

School of Management

TOUR 402

TOURISM RESEARCH METHODS

Trimester 1, 2015

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE COORDINATORS

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Administrator

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Trimester Dates

Teaching Period: Monday 2nd March – Friday 5th June 2015

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before Friday 13th March 2015.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is Friday 15th 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' including supporting documentation. The application form is available from either of the Faculty's Student Customer Service Desks or [online](#).

Class Times and Room Numbers

Seminars

Monday 12:40 – 15.30 RH MZ04

Course Delivery

Course delivery will take a seminar format with active student participation.

Group Work

N/a

Expected Workload

Students are expected to devote 150 hours to this 15-point course, including 3 hours class contact time per week during the trimester.

Prescription

The goals of this course are to develop students' ability to undertake tourism research, to foster a critical appreciation of the research of others and to explore the applications of research. Using the concept of the research cycle as its underlying framework, the course examines different facets of research - from problem formulation through data collection, analysis to interpretation and application - and different approaches to research, both quantitative and qualitative. It combines both theory and practice and provides opportunities for students to undertake a research project in an area of personal interest.

Course Learning Objectives

BTM (Hons)/MTM Programme 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.

Learning Objectives

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 Objectives and Content

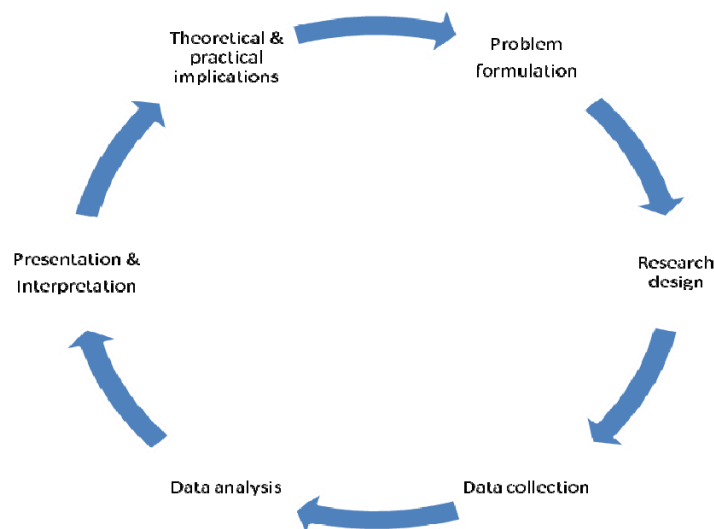
This paper provides a broad overview of tourism research methods, their application and data analysis. Its objectives are:

- 1) to develop your ability to undertake tourism research,
- 2) to foster a critical appreciation of the research of others
- 3) to explore applications of research.
- 4) to deepen your quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills

In these ways TOUR 402, with TOUR 401, underpins other 400 tourism courses, the dissertation (TOUR 410) and the MTM thesis.

The course begins by providing an introduction to issues which arise in undertaking tourism research and, using the concept of the research cycle (Figure 1) as its underlying framework, systematically examines different facets of research – from problem formulation through data collection and analysis to interpretation and application – and different approaches to tourism research. It combines both theory and practice, the emphasis shifting to the latter as the course progresses, and concludes with presentations of your own research projects.

Figure 1: A Conceptualisation of the Research Cycle



Source: D.G. Pearce (2012)

Course-related Student Learning Objectives and Skills

By participating fully and actively in this course you will develop your ability to:

- 1) engage effectively with all phases of the research cycle;
- 2) appreciate different approaches to tourism research and understand when it is appropriate to apply a particular approach;
- 3) evaluate tourism research systematically and critically;
- 4) effective conduct both quantitative and qualitative data analysis
- 5) carry out and present your own independent research;
- 6) apply research to tourism management problems;

WEEK	Topic
1 2 March	Introduction to course & tourism research Briefing for research critique exercise
2 9 March	Approaches to tourism research
3 16 March	Research design and conceptual frameworks
4 23 March	Presentation of research critiques Introduction to research projects
5 30 March	Tourism research in action Understanding research ethics
	Mid-semester break
6 20 April	Analytical frameworks, analysis and presentation of results
7 27 April	----- Public Holiday - no class -----
8 4 May	Conceptualising tourism data
9 11 May	An in-depth examination of qualitative research
10 18 May	An in-depth examination of quantitative research Part 1
11 25 May	An in-depth examination of quantitative research Part 2
12 1 June	Public Holiday - no class, alternative arrangements will be made for presentation of research projects

Readings

Selected references and required readings will be provided throughout the course; additionally, required readings will be available via Blackboard. However, students are expected to apply their own initiative and literature search skills for the two assignments.

Materials and Equipment

No specific material or equipment is required.

Assessment

The Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>.

The three pieces of assessment are designed to evaluate your understanding of key course concepts and to assess the skills you obtained from taking this course. To pass you must: (a) complete the assignments on time, (b) to an appropriate standard (at least a C-), and (c) participate actively in class.

Assessment 1: Research critique

The aim of this exercise is to foster your understanding of aspects of the research cycle, develop an appreciation of different approaches to research and to evaluate tourism research systematically and critically (Student Learning Objectives 2, 3 and 6).

Select any two research papers from the following journals – **Annals of Tourism Research, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Journal of Travel Research, Tourism Economics, Tourism Management** – and present a carefully reasoned critique of each focusing on the following points:

- 1) Is there a clear statement of the problem or topic being examined? What is it?
- 2) What theoretical or conceptual frameworks have been used? How have they been used?
- 3) What methodology has been used? Is it appropriate?
- 4) What are the limitations of the research?
- 5) What type and sources of data have been used? Are they valid?
- 6) What means of analysis have been employed? Is there an explicit analytical framework?
- 7) Are the results presented clearly and interpreted effectively? Have the objectives been met?
- 8) How effectively are the different phases of the research brought together?
- 9) Are suggestions/avenues for further research provided? Are they appropriate, can you think of others?
- 10) Which of these papers do you think is the best? Why?

Your written critique will be assessed based on: (a) your ability to demonstrate a solid understanding of broader research issues in making your assessment of the papers critiqued, (b) effective use of relevant literature, and (c) to provide a well-structured, (d) well-written, and (e) well-reasoned critique. Your critique should not exceed 3000 words be referenced according to the Guide for Tourism Courses (APA style) and is **due on 26 March** at noon. While the assessment mark will be based on the written essay, you also need to share your critique with your colleagues in the form of a short seminar **presentation on 23 March** (details to be given later).

Weighting: **30%** of the final course grade.

Assessment 2: Individual Research Project

The aim of the research project is to provide experience in tourism research and the opportunity to follow up a topic of personal interest. It brings together all the student learning objectives. A topic in any field of tourism may be selected. Projects should be based essentially on primary data sources and should demonstrate:

- 1) the ability to formulate a clear problem statement, indicating 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.

The presentations are scheduled for the **week of June 1 (further details about exact day and time to follow)**. **20** minutes will be given for presentation and **10** minutes for discussion. The written report should not exceed 4000 words (plus tables, figures and references) and is due by midday **Friday 5 June**.

Weighting: **60%** of the final course grade (**10%** for the oral presentation and **50%** for the written report). The assessment of the oral presentation will be based on the overall academic merit of the research, the clarity and effectiveness of the presentation and your ability to handle questions. The written report will be evaluated on the six points listed above.

Assessment 3: Class participation

Your full and active participation is essential to develop your critical and communication skills, to acquire leadership experience and to get the most out of this course.

Weighting: **10%** of the final course grade. This will cover your preparation for each class (particularly the set readings) and contribution to class discussions and debate (Course Student Learning Objectives 3 and 4).

You are expected to attend all classes.

Penalties

- (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); i.e. a one day late penalty results in a B+ being adjusted to a B. **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 unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinators**. Extensions will only be granted under special circumstances. Students who wish to apply for an extension must contact the course coordinators 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 course coordinators.
- (ii) 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 coordinators, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances. All such applications must be made before the deadline and be accompanied by documentary evidence, eg 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. 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.

- (iii) 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.

Mandatory Course Requirements

The three pieces of assessment are designed to evaluate your understanding of key ideas from throughout the course and to assess the skills obtained from it. To pass the course you must complete the assignments on time and obtain an overall course mark of 50% or better.

If you cannot complete an assignment, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

Class Representative

A representative for all TOUR 400 level classes will be elected in the first week, and 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

Information on course-related matters will be announced in class.

Student feedback

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.
