

School of Management

MGMT 404 RESEARCH METHODS

Trimester 1, 2016

COURSE OUTLINE

Prescription

An examination and evaluation of the role of methodology in management research. This course involves the methodological examination of theoretical and empirical research and provides the chance to develop and apply quantitative and qualitative data methods.

Course Learning Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explain and differentiate conceptual and philosophical issues as they relate to the research process including research paradigms and related methodologies (Assignment 1).
2. Identify gaps and potential areas of contribution for management, organisational and business research through the critical analysis of existing research literature (Assignment 1).
3. Develop appropriate research designs for their own research questions (Assignment 2 & 3).
4. Evaluate a range of practical and ethical issues related to the research process in local, national and international contexts (Assignments 2 & 3).
5. Apply both qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect and analyse data relating to a chosen management or organisational topic (Assignments 2 & 3).

Course Content

Organisational, management and business research can be described as a systematic and organised effort to extend our understanding of how, why, and in what ways, organisations and the workers within, operate in the work environment. Research in this field can add new insights to an existing body of knowledge in an area of interest, and/or gather information that can guide decision-making within the workplace and business environment.

The course invites students to consider the purposes and objectives of organisational, management and business research and provides an overview of the research process. It

introduces students to a range of research methods and provides some hands on experience with these. The course also requires students to explore the ethical and moral considerations related to carrying out organisational, management and business research in New Zealand.

The course provides the foundation on which students will develop their own research project in MGMT 430 in Trimester 2.

Trimester Dates:

From Monday 29th February to Tuesday 7th June.

Withdrawal from Course

1. Your fees will be refunded if you withdraw from this course on or before **Friday 11th March 2016**.
2. The standard last date for withdrawal from this course is **Friday 13th May 2016**. 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](#)

Names and Contact Details

COURSE COORDINATOR & CO-LECTURER:

A/Prof Bob Cavana

Room: RH 904, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5137

Email: bob.cavana@vuw.ac.nz

CO-LECTURER:

Dr Sarah Proctor-Thomson

Room: RH 909, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 9982

Email: sarah.proctor-thomson@vuw.ac.nz

Office hours will vary for each lecturer, so please email for an appointment.

COURSE ADMINISTRATOR:

Misa Ito

Room: RH 1022, Rutherford House

Phone: 463 5397

Email: misa.ito@vuw.ac.nz

Class Times and Room Numbers

Lectures: Tuesday

Time: 9.30am-12.20pm

Venue: Railway West Wing, RWW 129

Course Delivery

Students are required to attend a one three-hour class session each week. The weekly sessions are based on discussion of the reading material and the collaborative working through of student's personal assignments and class research exercises. It is therefore essential that students are thoroughly prepared for each session. Student achievement is individually assessed.

In some of these class sessions, computer labs/workshops will be arranged to explore specific research activities, including library research skills, Qualtrics survey design, and SPSS statistical analysis. In addition, some tutorials will be provided to complement the class sessions where appropriate. In 2016 the invited workshop presenters are:

Library research skills workshop – Thomas Martin, Management Subject Librarian, VBS

This workshop will focus on building research skills and improving information literacy. The workshop will familiarize you with the different resources available through the Library, and give some advice on finding journal articles, information on research methodologies, and making citations. We will cover navigating the Library website, and tips, tricks, and methods for conducting efficient searches in specialised databases.

Qualtrics survey tools workshop – Dr Lisa Woods, Consultant Statistician, VUW

This lab will be an introduction to Qualtrics. We will learn how to develop and distribute a survey, as well as get an overview of the responses, and how to export the data into Excel or SPSS for future analysis.

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:

- O'Leary, Zina (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage.

Supplementary reading:

- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2016). *Business research methods*, 4th Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hair, J.F, Celsi, M., Money A., Samouel, P. & Page, M. (2016). *Essentials of business research methods*, 3rd Ed. New York: Routledge.

Materials and Equipment

- Other research methods textbooks are available in the VBS library on the 2nd floor of the Railway Building.
- Additional readings, articles, chapters, and workshop exercises will be distributed in class or posted on Blackboard.

Mandatory Course Requirements

In order to pass this course, you must satisfy the mandatory course requirements (below) and obtain at least 50% of the overall marks available (maximum of 100).

To meet mandatory course requirements, unless you have received the approval of the course coordinator, you must:

- (i) attend a minimum of eight of the 12 scheduled sessions, and
- (ii) submit all assignments within the allowable timeframe (see Penalties section).

These requirements exist because i) a lot of the learning on the course takes place interactively among students and lecturers in the class sessions and computer workshops on the course and ii) managing and working to deadline is a key skill for graduates.

Students who fail to satisfy the mandatory requirements for this course but who obtain 50% or more overall, will be awarded a "K" fail grade.

Standard fail grades (D or E) will be awarded when the student's overall course mark falls below the minimum pass mark, whether or not the mandatory course requirements have been satisfied. Notice of Failure to meet Mandatory Course Requirements will be posted on Blackboard.

If you believe that exceptional circumstances may prevent you from meeting the mandatory course requirements, contact the Course Coordinator for advice as soon as possible.

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

Expected Workload

Students can expect the workload to be 150 hours over the whole course, including both scheduled contact time and work outside class.

Assessment

The Assessment Handbook will apply to all VUW courses: see <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>.

Assignment	Title	% of marks available	Due Date
1	Exploring potential contribution to management knowledge	25 %	<i>3pm, Monday 4 April</i>
2	Survey planning & design	40 %	<i>3pm, Monday 9 May</i>
3	Focus group pilot & analysis	35 %	<i>3pm, Tuesday 7 June</i>
	TOTAL	100 %	

Assignment 1. Exploring potential contribution to management knowledge

Due: *3pm, Monday 4 April*
Marks: 25%

Word limit: 2,000 words (excl. references)

In this assignment, you are required to choose a topic of interest to you and discuss how you can potentially develop it into a research project that contributes to knowledge on that topic. You are required to select 7 journal articles on the topic and examine their theoretical approach, central questions and contribution. You then need to pose a relevant research question and ground it in a philosophical position. Frame your assignment within a brief introduction and conclusion.

Full details of Assignment 1 will be handed out in the Week 1 class and posted on Blackboard in the 'Assessment' section.

Assignment 2. Survey planning and design

Due: 3pm, Monday 9 May

Marks: 40%

Word limit: 3,000 words for report (excluding appendices).

This assignment builds on the ideas covered earlier in the course and the work undertaken in the survey methods section of the course. In this assignment you will develop a short survey on an organisational, management or business topic of your choice. You will need to move through each of the main steps of planning and developing some survey research including piloting a questionnaire. However, you will NOT be required to execute the survey, although you will need to develop a plan for statistically analysing the data that could be collected and testing your hypotheses. You may propose to use existing survey questions and/or scales in your questionnaire, but you must justify your choices and generate some original questionnaire items also (to be discussed with the course lecturer).

Full details of Assignment 2 will be handed out in Week 4 and posted on Blackboard in the 'Assessment' section.

Assignment 3. Focus group pilot and analysis

Due: 3pm, Tuesday 7 June

Marks: 35% total: 15% group report and 20% Individual analysis

Word limit: Group report: 1500 words (excl. refs or appendices)

Individual analysis: 1200 words (Excl. references or appendices)

This assignment gives you an opportunity to engage in qualitative research planning, data collection and analysis via a focus group research pilot. In this assignment you will be working with a group of peers to develop and run a focus group on a relevant management topic (To be signed off by Course Lecturer in Week 10). You will write up the design and delivery of the focus group as a research team and then individually analyse the focus group data and present this as an individual analysis report.

The group report is to be developed collaboratively and all members are expected to contribute equally. You are required to submit Appendix 2 by 8th June 2016 if your group members **have experienced some issues in terms of unfair contribution by any one of the members.**

Full details of Assignment 3 including the marking guide and criteria will be handed out in Week 9 and posted on Blackboard in the 'Assessment' section.

Format for assignments

Assignments should have the following format:

- Word-processed, 12 point font.
- A cover sheet stating: Student name, project title and word count.
- Page numbers on each page.
- APA reference style used including in-text referencing and a list of references at the end.

Quality Assurance Note

For reasons of quality assurance all assessed work must be submitted in both hardcopy and electronic form by the due date. Your assessed work may be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation, academic audit and programme development processes. All material used for such purposes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Handing in assignments

Hardcopy: A hardcopy of assignments should be submitted by the due date and time to **Assignment Box: 23**, first floor, Railway West Wing. Late hardcopy assignments must be handed to Misa Ito in RH 1022.

Electronic copy: An electronic copy of Assignment 1 & 2 should also be emailed to bob.cavana@vuw.ac.nz and Assignment 3 to sarah.proctor-thomson@vuw.ac.nz by 3.00pm on the due date with subject line as follows: MGMT 404, ASSIGNMENT X, Name.

Hardcopies received after due date will be deemed to be late and penalised accordingly and assignments will not be returned to students until an electronic copy is received.

Students must also keep an electronic copy of their work archived. Failure to do so will jeopardise any claim by you that your work was submitted in the rare cases where your work goes astray.

Penalties

- i) In fairness to other students, work submitted after any deadline without prior arrangement of an extension 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 may not be accepted and the student may fail the Mandatory Requirements.
- (ii) 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 Coordinator, providing documentary evidence of the reasons of their circumstances (e.g. a medical certificate, or counsellor's report that indicates the degree of impairment, and for how long the student has been impaired).
- (iv) 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 Coordinator as soon as possible, and make application for waiver of a penalty as soon as practicable.
- (v) Word limits should be adhered to. This is to reinforce the importance of accurate, concise and clear communication in management studies and organisational practice. A 10% penalty will be applied if the word limits are exceeded by more than 5% of the stipulated maximum level.

Group Work

Students will be expected to work in groups or pairs on class exercises throughout the course. Assignment 3 also requires groups of 3-5 to develop a focus group design and pilot together and to produce a collaborative report. You will have time within the class to work with your group on this assignment but to complete the work it is likely the group will need to meet an additional 1-3 times over four weeks including the time to run the focus group itself.

Use of Turnitin

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 submitted to Turnitin. A copy of submitted materials will be retained 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.

Student feedback

This year we have responded to student feedback by including three computer based workshops on the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php

Class Representative

Students will select a representative for the postgraduate programme at the start of the trimester.

Communication of Additional Information

The course lecturers will convey any additional information to students in class or via blackboard and students' VUW email. Please ensure that student VUW email accounts are checked regularly.

Link to general information

For general information about course-related matters including academic integrity and plagiarism, university policies and statutes, and student support programmes such as Te Putahi Atawhai (Maori and Pacific Mentoring Programme), please 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.

MGMT 404 Research Methods Course Schedule – 2016

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
1 BC	Mar 1	Introduction - Overview of the course; The research process; Research philosophies & paradigms; Research strategies; Ethical issues.	Read: Cavana et al, Ch 1 & 2 O'Leary, Ch 1, 2 & 4
2 BC	Mar 8	Reviewing the Literature & Problem Definition – Preliminary information gathering; Literature search; Writing a literature review; Problem definition. Library research skills workshop – in Computer Lab with Thomas Martin, Management Subject Librarian, VBS	Read: Cavana et al, Ch 3 O'Leary Ch. 6
3 BC	Mar 15	Developing frameworks and evaluating research – Conceptual frameworks; Theoretical frameworks, Research questions; developing hypotheses; Research reporting; Evaluating research. Mixed methods research.	Read: Cavana et al, Ch 4, 14 & 15 O'Leary Ch. 15 Read and Bring: Your <u>review notes</u> of Sutton & Rafaeli AMJ article
4 BC	Mar 22	Research design and planning – Study purpose; research design; the research proposal; What is quantitative research? Quantitative research methods.	Read: Cavana et al, Ch 5 & 8 O'Leary Ch 5, 7 & 8 esp. p. 120-130
Easter Break			
5 BC	Apr 5	Quantitative Data Collection Measurement of variables; Scaling, reliability & validity; Questionnaire design;	Read: Cavana et al Ch 8, 9 & 10 O'Leary, Ch.11, p. 201-215 Bring: Your <u>survey topic</u> , <u>your revised research question</u> , and a list of <u>key variables</u> you plan to measure.
6 BC	Apr 12	Survey Design and Instrument Testing - Populations & sampling; Question testing; Questionnaire appearance; Reducing non-response. <Pilot questionnaire sometime this week after our Tuesday class> Introduction to Qualtrics – Computer Lab with Dr Lisa Woods, VUW statistician	Read: Cavana et al Ch 10 & 11 O'Leary, Ch. 10 esp. pp.181-190 Bring: 3 copies of your full <u>draft survey</u> .
7 BC	Apr 19	Quantitative Data Analysis and Interpretation - Going over piloting of questionnaire; preparing data, describing data. Working with SPSS in the Computer Lab I.	Read: Cavana et al Ch 13 & App I O'Leary, Ch 13 Bring: Completed questionnaires from pilot.
ANZAC Day & Mid-term Break			
8 BC	May 3	Hypothesis Testing & Analysis Testing hypotheses; Inferential statistics; Working with SPSS in the Computer Lab II.	Read: Cavana et al Ch 13 & App I O'Leary, Ch 13
9 SPT	May 10	Qualitative Research What is qualitative research?; Rigour in Qualitative Research; Qualitative Research Methods: Observations & Interviews; Review of qualitative research article;	Read: Cavana et al Ch 6 Read and bring your review notes: on qualitative research article: Ojha & Holmes (2010)* Supplementary: O'Leary Ch.8 esp. pgs 130-146; Bryman & Bell, Part 3
10 SPT	May 17	Qualitative Focus Group Research I Developing focus group schedule, conducting a focus group in organisational research, ethical considerations in international contexts.	Read: Cavana et al Ch 6; Kitzinger & Barbour (1999)* Bring: Your <u>group's research topic</u> and <u>research question</u> . Supplementary: Bryman & Bell Ch21
11 SPT	May 24	Qualitative Focus Group Research II Testing focus group interview schedule; Observation skills; Transcribing, abstracting and coding qualitative data <run focus group this week sometime after our Tuesday class>	No readings this week. Preparation time is to be spent developing the focus group project design and materials ready for class. Bring: Focus group draft <u>interview schedule</u> , and <u>information and consent forms</u> .
12 SPT	May 31	Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation Group analysis; Formal reflection on focus group; Template analysis; Writing as qualitative analysis	Read: Cavana et al Ch 7; King (2012)* Bring: 2 page excerpt of focus group transcript and reflective notes. Supplementary: O'Leary, Ch14.

*Supplied in week 8 and available on blackboard

Lecturers: BC = Bob Cavana & SP-T = Sarah Proctor-Thomson; **Textbook:** Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran (2001) *Applied Business Research: Qualitative and quantitative methods*; **Recommended:** O'Leary (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project*, 2nd ed; **Supplementary:** Bryman & Bell (2016). *Business research methods*, 4th ed.; Additional readings on Blackboard or handed out in class where appropriate.

Appendix 2: GROUP MEMBER CONTRIBUTION (OPTIONAL)

This is an optional form to be used by individual group members if there is a concern about equal participation of members in the group work.

To be submitted to the lecturer by 8 June 2016.

Your Name _____

Group Members Names (including your own)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Evaluation of group member participation involves peer and self- assessment. This information will be used by the paper co-ordinator in the event of any complaints perceived by group members (unfair contribution by any one of the group member).

Scale:

1 = minimal contribution

2 = minor contribution

3 = satisfactory contribution

4 = substantial contribution

5 = very substantial contribution

Group Member	1	2	3	4	5
Contribution at meetings (do they attend, participate and share ideas)					
Commitment to common goal (do they keep on task and show concern for doing things right)					
Reliable completion of tasks (do they show a responsibility to the group and the tasks they have to do)					

How many hours (on average) did you spend working with this group? _____