School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
Course Outline

LALS 541, The Research Process
TRIMESTER 2 2010
12 July to 13 November 2010

Trimester dates
Teaching dates: 12 July 2010 to 15 October 2010
Mid-trimester break: 23 August to 5 September 2010

Withdrawal dates
Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

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2. Staff: Lecturers: Stuart Webb

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Course Administrator

Rachel Scholes	Office:	von Zedlitz Building, Room VZ210
	Phone:	463 5894 or 463 5600
	E-mail:	rachel.scholes@vuw.ac.nz
	Post:	as above

Class times and rooms:
Wednesdays, 4:10-6:00 pm
24 KP 201

Announcements:
Additional information concerning this course will be posted on the course blackboard site.

LALS main office: VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Course Administrator: Rachel Scholes, Postgraduate administration
                                    Tel: 463-5600

Web contact: www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz

Course Delivery

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance. On campus classes are run as workshops. For distance students, the course is available at http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz. Blackboard is Victoria's online teaching and learning system. In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in activities and discussions. Further information about Blackboard is available under Frequently Asked Questions, under the Study tab of the School website.

For distance students the course is delivered via 10 weekly units of work placed on BB each week of the course. Distance students are expected to complete tasks as set out in these units of work, and complete the required readings.

On-site students will receive hard copies of ten weekly units of work similar to those available for distance students on BB. On-site students are expected to have completed relevant readings prior to class as well as any required tasks, and to participate in class discussions and group work. Sections of the weekly classes will involve short lectures.

Communication of additional information
Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in on campus classes and posted on the course website in Blackboard.

Aims:
This course explores the use of valid methodology for conducting second language research. During the course, we will follow the research process from choosing a research topic to the finished research report. Different types of research designs and data analysis will be discussed, with an emphasis throughout on the validity and reliability of research methods.

This course relates closely to LALS 540 (Evaluating Research in Applied Linguistics) which is taught in the first trimester; I would encourage students with an interest in conducting applied linguistics research to complete both courses. While LALS 540 focuses understanding second language research, LALS 541 focuses on conducting second language research.

The course will provide members with opportunities to study:
a. The stages of the research process
b. The relationship between research questions and research design
c. The nature of second language data analysis
d. The dissemination of second language research

Objectives:
By the end of the semester, students will:

a. Be able to apply research literature to formulate research questions.
b. Be able to develop appropriate research methodology to address a specific question
c. Be able to collect, analyze, and synthesize second language data, drawing appropriate
implications and conclusions.

Course content:
(Note: Tasks for on-campus student are underlined, tasks for distance students in *italics*.

Date	Topics	Reading from Mackey & Gass	Other reading	Task
14/7	Overview of the research process	Chapter 1	None	None/*Introductions on wiki*
21/7	Research questions and hypotheses	Chapter 4	Shohamy & Seliger Ch. 3 Wallace Ch. 2	Draft RQs on forum/*on wiki*
28/7	Review of the literature	None	Article reading in preparation for Assignment 1	None/*None*
4/8	Fixed (quantitative) designs	Chapter 5	Hatch & Lazaraton Ch.3	Definitions of terms in class/*definitions of terms on wiki*
11/8	Flexible (qualitative) designs	Chapter 6	Adams, Fujii, & Mackey (2006)	None/*None*
18/8	Human ethics requirements / quality assurance & data collection procedures	Chapter 2	Human ethics (link on website)	None/*None*
8/9	Statistical analysis	Chapter 9	Assigned research article.	Outline of the analysis in class/*on wiki*
15/9	Qualitative data analysis	None	Assigned research article.	Outline of the analysis in class/*on wiki*
22/9	Writing up and disseminating research	Chapter 10	Freeman Ch. 7	None/*None*
29/9	Presentations of research proposals	None	Full presentation (with 1 page handout) of research proposal in class/*on wiki*	

Texts:

Mackey, A. & Gass, S.M. (2005). *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.
Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

LALS 541: The Research Process Readings

This set of readings is available as downloadable files from the LALS 541 Blackboard site.

Assignments:
There are two assignments in LALS 541. The purpose of the assignments is to allow you to engage in the research process. Each of the assignments forms part of a complete research proposal.

During the class, you will also be expected to complete specific tasks, as outlined in the course content above. These are mandatory and considered part of your participation in the class. Completion of the class requires completion of these tasks as well. Tasks should be posted to blackboard one day before the lecture. Part of class time (for on-campus students) or online participation (for distance students) will be reading and critiquing one another's tasks.

Component	Value	Word count	Due date
Tasks	10%	n/a	See schedule above
Assignment 1	45%	1800-2000	Friday, 20 August
Assignment 2	45%	1800-2200	Friday, 15 October.

Tasks:
In this course, you will go through the stages of designing a research project. The five tasks are designed to workshop this project at various stages, so you can receive feedback from your classmates and from me on your project as you develop it. The idea is for us to collaboratively learn about the research process. The topic for most of the workshop tasks is your own research (distance students will also have tasks that involve writing definitions of concepts).

10% of your grade will be based on timely completion of workshop tasks, as noted above in the course content. For the on-campus students, this entails submitting workshop tasks in class or to the blackboard on-campus student discussion forum before the relevant class day when necessary. For distance students, your workshop tasks will be submitted on wikis (simple, group built websites) on blackboard. You will receive instructions on what/how to submit from week to week. For the workshops to be successful, people need to submit their

tasks and comment on others' tasks in a timely manner. Late submissions and late comments will not be accepted.

Assignment 1: Literature Review
Choose a research topic, and conduct a thorough literature review. You should include 12-17 sources, no more than two of which can be web-only sources. Your review should go beyond summarizing articles, to drawing connections between them to build a research-based explanation of your topic area. The literature review should lead into your specific research question(s) (and hypothesis(es) where appropriate) that should also be included. You should follow APA citation guidelines.

Assignment 2: Methods Section
Starting from your research question(s) (and hypothesis(es) where appropriate) explain how you will conduct the investigation. Your report should include a detailed description of the intended participants and setting, the materials used in the study (included in the appendix), procedures for pilot study(ies), the study procedure and timeline, human ethics considerations, and the proposed method for coding/categorizing the data (including examples) and the method of analysis, and a projection of the implications/value of the proposed research for language teaching or language learning and directions for future study. You may also need to include a discussion of the second language form(s) investigated. References should be cited where appropriate following APA guidelines.

Penalties:

No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. If you find that you need an extension, you **must** get explicit permission from the course coordinator before the due date. Extensions will only be granted when the assignment is not completed due to unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or family emergencies.

For assignments handed in late without an extension the maximum grade possible is B+ and no personal comment will be provided

Be careful to keep within the word limits. Assignments that are slightly excessive in length (more than 10% over the limit) will be marked down one grade ie. from a B+ to a B, or from a B to a B-. Assignments that are far over the word limit (more than 25% over the limit) will be marked down one full grade ie. from B+ to C+, or A- to B-.

Plagiarism will result in failure in the course. See also Academic Integrity and Plagiarism below, and page 17 of the MA Handbook.

Submitting assignments and tasks

Distance members of the course should submit your assignments through the Blackboard (BB) system. Instructions on how to use the BB assignment tool are on the BB website. As a backup measure only, assignments may be submitted as e- mail attachments to lals-ma@vuw.ac.nz.

On-campus students should submit a hardcopy to the School office.

General guidelines
When submitting typed or word-processed assignments:
• Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
• Set line spacing to 1.5

• Set font size of 12 point
• Include page numbers
• Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the
title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
• Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section)
• References should be cited where appropriate following APA guidelines.
• **If submitting via the internet, email to the course email (LALS-541@vuw.ac.nz), ot to the instructor's email**

Hard copy submissions
• Put a LALS cover-sheet on the assignment, and complete the information requested there
• Type on one side of A4 paper
• Staple pages together
• Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves unless necessary
• Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves

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 online 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 material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

Relationship between assessment and course objectives:

Assignment 1 is designed to evaluate objective (a), assignment 2 to evaluation objectives (b) and (c).

Workload:

It is anticipated that you will invest a minimum of 12 hours per week on this course, including lecture attendance. However, in order to achieve a high grade in the course, most students will find it necessary to spend more time on this course.

Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

In order to pass this course, you must attend all lectures unless otherwise excused (on-campus students) or participate weekly online (distance students), and complete both assignments. Additionally, you should prepare weekly tasks ahead of time and upload them to the team website (distance) or discussion forum (on-campus) on blackboard by the Tuesday before the relevant lecture. You must also participate in the on-campus or virtual workshop on the tasks. More information on the team website and virtual workshopping are available on blackboard.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source

- The work of other students or staff

- Information from the internet

- Software programs and other electronic material

- Designs and ideas

- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

Victoria University of Wellington

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

COURSE NAME & CODE:

STUDENT'S SURNAME:

STUDENT'S GIVEN NAME:

STUDENT'S ID NUMBER:

LECTURER/TUTOR

ASSIGNMENT NUMBER AND TITLE:

NUMBER OF WORDS:

DUE DATE:

Please complete the following checklist (insert Y if criteria met)

I have checked my work carefully before submitting   __

I have included a list of references, properly formatted   __

I have numbered the pages of this work   __

I have retained a copy of this work   __

There is no plagiarism in this work   __

I value your feedback and will collect my work promptly   __
OR
I do not require any feedback on this work   __

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:
(on-line submissions do not require a signature)

DATE: