

GOVT 604
RESEARCH PROPOSAL
(30 Points)

Full Year 2012

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Coordinator: **Dr Amanda Wolf**
Room RH 804, Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus
Telephone: (04) 463 5712
Email: amanda.wolf@vuw.ac.nz

Programme Administrator: **Dawn Yeabsley**
Room RH 802, Level 8, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus
Telephone: (04) 463 6966
Fax: (04) 463 5454
Email: dawn.yeabsley@vuw.ac.nz

Trimester Dates: From Monday 5 March to Friday 16 November (inclusive)

Withdrawal from Course

The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is 18 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* form and include supporting documentation. The application form is available from the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks.

Class Times and Room Numbers

Classes will meet in RH 819 on Wednesdays (3 to 5) and Fridays (9 to 11): see course outline for specific dates.

Course Content

In this course, candidates will develop a research proposal that establishes the research question, context, objectives, methodology and justification for their thesis inquiry. Skills covered include writing for academic purposes, and presenting orally to public and academic/specialist audiences. Strategies for overcoming key challenges will be addressed. Ethics applications and pilot studies (as required) will be completed.

Course Learning Objectives

Those who successfully complete GOVT 604 should be able to:

1. *Persuasively communicate the appropriateness of research designs, orally and in writing*
2. *Undertake research that can make an original and significant contribution to knowledge or understanding and practice*

Course Delivery

The course will be delivered in seminars, a writing retreat, and one-to-one meetings with supervisors/advisors. All candidates are expected to prepare appropriately for course sessions, to attend each session and to take responsibilities as may be assigned.

Expected Workload

The total workload associated with this course is approximately 275-300 hours.

Readings

Required readings are listed on the course outline below, and will be provided via Blackboard. Hard copies may be printed at the School if desired. Candidates are not required to purchase any texts. In addition, candidates will need to identify, read and summarise additional readings specific to their thesis.

Assessment Overview

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Full draft of the research proposal	10%	20 July
HEC application	10%	20 July
Critical assessment of research proposals	10%	10 Aug
Oral presentation of the research proposal (assessed by the School Research Committee and primary supervisor)	30%	26 Oct
Final presentation of the research proposal (assessed by the School Research Committee and primary supervisor)	40%	9 Nov

Assessment Detail

Criteria for “pass” are set for each assignment at a level to ensure doctoral-level competency and achievement. Passing standards will be more-or-less equivalent to a B+ at Honours level. All assignments must be passed to achieve an overall pass in the course.

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 programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Detailed Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings/Assessment
4 April	Public sector mentor guidelines	Draft 'one-pager' (emailed in advance)
27 April	Pilots/ initial fieldwork planning	Proposal outline and research design/methodology section due
4 May	Interviewing: planning and conducting	
11 May	Interviewing: Analysing and reporting	
18 May	Problem and research question statements	
25 May	HEC application	VUW Pipitea forms and guidance
1 June	Proposal formats and other choices	Proposal 'scene setter' and research question/s due
8 June		Proposal methods section due One on one meetings with Amanda
20 July	Focus candidate A	Draft full proposal and HEC application due
27 July	Focus candidate B	
3 Aug	Focus candidate C	
8 Aug	Focus candidate D	Proposal critiques due
17 Aug	Caveats and limitations	
22 Aug	Oral argument	
17-21 Sept	Writing retreat	
24 Sep-26 Oct	Practice sessions for oral presentations	Full proposal seminars
9 Nov		Written full proposals due

Additional readings:

DGov Procedures, section 5: Provisional and full registration (attached to this outline)

School of Government guidelines on provisional to full registration

Victoria University of Wellington, Human Ethics Committee, information for applicants and application form.

Sample PhD research proposals.

Penalties

No penalties will apply. Candidates who cannot meet assessment deadlines must negotiate an alternative arrangement with the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To pass the course, a candidate is required to pass each assessment item.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information will be conveyed via email.

Use of Turnitin

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 www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.

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 www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar (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/>

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

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

From DGov Procedures

5.0 Provisional and full registration (Policy 4.5)

5.1 Provisional registration

- a) Candidates in the Doctor of Government are “provisionally registered” during Part 1, and until they meet the requirements for enrolment in Part 2.
 - During Part 1 candidates are expected to make satisfactory progress on agreed-upon performance standards in coursework and in the preparation of a research proposal. Indicators of satisfactory progress are as set out in course outlines and DGov research proposal guidance.
- b) It is the School’s responsibility to document the progress of all candidates (see section 7.0). This is particularly important during Part 1 and any concerns about the candidate’s ability to meet standards should be noted.
- c) It is expected that candidates will be involved in discussions about their progress with their Supervisor, course coordinators and Programme Director, and given appropriate opportunities to address any identified shortcomings.

5.2 Criteria for progression to full registration

- a) To progress from Part 1 (provisional) to Part 2 (full) registration, the candidate must:
 - (i) write a full research proposal (see section 5.3) the length of which is determined by School regulations; and
 - (ii) meet any School or programme requirements developed by the School Research Committee and approved by the Associate Dean (PGR); and
 - (iii) meet any individual requirements imposed by the School.
- b) Each candidate should present a seminar on their work as a requirement for movement from provisional to full registration. The specific requirements in a) (ii) above, may be found in the DGov Proposal and Thesis Guidelines.
- c) All full research proposals may be submitted to the University’s plagiarism detection software. In the event of plagiarism being detected please refer to the [Dealing with Student Plagiarism and Related Academic Misconduct Procedure](#)

5.3 Research proposal

As published by the School in the DGov Proposal and Thesis Guidelines, full research proposals should contain the following elements:

- a) the background to the research question, which will often be an applied problem, and will include detail on context of the problem
- b) the research problem, with specific questions and sub-questions set out and explained.
- c) the conceptual or theoretical framework (the scholarly context), which will be presented in a way that shows the candidate’s knowledge of relevant literature and which is justified as appropriate for the research question/s. As with the treatment of research design and methodology, it may not always be sufficient for a candidate to explain the choices that have been made: It may be necessary to explain why other choices were rejected.
- d) research design and methodology, fully justified as appropriate for the proposed research and with sufficient attention to the specific work proposed for the reader to judge the candidate’s ability to design and conduct research tasks.

- e) details of any special resources required (beyond what is specified in the Minimum Resources Agreement)
- f) a statement as to whether the research requires ethics approval and, if so, when it will be sought; if approval has already been granted for the proposed research or for preliminary work, this should be noted
- g) a discussion of any intellectual property issues to which the research may give rise
- h) a statement that there are no foreseeable cultural, social or legal impediments to the successful completion and/or publication of the research
- i) a tentative timetable for the completion of the thesis, including preliminary goals for the next six months.

5.4 Presentation of the proposal

- a) Candidates are required to present their proposal. The presentation will normally be publicly announced (e.g. in *VicNews*) and be open to those who may be interested from within the University and the profession.
- b) It is recommended that candidates summarise the proposal and highlight:
 - An introduction/motivation for the research;
 - Definitions or background information to place the research in context;
 - The research problem and questions;
 - The relevant literature/s and the theoretical framework for the research;
 - The methodology and methods and their justification in terms of the research questions;
 - The expected original and significant contribution to knowledge and understanding; and
 - Any known risks or unusual challenges and how it is proposed to address these.
- c) Candidates can expect to receive questions and feedback from those in attendance. Any feedback should be documented for the candidate's reference.

5.5 Application for full registration

- a) Applicants are required to meet all applicable criteria in section 5.2.
- b) The School Research Committee (SRC) will scrutinise applications to advance to full registration, or may set up an *ad hoc* committee of not fewer than three members to do this.
- c) The SRC should determine:
 - (i) that the candidate has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the research topic; and
 - (ii) that the research proposal outlines an appropriate theoretical framework which will lead to a defensible thesis; and
 - (iii) that the proposed research is original or adds value to existing knowledge; and
 - (iv) that the research can be placed into the existing body of knowledge – for this purpose a summary of the recent research literature relevant to the topic must be included; and
 - (v) that presentation of the proposal as has been satisfactorily completed; and
 - (vi) that all necessary coursework has been completed successfully and assessed at the required standard; and

- (vii) that any individual requirements imposed by the School as a condition of the candidate's provisional registration have been satisfactorily completed.

5.6 Outcomes of application for full registration

- a) The School Research Committee (SRC) may consider the following recommendations:
 - (i) that the candidate's movement to full registration should be approved; or
 - (ii) that the research proposal should be revised and resubmitted; or
 - (iii) that the candidate's registration should be terminated.
- b) Where all the criteria outlined in section 5.5 (d) are met, the SRC will recommend that full registration be confirmed.
- c) Where the recommendation is that the proposal be revised and re-submitted:
 - (i) The SRC must believe that the candidate is capable of correcting the proposal within a suitable timeframe (see (iii) below).
 - (ii) The SRC will provide clear written feedback to the candidate regarding what is required to meet the requisite standards and will specify a timeframe in which the candidate needs to re-apply for approval.
 - (iii) If revisions will take the period of provisional registration beyond 12 months for full-time candidates or 24 months for half-time candidates, the SRC must recommend to the Associate Dean (PGR) that the period of provisional registration be extended. The maximum extension permitted, as per Statute, is three months (full-time equivalent).
- d) Where the recommendation is to terminate registration:
 - (i) The SRC should meet with the candidate and explain face-to-face why this action is recommended. The candidate should also receive the decision in writing.
 - (ii) The candidature is terminated by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research on the advice of the Associate Dean (PGR).
- e) The SRC will make a recommendation on the outcome of the application to the Associate Dean (PGR) using the [Movement from Provisional to Full PhD Registration SRC Report](#) form.