

SCHOOL OF MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

IBUS 311 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT

Trimester Two 2011

COURSE OUTLINE

Name and Contact Details

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Trimester Dates

Monday 11 July to Tuesday 25 October 2011

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before 22 July 2011.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 23 September. 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.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Six special topics workshops will be organised throughout the trimester. The information about the workshops is detailed in a separate section following.

Individual or group consultation times will be agreed on after initial planning for each project.

Course Content

The International Business Research Project (IBUS 311 Project) is a research paper where students have the opportunity to investigate and experience the real-world of international business. This paper involves the application and assessment of an approved topic relevant to international business through supervised practical experience in an agency, firm or organisation involved in the development, planning and management of international business programmes, enterprise and/or policy formation.

Course Learning Objectives

The primary purpose of the paper is to equip students with research and problem solving skills through dual support from a participating organisation in industry or government as well as an academic supervisor from Victoria University. Therefore, students work for credit on a supervised IBUS project while working with or for a participating company or agency.

The learning objectives of IBUS311 are to:

- Analyse an issue of interest in the context of international business (LO1).
- Formulate a business model for the global market (LO2).
- Apply frameworks, tools, and concepts to an international business issue (LO3).
- Demonstrate skills in research and analysis and present results and recommendations of research projects (LO4).

Course Delivery

All 311 projects involve some aspect of international business, but the scope of possibilities is wide and could include elements of entrepreneurship, business planning, marketing, exporting, entry mode decisions, cross-cultural management, supply chain management, environment or industry analysis, regulatory issues, e-commerce... For example:

- Preparing a case study of an international company, focussing on a selected aspect of their international operations.
- Design of a business plan for an international spin-off, start-up or expanding firm or planning and evaluation of such project.
- Developing a market entry strategy into a new market for an existing export product.
- Developing a collaborative strategy for firms in a domestic cluster to compete internationally
- Developing a competitive strategy for a selected firm or industry in the global market.
- Developing a solution for a firm to be better integrated in the global supply chain.
- Evaluating the impact of environment strategy of a firm on its performance in overseas markets
- Examining the impact of currency fluctuations on export pricing strategies.
- Auditing the “International Business Readiness” of a small/medium sized business.
- Developing an E-business solution for an internationalising firm.
- Assessing the business outlook for New Zealand trade into a specified market.

It is expected that the IBUS 311 project will normally be carried out within a participating organisation for whom the student is working. There is provision however for students to work on a supervised project within a company or agency without specifically being employed. The key consideration in these circumstances is identifying a manager who is willing to take direct

responsibility for working with the student on a project with mutually agreed objectives and outcomes. This includes being reasonably available to the student through the project period (8-10 hours over three and half months), and assuring reasonable access to people and information likely to be required in adequately completing the project.

For participating organisations, the IBUS 311 Project aims to provide the following benefits:

- Getting a full report on the research.
- An opportunity to gain external insight in addressing present or future issues relating to international business.
- Addressing problems or opportunities that have been ignored due to time and resource constraints.
- Establishing a relationship with IBUS staff and students at Victoria.
- Assessing the potential for future recruitment of IBUS students.

The School for its part works closely with the student in formulating an agreed topic and project outcomes, and supervising the work to ensure that academic requirements are met. While the School is happy to work with students in identifying possible project sites students are responsible for finding organisations to work with.

The potential students will be invited to submit a proposal by **4 July**. PLEASE NOTE that acceptance into IBUS 311 is subject to approval by the course lecturer. Approval is based on the quality of the student's proposal and on limited placements in the programme.

Special topics workshops are designed to give students guidance on the project and also address any issues emerging in the course. Students are required to attend all the special topics workshops outlined in the following table.

No.	Workshop	Description	Week	Time	Venue	Date
1.	Introduction	Learning objectives and outcomes; research process; Client recruitment; Defining the research problem	1	10:30-11:30am	RHMZ05	13 July Wednesday
2.	Problem defining/ Literature review	Preliminary information gathering; Literature review; Developing research objectives/ propositions/ hypotheses	3	10:30-11:30am	RHMZ11	27 July Wednesday
3.	Integration of theory and practice	Primary data collection including surveys and/or interviews, and secondary data collection	6	10:30-11:30am	RHMZ05	17 August Wednesday
4.	Developing solutions	Data analysis and managerial recommendations	9	10:30-11:30am	RHMZ05	21 September Wednesday
5.	Validating or improving solutions	Oral presentation preparation	11	10:30-11:30am	RHMZ05	5 October Wednesday
6.	Course review	Wrap up and reflection	12	10:30-11:30am	TBA	12 October Wednesday

Expected Workload

Students' workload will vary depending on each project. Normally students can expect to work an average of 10 hours per week on meetings, readings, research and planning.

Readings

Two books are recommended as key references in this course:

Cavana, R. Y., Delahaye, B. L. & Sekaran, U. 2001. *Applied Business Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*. Milton, QLD, Australia: John Wiley & Sons.

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. 2010. *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

These two books are stored in the closed reserve for IBUS 311 at the Commerce library. In addition, students can discuss reading recommendations with the course lecturer based upon the specifics of their projects.

Materials and Equipment

Students are required to have access to personal computers and the Internet in order to conduct research. Students are required to be familiar with the process of employing academic databases accessible via the university library system.

Assessment Requirements

There is no final examination in this course. The research report is worth 80 marks; the other 20 marks will be made up by an oral presentation to the participating organisation.

The research questions, contents, length and depth as well as other aspect of the research project will be negotiated with the course lecturer and agreed on in writing before **1 August 2011**. The research report will be due **25 October 2011**. The report will be assessed by the course lecturer, in consultation with the participating organisation. In addition, each student is required to make a formal presentation to the participating organisation. The presentations are expected to take place **10-14 October** but the actual time will be negotiated with the participating organisations. Each presentation will be assessed by the course lecturer in consultation with the participating organisation.

Assessment	Learning Objectives Addressed	Weight	Due Date
Research report	LO 1,2,3	80%	25 October
Presentation	LO 4	20%	10-14 October

The research report will be assessed following the evaluation criteria specified in the book by Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001) on pp. 389-392. The structure of the report should follow the guidance given in the book by Sekaran and Bougie (2010), with references to Chapter 14 (pp.389-406) and Report 4 (Example of an abridged basic research report) in Appendix (pp. 418-22). All of the references in the report must follow the referencing format of the *Journal of*

International Business Studies. Please consult JIBS' Instruction for Authors' and articles within the Journal for examples on correct referencing. There are no set word limits for the research report. The length of the report will be the result of the consultation and negotiation with the participating organisations and the course lecturer.

Quality Assurance Note

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.

KEY DATES IN THE COURSE:

No.	Milestones	Due Date
1.	A preliminary proposal	4 July
2.	Acceptance into the course	11 July
3.	Client confirmation and finalising of the proposal and project agreement (signed off by the client and course lecturer)	1 August
4.	Completion of the literature review and development of research questions/ propositions/ hypotheses	15 August
5.	Completion of the research design	5 September
6.	Completion of data collection and analysis and development of solutions	3 October
7.	Oral presentation and client feedback	10-14 October
8.	Submission of the research report	25 October

HEC Requirements

University policy requires all research projects involving human subjects to be approved by the Human Ethics Committee. Approval for IBUS 311 projects, *that meet certain conditions*, is currently being sought. Students should ensure that their research project meets these conditions, or they will need to apply for HEC approval independently. A copy of these conditions will be made available to students by the course lecturer.

In addition students are required to submit and gain approval from the course lecturer for their proposed research topic. A proposal form can be gained from the course lecturer.

Examinations

There is no final examination for this course.

Mandatory Course Requirements

A written copy of research report must be submitted to the course lecturer by 10am 25 October unless an extension has been granted by the Course lecturer prior to this submission deadline. A

digital copy of research report must be sent to the course lecturer via email before the deadline for the written copy. To pass the course, the student must obtain a minimum of 50% of the total marks for the research report.

Penalties

Twenty marks will be automatically taken off the final marks of the work if the student submits their report later than **10am 25 October 2011** but before **10am 1 November 2011** unless a preapproval has been granted by the course lecturer before the late submission. The report will not be accepted for marking if it is handed in after **10am 1 November 2011** unless a prior approval has been given.

Communication of Additional Information

Blackboard and student email addresses are the devices through which any additional information or changes regarding this course will be communicated. Please check Blackboard and your student emails frequently (every two days at least).

Class Representative

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

Use of Turnitin (if applicable)

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

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, 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

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/>

**Te Putahi Atawhai
Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme**
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/tpa/index.aspx