

School of Management

MGMT 430 RESEARCH PROJECT IN MANAGEMENT

Trimester 2, 2014

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE COORDINATOR

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COURSE ADMINISTRATOR

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Trimester Dates

Monday 14th July – Friday 31st October

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 25th July 2014.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 26th 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

Monday 9.30am – 12.20pm RWW 413

NB: Classes are not held every week – see the Course Schedule for details. Attendance at all class is expected.

Course Delivery

This course is about developing your skills as a professional researcher. Successful research requires a unique combination of skills: creativity, interpersonal, project-management and writing skills, as well a critical approach to research methodology and the relevant academic literature.

In this course you will design and conduct a research project on a topic of your choice, using the methods of your choice. It is essential that you find a topic that genuinely interests you, and that you

take ownership of the research process. You can consider a wide range of topics, but your chosen topic must have a link to management, organisation and/or work.

This course combines six workshops, where you will work on successive parts of the project based on feedback from your peers, with individual supervision by a member of the School of Management. You will be allocated a supervisor by the Course Coordinator, based on your expressed area of research interest. The supervisory arrangements will be confirmed at the first class.

Your project:

- will probably involve research with people ('human subjects')
- could also include the use of documents, etc.,
- must be related to management, organisation or work in some way
- can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination.

The scope of the project will depend on the method (or combination of methods) you use and should be guided by the expected workload for this course (see below).

Expected Workload

You should expect to spend 300 hours working on this course. This includes both scheduled contact time (class sessions) and work outside class. You are expected to be well prepared for all workshops – please see the Course Schedule for details of what you are required to bring to each class. You are expected to participate in class sessions, presenting your own work and providing constructive feedback to others.

Prescription

Research project on a selected aspect of Management or HRIR.

Course Learning Objectives

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

1. develop a research question within the relevant literature;
2. apply relevant research methodology and/or analytical methods;
3. draw appropriate conclusions from independent research;
4. present research to an audience of peers and write it up in a suitable form.

Readings

The *required* textbook is:

- Cavana, R.Y., Delahaye, B.L. & Sekaran, U. (2001). *Applied business research: Qualitative and quantitative methods*. Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons.

Recommended reading:

- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2011). *Business research methods*, 3rd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- O'Leary, Zina (2010). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. London: Sage.

To complete the assessment you will need to have read widely on issues of research methodology. You are expected to demonstrate that you have a good overall knowledge of the research approach you have taken, and more detailed knowledge of specific methods you are using.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Workshop Topic	Reading (Cavana et al)	Bring to Class
1	14 July	Planning and Starting Your Project	Ch 1,2	Topic Analysis
2	21 July	Literature Review, Research design	Ch 3,4, 5	Completed 'Project Details' form
3	28 July	Human Ethics Application		Draft HEC Application including forms etc.
5	11 August	Data Collection		Draft interview schedule and/or questionnaire and/or observation sheets
Mid- Trimester Break				
8	15 September	Data analysis		[to be confirmed]
10	29 September	Writing up	Ch 14	Draft of abstract

Assessment

From Trimester 1, 2014, a revised Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>.

In particular, there will be a new grade scheme, in which the A+ range will be 90-100% and 50-54% will be a C-.

Assignment	Title	% of marks available	Due date
1	Literature review, research design and HEC application	30%	Friday 9 August, 4pm
3	Journal article	70%	Friday 31 October, 4pm
	TOTAL	100%	

Relationship between the assessments and the course learning objectives are as follows:

Learning Objective	Literature review, research design and HEC form	Journal article
1	X	X
2	X	X
3		X
4	X	X

All assignments should be submitted to the School of Management reception on Level 10 of Rutherford House. Assignments received after the due time will be deemed to be late. The reception is open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday.

1. Literature Review, research design and HEC application (if undertaking research with ‘human subjects’)

Due: Friday 9 August, 4pm

Marks: 30%

Length: 3000 words (+/- 10%), excluding reference list and completed Human Ethics Committee documentation

This assignment combines the early phases of the research process – the development of a research question within relevant literature together with the appropriate choice of a research methodology and analytical method(s). It should take the form of an academic essay. It is not a business report and you should therefore avoid the use of lists and bullet points.

The purpose of the literature review is to research and develop your topic and to connect your research project to the academic literature, as well as to any relevant practitioner literature. Depending on your topic, the review will include a mix of academic articles and books and non-academic background material. You should construct an argument, rather than merely providing a description of the relevant literature. You should argue the need for, and relevance of, your research project by setting it within the context of past research. This requires that you critically evaluate and synthesise the relevant literature to demonstrate the significance and value of your study. You must be able to summarise key aspects of the literature in your own words. Direct quotations can be useful (e.g. key terms and concepts), but should be used sparingly and should not act as a substitute for your own writing. It is essential that the literature is referenced appropriately.

The research design component of the assignment should examine how you are going to go about generating a credible response to your research question. If you are undertaking research with ‘human subjects’ you will also need to submit completed Human Ethics Committee (HEC) documentation. Please note that you may not formally agree to carry out research with any individuals or organisations, or start data collection before getting human ethics approval. Please also note that you should keep all signed research agreements until the end date on your HEC forms.

Assessment criteria

Your assignment should:

- present the construction of an argument to demonstrate the relevance of your topic
- include a mix of academic and non-academic material appropriate to your topic
- involve a critical evaluation and synthesis of the relevant literature

- be referenced appropriately
- show understanding of the theoretical aspects of research design, especially methodology
- demonstrate ability to design a viable and realistic project
- justify appropriate data collection methods
- justify appropriate data analysis methods
- show understanding of ethical issues in research
- include a realistic project timetable with milestones
- be written to an appropriate professional standard

2. Journal article

Due: Friday October 31, 4pm

Marks: 70%

Length: 8,000 words (+/-10%), excluding references.

Your task is to produce a credible academic research article in the form of an academic journal article.

A suggested format is

- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Findings/Data Analysis
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- Implications of your study for practice/future research
- References

Assessment criteria

The journal article should:

- flow coherently from the research question to the final conclusions
- contribute to the academic literature
- demonstrate a good theoretical understanding of the research process
- be written to an appropriate professional standard

Penalties

I. In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. **The penalty is 5% of the marks available** for an assignment submitted after the due time on the due date **for each part day or day late. Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays** will be included when counting the number of days late. Assignments received **more than 7 days after the due date** will not be accepted and the student will **automatically fail the Mandatory Course Requirements**.

II. Course Outlines provide a signal to students of forthcoming workload, dates of submission etc, and thus student study plans should take account of course requirements across all courses. Consequently, workload issues related to other courses and employment will not be accepted as reason for dispensation from mandatory requirements or waiver of penalties. **Extensions** to submission deadlines for any assigned work will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**.

- III. Students who are unable to comply with any of the mandatory requirements should make a written application for an extension to the due date for submission of assigned work or for waiver of a penalty, **in advance**, to the course co-ordinator providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.
- IV. All such applications must be made **before** the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, e.g. a medical certificate, or counsellor's report that indicates the degree of impairment, and for how long the student has been impaired. Please be sure to ask at the time of consultation for the degree of impairment to be stated in any certificate you provide to support your case.
- V. In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with the course co-ordinator as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- VI. The ability to write in an economical style is a skill that is valued in both academic and business settings and therefore word limits should be strictly adhered to. +/- 10% is acceptable. Beyond that, a penalty may be applied.

Mandatory Course Requirements

None

Referencing

Accurate and correct referencing is essential to scholarly research skills. A quick introduction to APA as required in this course will **be posted on Blackboard**. There are many different styles of referencing and the Faculty of Commerce & Administration at VUW has decided to make APA (American Psychological Association) referencing style the common standard across the Faculty. The Commerce and Central Libraries hold the APA Style Guide.

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 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

Information on course-related matters will be announced at class and posted on the **Blackboard** website at <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/>. It will be crucial for you to regularly check Blackboard for messages, announcements and materials.

Student feedback

This is the first time MGMT 430 will be running as a 30 point course. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php

Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters, go to

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/studenthelp/general-course-information>

Note to Students

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 academic audit. The findings

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