

School of Marketing & International Business

**IBUS 409 Dissertation**

Trimester One and Two 2011

**COURSE OUTLINE**

---

**Names and Contact Details**

Lecturer: Dr. Thomas Borghoff  
RH 1109, Rutherford House, 23 Lambton Quay  
Telephone: 463 9992, Fax: 463 5231,  
E-mail: [thomas.borghoff@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:thomas.borghoff@vuw.ac.nz)

Office hours: Tuesday 10:30 am – 11:30 am

**Trimester Dates**

Teaching Period: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
Study Period: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June  
Examination Period: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June – Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July (inclusive)

**Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before 11 March 2011.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is 14 May. After this date, students forced to withdraw by circumstances beyond their control must apply for permission on an *'Application for Associate Dean's Permission to Withdraw Late'* including supporting documentation

The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

**Course Content**

The Honours dissertation is a two-semester course. Students will complete an individual research project that combines learning from other courses in the Honours programme and individual research on a topic agreed upon by the student and the supervisor. Students will demonstrate expert knowledge in a chosen area of study and appropriate scholarly and ethical behaviour in conducting and reporting their research. The dissertation must have a well-developed conceptual foundation and include a primary research component.

## **Course Learning Objectives**

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

1. Produce independent research including setting initial research questions and forming conclusions;
2. Identify, plan, design and manage a significant research project (under supervision);
3. Apply appropriate methodology for the research;
4. Write up and present the research using the appropriate structure and format;
5. Make an original contribution to research in the field of international business.

## **Expected Workload**

Students should expect to devote approximately 10 hours of independent study per week to this course.

## **Readings**

References will be specific to the chosen topic. 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 for reimbursement of research-related expenses incurred in the development of the dissertation. Original receipts for approved expenses should be submitted to Jessie Johnston, the School Administrator. More information about this is found in your Honours programme welcome folder.

## **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 not be accepted without 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, that 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, prepare for and attend all three seminars in order to pass IBUS 409.

## **Dissertation**

**Format.** The honours dissertation is normally around 10,000 words in length, or 30-40 pages. Please use 12-point, font and double-space your text.

The dissertation will include (as a guide):

- A 150-200 word abstract of the written work
- An introduction, outlining the salience/relevance of the research topic and background to the study
- A current literature review

- Properly justified research questions or hypotheses
- Cogent argument
- A presentation of the research methods
- Clear and concise results
- Logical conclusions, directions for future research and, where appropriate or necessary, recommendations.

Referencing must be thorough, and must follow the referencing style of the Journal of International Business Studies. Please consult the journal ([www.jibs.net](http://www.jibs.net)) for examples of proper style.

**Due Dates.** A complete draft of the dissertation must be submitted to the supervisor no later than **Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011**. 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.

We strongly advise each student to prepare a schedule of meetings with your supervisor by **Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011**. This will allow you to manage your dissertation by setting realistic goals or milestones. You should plan your time so that you get the most benefit from your meetings. It is up to you to complete your dissertation by the deadline; however, to ensure that your supervisor is abreast of your progress and able to assist you as much as possible you should draft a plan of the specific tasks that you hope to accomplish by the dates that you set for each. Please prepare a schedule similar to the one below, so that your supervisor is able to track your progress and assist you in keeping on schedule throughout the academic year. Also, do not forget to include important dates and mandatory deadlines in your schedule.

Goal	Due date: Week	3	4	5	6	7	9	11	14	16	18	19	20	21	22	23
Topic formulation																
Literature review																
Formulation of research questions/ development of hypotheses																
Outline of research methods																
Interview schedule/ survey development																
HEC application																
Data collection																
Dissertation draft																
Revision																
Final draft																
Scheduled meetings with supervisor (max 12 hours):			●		●	●		●	●	●	●		●		●	

### Important dates and deadlines:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| - HEC application                        | <b>1<sup>st</sup> July</b>     |
| - Submission of full draft to supervisor | <b>14<sup>th</sup> October</b> |
| - Review, revise, submit final version   | <b>tba</b>                     |

## **Seminars**

This course will run three seminars to assist you with refining your research topic, sharing knowledge with peers, and completing required documentation - the HEC approval application. Seminars are mandatory and will be held three times during the trimester. These seminars will also allow your lecturers and supervisors to track your progress on the dissertation and provide you with feedback.

The seminar dates (and room numbers) are:

- **Seminar 1.** Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May (RH G01)
- **Seminar 2.** Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> June (RH G01)
- **Seminar 3.** Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> August (RH G01)

**Seminar One** will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> May. You will submit a three-page long research statement (approximately 1,500 words) to Thomas Borghoff two weeks in advance. In the proposal, you should outline your proposed topic, its relevance and any ideas that you have about how you will organise your dissertation (e.g., a general research problem/question, key literatures that you will explore, and your methodological approach). Students will be organised into three to four groups, based on similarity of research interests. Information about the groups will be provided one week before the seminar, and you are expected to read the materials of all members in your group and prepare a commentary for each (5 minutes). Each group will be facilitated by an academic supervisor.

In the seminar, you will present (15 minutes) your research proposal to your group members. After the presentation, you will receive comments from your group members and have the opportunity to discuss or address any questions raised by the audience. Likewise, you will have the opportunity to listen to other group members' presentations and ask questions. There will be a short break after all the presentations. Then, the academic in each group will comment on the students' research projects.

Students should have met with their supervisor to discuss their research questions and approach prior to the first seminar.

## ***Preparation***

Preparation prior to the seminar will involve the following tasks:

- 1) draft and submit the work you have done on your thesis to-date to Cruise Yu, who will circulate it to other members of your assigned group, supervisors and the course co-ordinator on the Thursday prior to the seminar the following week (before 5pm);
- 2) read all drafts circulated by the class;
- 3) prepare a 5 minute commentary on the drafts of your group members (see tips below); and
- 4) prepare a 15 minute presentation on your progress to-date.

## ***Tips for commentaries***

- Read the draft well in advance of the seminar date.
- Comment on the feasibility and appropriateness of the research e.g., methodology, literature chosen, research questions, etc. Outline any areas you believe need more explanation or more refinement or more supporting literature.
- Critically assess the arguments, research questions or hypotheses.

- Be as specific as possible as to things that could be improved. 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 Two** will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> June. This will be a one-hour seminar devoted to assisting you in preparing your HEC application. This seminar will be led by Dr. Thomas Borghoff. You will be taken through the procedure and guidelines and will receive numerous tips to calm your nerves and help ensure that your application is submitted by the deadline, you obtain approval for your research and are able to commence with your data collection in Trimester 2.

**Seminar Three** will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> August. Unlike Seminar One, you will not need to submit an outline of your work in advance, as your supervisor will already be familiar with your research topic and progress. By this stage, we believe that you should have already obtained your HEC approval and begun your data collection; some of you may even be in the data analysis stage. In this seminar, you will again be organised into groups, and will present (15 minutes) your research to other group members. This is an opportunity to report your research progress and share knowledge and experience on doing your own research with peers. After the group presentations and discussion with your peers, the academic assigned to your group will comment on your ongoing research project, and offer feedback or advice.

It is important to note that, while the seminars aim to provide you with a research-oriented working environment for the course, you should not rely solely on the seminars for feedback from your classmates and the lecturers/supervisors.

### **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in IBUS 405, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

### **Communication of Additional Information**

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

### **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 compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. 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.

**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**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study)

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx>

The University's statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx> (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/default.aspx)

**AVC (Academic) Website: information including: Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx)

**Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**

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

**Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**

[http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/mentoring/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/)