

School of Management

## **TOUR 410 DISSERTATION**

Trimester Two 2014

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

---

#### **COURSE COORDINATOR**

Professor Doug Pearce

Room: RH 921, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5715

Email: [Douglas.Pearce@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Douglas.Pearce@vuw.ac.nz)

#### **Supervisors:**

Dr Christian Schott

Dr Mondher Sahli

Dr Karen Smith

Dr Adam Weaver

Assoc Prof Ian Yeoman

#### **ADMINISTRATOR**

##### **Luisa Acheson**

Room: RH 1022, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5720

Email: [Luisa.Acheson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Luisa.Acheson@vuw.ac.nz)

#### **Trimester Dates**

Teaching Period is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October

#### **Withdrawal from Course**

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2014.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> 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**

13:40-15:30 Monday **14 July**: proposal presentation RHMZ04  
13:40-15:30 Monday **18 August**: first progress report session. Room TBC  
13:40-15:30 Monday **6 October**: second progress report session. Room TBC  
Presentations: 9.00-12.00 **20 October** RHG01

## **Course Content**

This course is primarily an educational exercise in research which involves the preparation of a dissertation on an approved topic in tourism management. Preparing the dissertation also provides an opportunity to follow up a topic of personal interest in the field of tourism.

## **Programme and Course-Related Learning Objectives**

**Learning Goal #1:** Our graduates will possess and apply an advanced understanding of tourism management, be able to undertake and use research, and have a range of transferable skills.

### *Learning Objectives*

Graduates will be able to:

- (a) demonstrate a critical understanding of theoretical and applied aspects of tourism management;
- (b) display an advanced appreciation for concepts and methods that inform the management of tourism organizations, businesses, and resources;
- (c) design and conduct independent research;
- (d) develop skills and knowledge that provide a solid platform for further postgraduate study.

**Learning Goal #2:** Our graduates will demonstrate application of critical and creative thinking skills to practical and theoretical tourism management problems.

### *Learning Objectives*

Graduates will be able to:

- (a) think conceptually and analytically about tourism and its management;
- (b) synthesize and evaluate a range of tourism management issues;
- (c) access, evaluate and apply a range of information and data sources;
- (d) use innovative thinking and creative skills in the context of the tourism business environment and tourism research.

**Learning Goal #3:** Our graduates will be effective and confident communicators.

### *Learning Objective*

Graduates will be able to communicate ideas and research findings articulately and effectively in a range of written and oral formats.

**Learning Goal #4:** By meeting the above learning goals, our graduates will display leadership and be able to assume positions of responsibility in the tourism industry and related sectors.

Graduates will be able to:

- (a) engage in effective decision making through their analytical, creative and communications skills and experience;
- (b) demonstrate a mastery of a wide range of tourism management concepts and techniques.

### **Course Learning Objective**

The objective of TOUR 410 is to develop experience and demonstrate competence in all phases of tourism research by undertaking and presenting a dissertation based on primary research. Creativity and critical thinking are fostered through the selection of the topic and the design and execution of the research; communication skills are developed through the oral presentation and written dissertation.

### **Skills**

Preparing the dissertation will develop your ability to undertake independent tourism research by providing experience in:

- formulating a research question and developing an appropriate research design;
- collecting, analyzing and interpreting primary data;
- communicating the results of your research both orally and in writing.

### **Course Delivery**

TOUR 410 primarily involves the preparation of an individual piece of research under the guidance of an assigned supervisor. In addition, four class meetings will be held to present the proposal, report on progress and make an oral presentation.

### **Expected Workload**

The expected workload for the preparation of the dissertation is 150 hours. Time management is particularly important as most of this is outside class contact hours

### **Group Work**

The dissertations are based on individual work.

### **Readings**

Students are expected to situate their study in the literature and read material related to their specific topic.

### **Assessment**

**20%** of the final grade will be based on the oral presentation and **80%** on the written report.

Formal oral presentations of the research findings (20 minutes plus 10 minutes of questions) will be given on **Monday October 20**. Details regarding the presentations will be given at the meeting on 6 October. The oral presentation should clearly outline the research problem, situate it in the literature, indicate the methodology used in the project, and highlight the main findings and conclusions drawn. The presentations will be evaluated in terms of the following factors:

- 1) Structure
- 2) Research merit
- 3) Communication
- 4) Appropriate use of audio-visual aids
- 5) Handling of questions.

The written dissertation is due by **9:30 am on Friday 24 October**. It should be 8-10,000 words long (**including references**) and follow the conventions outlined in the Tourism Style Guide. It should not incorporate work that has been or will be submitted for credit in any other course.

Dissertations should be based essentially on primary data sources and should demonstrate:

- 1) the ability to formulate a clear problem statement and an appreciation of the academic context of the work and/or its practical implications;
- 2) an appropriate research design and appropriate research methods;
- 3) a critical appraisal of the data used;
- 4) accurate and effective analysis and presentation of the data collected;
- 5) clear and logical interpretation of the results obtained;
- 6) the ability to produce a well-written and structured report.

### **Proposal**

A formal written proposal not exceeding 2 pages must be submitted to the course coordinator, Prof Doug Pearce, by midday on **Thursday 10 July**. The proposal should emphasize points 1 and 2 above and outline clearly the nature of the problem being addressed and the methods to be used. **To meet this deadline you will need to develop your proposal over the mid-year break.** Contact appropriate staff to discuss your initial ideas.

On the basis of the topics, members of the class will be split into two streams for a proposal presentation session from 13:40-15:30 **Monday 14 July**. Each student will give an oral presentation of 5-10 minutes. Students will be allocated a supervisor with whom they will be expected to maintain regular contact during the preparation of the dissertation.

Provision should be made for obtaining HEC approval where necessary. The procedures for doing this will also be outlined at this meeting.

### **Progress reports**

A ten minute report outlining progress to date, the conceptual framework being used, problems encountered and work yet to be completed, will be given by each student at a progress updating session to be held from 13:40-15.00 **Monday 18 August**.

A second progress report session will be held from 13:40-15.00 **Monday 6 October**.

Further details on what is required at these progress report sessions will be given later. Keeping a research log will provide you with a good record of what you have been doing and be helpful when it comes to writing up your final report.

### **Mandatory Course Requirements**

In addition to giving the oral presentation and completing the dissertation by the due date, and receiving at least 50% for the assessment of these, students should contribute fully to the class meetings.

### **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.

### **Penalties for Lateness & Excessive Length of Assignments**

- (i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline will incur a penalty for lateness. The Tourism Management Group has implemented a standardized late penalty for all tourism courses. Students who submit late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (including weekends). **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**.

**Extensions** will only be granted under special circumstances. Students who wish to apply for an extension must contact the course coordinator before the due date. Students who apply for an extension due to illness must obtain a medical certificate. Medical certificates must specify that the student is 'unfit to study' or 'unfit to sit an examination.' Medical certificates must also indicate the duration of the illness. Please take note: workload pressures and computer problems are not a case for extension. Please submit late assignments to The School of Management Reception RH1022.

- (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 a course coordinator, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances.

All such applications must be made **before** the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, e.g. a medical certificate, or counsellor's report clearly stating the degree of impairment, and the dates the illness or event prevented you from undertaking your academic studies. This can be applied retrospectively.

- (iv) In the event of unusual or unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. serious illness, family bereavement or other exceptional events), that precludes an application in advance, students should make contact with one of the course coordinators as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (v) Word limits should be adhered to, especially so when they provide a guide to limiting the student's coverage of a topic. **The penalty will be 10% of the grade for an assignment which is 10% over the word limit.**

## Grading Guidelines

The following broad indicative characterisations of grade will apply in grading assignments:

	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Normal range</b>	<b>Midpoint</b>	<b>Indicative characterisation</b>
Pass	A+	90%–100%	95	Outstanding performance
	A	85%–89%	87	Excellent performance
	A-	80%–84%	82	Excellent performance in most respects
	B+	75%–79%	77	Very good performance
	B	70%–74%	72	Good performance
	B-	65%–69%	67	Good performance overall, but some weaknesses
	C+	60%–64%	62	Satisfactory to good performance
	C	55%–59%	57	Satisfactory performance
	C-	50%–54%	52	Adequate evidence of learning
Fail	D	40%–49%	45	Poor performance overall, some evidence of learning
	E	0%–39%	20	Well below the standard required

## Mandatory Course Requirements

In addition to making the oral presentation and completing the dissertation by the due date, and receiving at least 50% for the assessment of these, students should contribute fully to the class meetings.

## Class Representative

A 400 level Tourism Management representative was elected in the first trimester. The representative'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

Additional information will be communicated at the class meetings and by email. Students should maintain regular contact with their supervisors.

## Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters, go to

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