scope and coverage of the subject and assessments will be the same across all ANZSOG jurisdictions. There is nevertheless some local tailoring to draw on the expertise of local lecturers, practitioners and specialists and to facilitate consideration of issues and applications relevant to each jurisdiction.

Educational format

This course will use a variety of educational formats, including case study teaching, small group discussions, exercises, speaker panels and project team presentations. The program involves a lot of participation by students, which in turn means that it is important for students to read and prepare set cases and exercises.

Learning Outcomes

Those completing this subject will:

- Be able to accurately use, interpret and draw inferences from information gathered as evidence to support decision-making;
- Be aware of the strengths, weaknesses and suitability of selected quantitative and qualitative methods for gathering evidence;
- Know how to commission information gathering and analysis to support management and policy decision-making;
- Understand how the policy system and organisational context affects the use of evidence and analysis in public decision-making.

Attendance Requirements

Full attendance by participants is expected for all EMPA subjects and a record of attendance will be maintained for this subject. Where absence is unavoidable, notification of such both to the subject leader and to the ANZSOG Student Coordinator Linda Losanno (l.losanno@anzsog.edu.au) is required as soon as possible. If a student is absent for 2 sessions or more, additional work in lieu of attendance will be required. If a student is absent for more than 20% (4 sessions or 1 day) of class

contact time, the student will be required to repeat the subject, including all assessable work. Should this occur, the result may be recorded as a fail at the student's university and the student would then be liable for payment of the repeat subject.

Cross-jurisdictional attendance for subjects conducted in multiple locations will normally be permitted only in special circumstances and must be approved beforehand by ANZSOG through the Student Coordinator.

Class information

Sessions are scheduled as follows:

Session 1	9:00 to 10:30am
Morning Tea	10:30 to 11:00am
Session 2	11:00am to 12:30pm
Lunch	12:30 to 1:30pm
Session 3	1:30 to 3:00pm
Afternoon Tea	3:00 to 3:30pm
Session 4	3:30 to 5:00pm

Assessment

Task	Length	Marks	Due date
First individual assignment	up to 1500 words	20%	12 October
Second individual assignment	4 short answer questions	30%	9 November
Project team assignment (2 parts):			
• Presentation	See notes under	10%	*Day 5
• Written report – 3000 words	Assessment tasks	40%	30 November

*Day Five is the following for specific locations:
Sydney, Wellington, Adelaide, Canberra – 13 November
Brisbane and Melbourne – 16 November

Assessment guidelines

Assignments should be submitted directly to ANZSOG by COB on the date due. Submit your assignments to assignment@anzsog.edu.au. You will receive confirmation of receipt within a day of submission.

Non-completion / late submission of assessment

All assessable work is compulsory and completion of all components of assessment is required to pass the subject. If, because of illness, a participant is unable to complete work or complete the exam at the scheduled time, a medical certificate must be produced. Other exceptional

circumstances (e.g. bereavement, highly abnormal work obligations) affecting capacity to complete assessment should be discussed with the lecturer and separate or make-up assessment may need to be substituted to achieve the same learning outcomes. Supporting attestation, for example a work supervisor's written explanation, may be required. Penalties will apply where no adequate exception is established. Timely completion of assessable work is also expected. A penalty of 5% of the total mark for an item of assessment will be applied for each day late unless waiver for good reason is arranged with the subject leader beforehand. The ANZSOG Student Guide, given to all students, states:

Extensions are normally granted only for medical or other serious reasons. Work related reasons are not normally accepted, as all students are required to balance hectic work schedules and are advised at the commencement of each subject of assessment requirements.

Applications for exception or extensions must be made before the due date. Students should complete the *EMPA application for assessment extension* form that can be found on the ANZSOG website and email it to the Student Coordinator (l.losanno@anzsog.edu.au) who will consult the local lecturer (in cases involving up to two days extension), and the Subject Leader (in cases involving two or more days extension), to facilitate equity across jurisdictions. In such cases, students will be contacted about any decision reached.

Word limits

Assignments submitted over the set word length **will** be penalised. The word count does not include footnotes, appendices or supplementary material but the body of the text has to stand on its own merits. Supplementary material may be disregarded by the assessor.

Referencing

In all assessable work, full acknowledgement of sources used is required - both for general referencing and for quotation. This includes acknowledgement of any internal documents or web sources relied upon. Where extracts are used directly these must be cited, where ideas are relied upon more broadly referencing is still needed. Please include a full reference list at the end of the assignment, listing in alphabetical order all references cited in the assignment, and in a standard format. The Harvard citation style is preferred and can be found at: http://www.library.uwa.edu.au/help/guides/harvard_citation_style.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism remains unacceptable in any format for the purposes of this subject. Students should be aware that software (e.g. "Turn-it-in") may be used at the discretion of ANZSOG to review material submitted. Serious penalties may be applied in cases of plagiarism.

Return of marks and Assignments

ANZSOG is aiming at assessment turn-around of two weeks for the smaller exercises/assignments and three to four weeks for the project team report and the final assignment or exam.

Students' work will be returned with feedback and comments when appropriate.

Allowance of an additional week will be made for larger classes (e.g. Melbourne and Sydney).



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Assessment tasks

Assignment 1: A review of evidence in your workplace

Write a short review (up to 1500 words) of how evidence is used in your workplace to support policy and/or decision-making. In your review you should consider the following issues:

- What kinds of evidence are considered more or less 'legitimate'?
- Are some methods of collecting evidence preferred over others?
- What issues of project management arise in collecting and using evidence in your organisation?
- What changes would you recommend to improve the use of evidence for decision-making in your organisation?

Note that the example(s) from your workplace are to be used to discuss these general issues, rather than of interest for their own sake.

You must submit your assignment by COB on Monday 12 October. This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

Assignment 2: Take-home assignment

The DMUU e-Learning website has a section entitled "Assignment 2: Take-home test". The questions for the take-home test relate to material covered on days 3 and 4 of the subject, and will be available on this page from 5pm AEDT on 4 November.

You must submit your assignment by COB on Monday 9 November. This assignment is worth 30% of your final grade.

Assignment 3: Project team presentation and report

The class will be divided into several project teams, and your group's topic will be given to you at the end of day 2.

Your assessment will consist of two parts:

1. A presentation before the rest of the class on Day 5 of the course (worth 10% of your final grade).
2. A written report up to 3000 words to be submitted on 30 November (worth 40% of your final grade).