

School of Information Management
MMIM552 RESEARCH METHODS

Trimester One 2011

COURSE OUTLINE

Lectures: Tuesday evenings, starting 01 March 2011
One two-hour class each week
Times: 5:40 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Venue: RWW 220

There is no required text book. Readings are provided on Blackboard.

Workloads

This course is worth 15 points, which equates to 150 hours of study.

Lectures 2 hours per week
Private study and preparation 6 – 8 hours weekly throughout the trimester.

Assessment Requirements

There is no exam for this course, all assessment is by course work.

WK 2 Presentation of Research Topic or		
WK 3 Presentation of Research Topic	5%	8 hours
WK 6 Philosophy of Research Essay	20%	40 hours
WK 8 Presentation of Interview Results	30%	20 hours
WK 9 HEC application	5%	8 hours
WK11 Research Proposal	40%	60 hours

Course Content

The course is intended to prepare students for MMIM590 or MMIM592. The course will cover the philosophy of research, how to do a literature review, the essentials of qualitative and quantitative methods, and basic approaches to case studies and research projects. The major deliverable is a finished Project Proposal, ready to be implemented.

Course Delivery

Weekly lectures. There are no separate tutorials or lab sessions. Students are expected to participate actively in the discussion sessions of each lecture and present the results of their research findings. Key dates as shown below.

Learning Schedule

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Lecture</i>	
Week1	01 Mar	Introduction to research methods Discussion of Research topic design	
Week 2	08 Mar	Presentation of individual research topics. Paradigms and the Philosophy of Research	5%
Week 3	15 Mar	Presentation of individual research topics. Designing Qualitative Research	
Week 4	22 Mar	Qualitative Data Collection	
Week 5	29 Mar	Analysis of Qualitative Data	
Week 6	05 Apr	Philosophy of Research Essay hand-in Questionnaire based research	20%
Week 7	12 Apr	The Normal distribution, Correlation	5%
		<i>Mid Trimester Break</i>	
Week 8	03 May	Interview and Content analysis hand in Presentation of Interview Analyses	30%
Week 9	10 May	HEC form hand in & discussion Regression, multiple regression	
Week 10	17 May	Factor analysis. SEM	
Week 11	24 May	Research Proposal Hand-in Analysis of variance. ANOVA	40%
Week 12	31 May	Research Proposal Feedback	

This schedule is subject to change.

Course Learning Objectives

On completion of this course the student will be able to

Communication

- Publish a research proposal for a research project.
- Create a Human Ethics Committee application.
- Present the results of their research findings in an academic format.

Creative and Critical Thinking

- Outline quantitative research techniques for appropriate situations.
- Outline qualitative research techniques for appropriate situations.
- Design a questionnaire to support a hypothesis.

Leadership

- Discourse on research philosophies and strategies.
- Design and conduct research interviews.

Due date	Assessment	
08 Mar 11 or 15 Mar 11	Presentation of your research topic. You may use no more than three ppt slides, and a summary sheet to hand out. The summary sheet will list three journal articles relevant to your topic. Make enough copies of the summary so that you can give one to the other students as well. Check the SIM Research directory to identify staff you could approach as a supervisor. 8 hours	5% <i>Communication MA1</i>
05 Apr 11	Philosophy of Research Essay Topic: Justify the pedagogical and philosophical approach you will bring to your research topic, and outline any problems inherent in that approach. 1000-1200 words, properly APA referenced. 40 hours	20% <i>Critical Thinking Leadership MA3</i>
03 May 11	Presentation of your Interview results Report: Combination of Interviews and Content Analysis. Treat this as a practice project, with sections as you would use in the final project proposal. Not more than 2000 words. You can use excerpts and direct quotations 20 hours	30% <i>Leadership Communication MA2</i>
10-May-11	HEC Project Proposal Use the SIM form, not the BCA version. You must include your proposed interview questions, or the survey you intend to use. These do not have to be final, but must give a good idea of the final questions. 8 hours	5% <i>Critical Thinking MA1</i>
24-May-11	Final Proposal Examples of the required format will be given out in class. 60 hours	40% <i>Critical Thinking Communication MA1</i>
31-May-10	Proposal Feedback Discussion and feedback on the project proposals.	

Full details of each course work item/assignment will be given out in class and/or published on Blackboard.

RUBRICS

MARKING RUBRIC for Philosophies of Research assignment.

Academic Essay.

Justify the pedagogical and philosophical approach you will use to research your research topic, and outline any problems inherent in that approach.

1000-1200 words, properly APA referenced.

20%

	A	B	C
Justification of philosophical approach used	Clearly articulated	Some coverage but lacks depth	Minimal justification
Reflective evaluation applied to topic	Shows true insight	Some understanding	Minimal appreciation shown
Paradigms & Philosophies discussed	Multiple	Two	One
Breadth of reading and refs	Comprehensive	Adequate	Few
Understanding of Philosophies	Shows clear understanding	Some appreciation	Surface use only
Actively engaged with	Excellent use	Good discussion	Some understanding
Knows how to apply	Shows clear understanding	Some appreciation	Surface use only
Originality	Shows independent thought	some new ideas	derivative
Argument	Logical Flow	Understandable	Hit and miss
Use of sources	Excellent	Good	OK
Focus	All content to the point & relevant	a little extraneous material	noticeable irrelevant material

Presentation			
APA citation	Exact	Minor Inconsistencies	Incorrect formatting
Essay Format	Structured	Bit wandering	confused
Word Count	As required		outside the specification

	What was delivered:	
A	A quality of learning and understanding that is the best that could reasonably be expected in this course.	Shows insight, has reflected on their research, understands the implications of using a particular philosophy, has critically evaluated their proposed research methods via the philosophy. Has justified their personal approach to their topic.
B	Highly satisfactory but lacks the flair that distinguishes A	Has described the philosophies, how they are used, has shown some understanding of the philosophical issues and their justification, but not to the level for an A.
C	Quite satisfactory but not of the same standard as a B.	Has made good attempt at the assignment, but has not demonstrated real insight of the consequences or problems of using a particular philosophy. Justification may not be explicitly shown.
D	Minimally Acceptable. at the lower end of what is acceptable from a Masters student.	May have described some philosophies but not shown that they know how to apply them. Little or no reflection on how knowledge of philosophies might affect their approach to their own research topic.
F	Less than acceptable.	Below the standard expected from a Masters student.

COMMENTS

YOUR GRADE:

MARKING RUBRIC for Comparison of Interviews and Content Analysis assignment.

	A	B	C	D
Uses Research Project format	Follows the required format	Mostly conforms	Poorly organised	Not in research project format
Scholarship	Comprehensive reading and refs	Adequate reading	Needs more	Minimal/ None
Introduction / Objectives	Puts work into context	could be clearer	Inadequate for the reader	None
Interviews				
Interview Questions	Clearly focused	in the right area	poorly thought out	Not mentioned
Interview Methodology	Excellent description	Adequate for this assignment	skimpy, serious omissions	Not shown
analysis of Interview data	Shows true insight	Adequate for this assignment	Superficial, lacks rigor	None
Interview Model	Clear and understandable	Acceptable	Not good	Not done
Content Analysis				
CA methodology	Excellent description	Adequate for this assignment	Skimpy, Serious omissions	Not Shown
CA analysis	Shows true insight	Adequate for this assignment	Superficial, lacks rigor	None
CA model	Clear and understandable	Acceptable	Not good	Not done
Argument				
Comparison of the models	Excellent use	Good discussion	Not enough depth	No real understanding
Developing Arg	Logical Flow	Understandable	Hit and miss	Confused
Essay structure	Structured	Could be improved	Confusing	Messy
Originality	Shows independent thought	some new ideas	derivative	copied
Focus	All content to the point & relevant	some extraneous material	noticeable irrelevant material	Didn't answer the question
Conclusion	Excellent, to the point	OK	does not sum up the findings	Missing

Presentation	These elements are expected, can detract from grade			
Use of refs in text	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor
APA citation format	Exact	Minor Inconsistencies	Incorrect formatting	Not used
Word Count	As required	Not Shown	outside the specification	much too short or too long

COMMENTS

Most important thing to change

YOUR GRADE:

Report: Results of Interviews 30%

Compare the outcome of your interviews with the outcome of the content analysis and present the results as a report. Treat this as a mini project with sections you would use in your final project proposal.

Not more than 2000 words, properly APA referenced.

	What was delivered:	
A	A quality of learning and understanding that is the best that could reasonably be expected in this course.	Used a project layout, has reflected on the research methods, justified the research methods used. Has justified how they arrived at the models, has analysed and discussed how the models are different..
B	Highly satisfactory but lacks the flair that distinguishes A	Has outlined the methodologies but not in detail, has shown some understanding of the issues associated with different methodologies, has justified their analysis and the models, but not to the level for an A.
C	Quite satisfactory but not of the same standard as a B.	Has made good attempt at the assignment, has done the interview and CA adequately, but not tried to justify their models or their analysis. Models not adequately contrasted. Lacks rigor, not an academic approach.
D	Minimally Acceptable. at the lower end of what is acceptable from a Masters student.	May have described some aspects of the data analysis but not shown that they understand what is wanted. Little or no justification of either method or analysis, too much unsupported statements, lacking the level of academic rigour required.
F	Less than acceptable.	Below the standard expected from a Masters student.

Project Proposal – Planning Outline

This is not a marking scheme

It shows what things you need to do, and approximately where to put your effort.

Criteria	Weight	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Fails to Meet Expectations
<p><i>Clear Goals</i> Outlines a scholarly, significant, elegant and ethical project to carry out at a later date. Requirements: Addresses a significant issue or problem Is publishable Identifies the target journal The research is actually wanted by someone Has support of identifiable research subjects Is not simply an issue arising from bad management Is about some aspect of ICT Has an accessible body of knowledge to work from Can be done in the time available Outlines how the results will be shared beyond MIM</p>	25%			
<p><i>Adequate Preparation</i> Is well-grounded in key theories and research findings related to IS generally Shows evidence of having engaged with the literature in the academic discipline</p>	20%			
<p><i>Appropriate Methods</i> Demonstrates research design and research methods appropriate for the project proposed</p>	20%			
<p><i>Significant Results</i> What the outcome will be and how it will help some organization or industry The contribution to knowledge</p>	15%			
<p><i>Reflective Critique</i> Anticipates any ethical issues that the research might raise Identifies the limits and potential weaknesses in the design</p>	10%			
<p><i>Effective Presentation</i> Presents the research in a clearly structured and coherently written research proposal format Adheres to the conventions of scholarly writing, including full and correct referencing</p>	10%			
<i>Weightings</i>	100%			

MARKING RUBRIC for Research Proposal.

	A	B	C	D
Research Proposal				
Introduction	explains work in context	needs to be more focussed	Inadequate for the reader	None
Research Question	Concisely stated	OK	unclear or ambiguous	Missing
Aims & Objectives	Clear & unambiguous	could be more specific	Inadequate for the reader	None
analysis of the problem	Shows true insight	Adequate for this assignment	Superficial, lacks rigor	None
Literature Review	Comprehensive refs, used well	Adequate reading	Needs more refs / more structure	Minimal/ None
Theoretical Model	Excellent	Good	Not clear	None shown
Hypotheses	Exact, relevant	Undefined	Implied	None
Philosophical justification	Clearly stated, understands	Shows appreciation	Minimal consideration	Not shown
Methodology				
Research Design	Excellent description	Adequate for this assignment	partial, serious omissions	Not shown
Feasibility of research	Optimal	possible problems	poorly thought out	Unlikely to succeed
Data collection methods	Clear and appropriate	Suitable in general	Not a good choice / fit	Not shown
Data analysis methods	Excellent description	Adequate for this assignment	unclear, Serious omissions	Not Shown
Questions	Complete	Outlined	Too brief	Missing
Format				
Report Layout	Follows the required format	Mostly conforms	Poorly organised	Not acceptable format
Logic	Structured	Does not flow	Confusing	Messy
Focus	To the point & relevant	some extraneous material	lot of irrelevant material	Didn't answer the question
Conclusion	Excellent, to the point	OK	does not sum up the proposal	Missing
Presentation				
in-text citation	Excellent	Good, minor	systemic misuse	Poor
APA reference formatting	Exact	Minor Inconsistencies	Incorrect formatting	Not used
Word Count	As required	Not Shown	outside the specification	much too short or too long

COMMENTS

Most important thing to change

YOUR GRADE:

Research Proposal 40%

The proposal is being marked on its presentation, structure, completeness and conforming to design requirements. It is not principally being graded in the quality of the idea.

	What was delivered:	
A	A quality of proposal and understanding of research design that is the best that could reasonably be expected in this course.	Concise research question. Clear aims and objectives. Clear and understandable research design, conforms to a standard layout, has justified the research methods, and analysis methods. Puts the research into context by citing appropriate reference sources.
B	Covers all the requirements but lacks the flair that distinguishes A	Has outlined the research proposed but not in complete detail, has shown some understanding of the issues associated with the proposed research, has justified the analysis and the models, but not to the level for an A.
C	Quite satisfactory but not of the same standard as a B.	Has made good attempt at the proposal, has covered all the areas adequately, possibly not justified methods or analysis. Lacks rigor, not an academic approach.
D	Minimally Acceptable. at the lower end of what is expected from a Masters student.	May have described most but not all aspects of the research proposed, but not shown understanding of what is wanted. Little or no justification of either method or analysis, lacking the level of academic rigor required.
F	Less than acceptable.	Not up to the standard required from a Masters student.

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator: David Mason
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Programme Administrator: Usha Varatharaju
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Teaching Period: Monday 28 February – Friday 3 June

Reading List for Qualitative Methods

Recommended Text:

Punch, K. F., *Introduction to Social Research – Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (2ed.), Sage, 2005; ISBN 0761944168;

Chapters from the recommended text may be read/copied in the library (the text is on 3 day loan). If you want to buy this book, it is available from VicBooks, \$92.00. This book is suggested reading, not a requirement.

A good starting point for the philosophy of research assignment is
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/philosophy.php>

The following journal articles will be provided on Blackboard.

Angrosino, M.V. and Mays de Pérez, K.A. (2000) Rethinking Observation: From method to Context. In Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3ed), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, p673-703.

Denzin, N.K. (2000) Methods of Collecting and Analysing Empirical Materials. In Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3ed), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, p632-644.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) Building Theories from Case Study Research. *The Academy of Management Review*. Vol 14, No 4, pp. 532-550.

Fontana, A. and Frey, J.H. (2000) The Interview: From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text. In Denzin, N.K and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3ed), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, p645-672.

Gregor, S. (2006) The Nature of Theory in Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly*, Vol 30, No 3, Sept 2006, pp. 611-642

Klein, H. K. and Myers, M. D. (1999) A Set of Principles for Conducting and Evaluating Interpretive Field Studies in Information Systems. *MIS Quarterly*. Vol 23, No 1, pp 67-94.

Lehmann, H.P. (2008) Why Are There Not More Grounded Theories of Information Systems? Pre-Publication Manuscript: Under Review with *MIS Quarterly*.

Lehmann, H.P., Gallupe, R.B. (2005) Information Systems for Multinational

Enterprises – Some Factors at Work in their Design and Implementation, *Journal of International Management* Vol. 11, Nr. 2, 163-186.

Orlikowski, W. J. (1993) CASE Tools as Organizational Change: Investigating Incremental and Radical Changes in Systems Development. *MIS Quarterly*. Dec 1993, pp. 309-340.

Weber, R. (2004) The Rhetoric of Positivism vs. Interpretivism: A Personal View. *MIS Quarterly*. Vol 28, No 1, pp. iii-xii.

Webster, J. and Watson, R. T. (2002) Analysing the Past to Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review. *MIS Quarterly*. Vol 26, No 2, pp. xiii-xxiii.

Reading List for Quantitative Methods

The following journal articles will be provided on Blackboard.

Banker, R. & Kauffman, R. (2004). The evolution of research on Information Systems: a fiftieth year survey of the literature in Management Science. *Management Science*, 50 (3), 281-298.

Couper, M. (2000). Web Surveys: A Review of Issues and Approaches. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64, 464–94

Couper M.P. & Miller, P.V. (2009). Web Survey Methods: Introduction. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 72 (5), 831 - 835.

Denscombe, M. (2006) Web-Based Questionnaires and the Mode Effect. *Social Science Computer Review*, 24 (2), 246-254 DOI 10.1177/0894439305284522

Hotz, R.L. Most science studies appear to be tainted by sloppy analysis. *The Wall Street Journal Online*. Sept 14, 2007. <http://online.wsj.com/public>

Ioannidis, J. (2005). Why most published research findings are false. *PLoS Medicine*, 2 (8) www.plosmedicine.org DOI 10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124

Malhotra, N. (2008). Completion time and response order effects in web surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 72 (5), 914–934.

Treat, T.A. & Weersing, V.R. (undated). Five Classes of Research Questions in Clinical Psychology. Extract from *Encyclopedia of Statistics in Behavioral Science*. Pages 1-12. Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 0-470-86080-4.

Letter Grades will be used to mark all course work assignments. The percentage/grade equivalents for each course work element are weighted and accumulated to generate the final grade for the course. Grades, percentage equivalents and descriptions used are supplied in the table below:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>%Equivalent</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Extended Description</i>
A+	Over 84	Outstanding	Far exceeds requirements, flawless, creative
A	80-84	Excellent	Polished, original, demonstrating mastery
A-	75-79	Very Good	Some originality, exceeds all requirements
B+	70-74	Good	Exceeds requirements in some respects
B	65-69	Satisfactory	Fulfils requirements in general
B-	60-64	Acceptable	Only minor flaws. Unoriginal
C+	55-59	Pass	Mistakes, recapitulation of course material
C	50-54	Minimum pass	Serious mistakes or deficiencies
D	40-49	Marginal Fail	Little understanding, insufficient performance
E	00-39	Fail	Below the minimum required

Penalties

In keeping with standards of professionalism appropriate to this programme, it is expected that deadlines will be honoured. In fairness to students who complete work on time, work submitted after the due date/ time will incur penalties for lateness.

However: unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement, or other aegrotat requiring incidents) may lead to a waiver of these penalties but need to be discussed with the paper coordinator as soon as possible.

There are also penalties for **excessive length of course work** deliverables. Word limits need to be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student's coverage of a topic. **Penalty percentages in proportion to the excess word count will be applied.** For example, an assignment has a word limit of 3,000 words. A delivered assignment with 3,300 words would incur a penalty of 10%. Penalties will be applied as a multiplier of $(1 - \text{Penalty}\%)$ to the grade percentage. For example, if the grade percentage before penalties was **82%** (grade **A**) and the penalty was 10%, then the final percentage will be **82%** multiplied by **0.9** (i.e. $1 - 0.1$) = **73.8%** and the final grade will reduce to **B+**.

Materials and Equipment

No special materials or equipment are required for this course.

Readings

There is no required text for this course. A recommended text is:

Punch, K. F., *Introduction to Social Research – Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (2ed.), Sage, 2005; ISBN 0761944168; available from VicBooks, \$92.00 (This is a recommendation, not a requirement).

Group work

There is no group work component to this course.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class. 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 information will be notified to students via email and announcements on the MMIM552 Blackboard site, which will also carry general information and resources for the course.

Mandatory Course Requirements

There are no mandatory course requirements.

General Information

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 11. 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.

For the following important information please follow the links provided:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

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

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.

Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes.

The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

General University Policies and Statutes

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

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

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/