



MHST 513

RESEARCH METHODS

COURSE OUTLINE



**School of Art History, Classics & Religious Studies
Victoria University of Wellington**

**Trimester 1 & 2
28 February to 12 November
2011**

the best possible available stock of generalisations about social life ... will be based on a good deal of research, but their inductively-founded character will appear in their failure to approach law-likeness. No matter how well-framed they are the best of them may have to co-exist with counter-examples, since the constant creation of counter-examples is a feature of human life. And we shall never be able to say of the best of them precisely what their scope is. It follows of course that they will not entail well-defined sets of counterfactual conditionals. They will be prefaced not by universal quantifiers but by some such phrase as 'Characteristically and for the most part ...'

A MacIntyre (1981) After Virtue

there are no causes to be grasped with certainty where the act of creating meaning is concerned, only acts, expressions, and contexts to be interpreted. ... These contexts are always *contexts of practice*: it is always necessary to ask what people are *doing* or *trying* to do in what context.

J Bruner (1990) Acts of Meaning

COURSE ORGANISATION

Course Coordinator: Lee Davidson
OK 304
Office hours: Tuesdays 11-12
Tel: 463 5929
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Administrator Pippa Wisheart
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Class Times: Tuesday 9-11am
Full year course trimester 1 & 2

Venue: OK 301

Trimester dates

28 February to 3 June 2011
Mid-trimester break: 18 April to 1 May 2011
2 May-June 3 2011
Mid-trimester break: 22 Aug to 4 Sept 2011
Study week: 17-21 Oct 2011
Examination/Assessment period: 21 Oct to 12 Nov 2011

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

Aims

To provide an introduction to social research methodology, including qualitative and quantitative research methods, historical studies, and cultural studies, looking at their application in a variety of contexts related to museums, culture and heritage.

Learning Objectives

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

- understand the rationale behind the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- choose appropriate methods for particular research settings; and
- understand the principles and practicalities of research management from a variety of perspectives.

By the end of the course each student will have completed a proposal for their dissertation research.

Course delivery

The course is delivered through 23 two-hour discussion based seminars.

OUTLINE OF COURSE CONTENT

Introductory module

Mar 1 Introduction to research methods

Reading:

Sarantakos, S. (2005) 'Introduction', In *Social Research* (3rd Edition). pp13-27.

Mar 8 Research ethics

Readings:

Wilkinson, T.M. (2001) 'The core ideas of research ethics', in *Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, Practice, Critique*.

Extract from: Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research*. pp. 178-183.

Mar 15 Research perspectives

Readings:

Elliott, J. (2005) 'The researcher as narrator: Reflexivity in qualitative and quantitative research.' In *Using Narrative in Social Research*. pp. 152-170.

Walker, S., Eketone A., & Gibbs, A. (2006) 'An exploration of kaupapa Maori research, its principles, processes and applications', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, Vol. 9 (4): 331-344.

Cram, F. (1997) 'Developing partnerships in research: Pakeha researchers and Maori research', *Sites*, No. 35:44-63.

Mar 22 Designing research

Reading:

Blaikie, N. (2000) 'Designing social research', In *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. pp.35-57.

Mar 29 Research questions and objectives

Reading:

Blaikie, N. (2000) 'Research questions and objectives', In *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*. pp. 58-84.

Research methods module

Apr 5 Introduction to visitor research in museums

Readings:

Hein, G. E. (1998) 'Studying visitors', In *Learning in the Museum*. pp.100-134.

Ruessner, E. M. (2004) 'Best practices in audience research and evaluation: Case studies of Australian and New Zealand museums', *Visitor Studies Today*, Vol VII, Issue II, pp. 17-25.

Apr 12 Observation methods

Readings:

Yalowitz, S. & Bronnenkant, K. (2009) 'Timing and tracking: Unlocking visitor behaviour', *Visitor Studies*, 12(1), 47-64.

Kelly, Lynda & Bartlett, Allison (2002) 'Tracking and observation studies', Australian Museum Audience Research Centre

MID TRIMESTER BREAK

May 3 Questionnaires and surveys I

Readings:

Bechhofer, F. & Paterson, L. (2000) 'Structured questionnaires', in *Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences*. pp. 72-90.

May 10 Questionnaires and surveys II

May 17 Interviews & focus groups

Readings:

Patton, M.Q. (1990) 'Qualitative interviewing', in *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. pp. 277-359.

Stig Sørensen, M. L. (2009) 'Between the lines and in the margins: Interviewing people about attitudes to heritage and identity', In M. L. Stig Sørensen & J. Carman (Eds) *Heritage Studies: Methods and Approaches*. pp. 164-177.

May 24 Workshop 9am-12pm: Principles of quantitative data analysis

Readings:

Fielding, J. (2008) 'Coding and managing data.' In N. Gilbert (Ed) *Researching Social Life*. pp. 324-352.

May 31 Workshop 9am-12pm: Principles of qualitative data analysis

Readings:

Maykut, P. & Morehouse, R. (1994) 'Qualitative data analysis: Using the Constant Comparative Method.' In *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. pp. 126-149.

Saldana, J. (2009) 'An introduction to codes and coding', In *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. pp. 1-31

MID YEAR BREAK

July 12 Historical methods

Readings:

McCulloch, G. (2004) 'The joy of life: Doing documentary research', In *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences*. pp. 29-50.

McDowell, W.H. (2002) 'Historical sources', In *Historical Research: A Guide*. pp. 54-76.

July 19 Visit to Archives New Zealand

July 26 Presentation of research projects

Research proposal module

Aug 2 Introduction to the dissertation & library seminar

Reading:

Rountree, K. (1996) 'Choosing a topic', In Rountree, K. & Laing, T. (1996) *Writing by Degrees: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses and Research Papers*. pp. 1-14.

Aug 9 The Proposal (part I): title and abstract

Aug 16 The Proposal (part II): literature review

MID TRIMESTER BREAK

Sept 6 The proposal (part III): research design

Sept 13 Student presentation and discussion of draft proposals

Sept 20 Dissertation proposal – the finishing touches

Sept 27 Proposal due - no class

Oct 4 Dissertation writing

Oct 11 Supervision issues, ethics, where next?

ASSESSMENT

This course is internally assessed on the basis of four written assignments and a presentation. Preparation for these assignments will include practical exercises, a group project and reading of appropriate literature.

The word lengths, due dates and percentage of the final mark for each are as follows:

First assignment: Ethics & Perspectives

Written assignment	(1000 words)	5 April	10%
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Second assignment: Research methods

Practical exercise write-up	(4 x 500 words)	2 Aug	20%
Group presentation	20-30 mins	26 July	10%
Written assignment	(2000 words)	2 Aug	20%

Third assignment: Research Proposal

Written assignment	(4000 words)	27 Sept	40%
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Method of Assessment

Assessment will be criterion referenced. An assessment schedule will be prepared for each assignment and distributed to students indicating the criteria against which the assignment will be assessed and the marks which will be awarded for each element of the work.

All written assignments may be handed in for comment as initial drafts and resubmitted *one further time only* for final grading by **1 November** at the latest. Assignments not received by the initial due date will not be eligible for resubmission. The only exception will be on medical grounds (including a medical certificate) or in other exceptional circumstances.

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities in examinations and other assessment procedures.

FIRST ASSIGNMENT (Introductory module)

Ethics and Perspectives due 5 April Max 1000 words 10%

1. Briefly outline the main ethical issues that researchers face and discuss the implications that varying perspectives can have for the research process. (4/10)
2. How can both ethics and perspectives be addressed in the research design process? (4/10)

A maximum of 2 marks will be given for the coherence and logic of the content, and the overall quality of your written presentation.

Your discussion should include examples, either from your personal experience or drawing on those given in class. Your arguments should also be supported by the class readings on this topic and at least one additional reading from the list below, or from the reading list in your course book.

Selected readings:

- Beach, D. (1996) *The Responsible Conduct of Research*. Weinheim, Germany: VCH Publishers Inc.
- Bell, C. & Roberts, H. (1984) *Social Researching: Politics, Problems, Practice*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- de Laine, M. (2000) *Fieldwork, Participation and Practice: Ethics and Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.
- Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research*. New York: Longman.
- Israel, M. & Hay, I. (2006) *Research Ethics for Social Scientists: Between Ethical Conduct and Regulatory Compliance*. London: Sage.
- Lee-Treweek, G. & Linkogle, S. (Eds) (2000) *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*. London: Routledge.
- May, T. (1997) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. 2nd ed. Buckingham; Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N. & Yaiser, M.L. (2004) *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sjoberg, G. (Ed) (1967) *Ethics, Politics and Social Research*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Smith Iltis, A. (2006) *Research Ethics*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Tolich, M. (Ed) (2001) *Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, Practice, Critique*. Auckland, N.Z. : Longman

SECOND ASSIGNMENT (Research methods module)

In this assignment students will work with their classmates on a number of exercises and a project, the aim of which is to familiarise them with the practicalities of using different types of research methods to collect, analyse and interpret data.

The assessment is divided into three components:

- Practical exercises (20%)
- Data analysis project: Group presentation (10%)
- Data analysis project: Individual written assignment (20%)

Practical exercises

There will be four practical exercises on data collection that all students will complete, working together: observations, surveys, interviews and archival research. Details on these exercises will be given out in class and each will involve approximately 4 hours field work. For each exercise students will write a short, individual report of 500 words, reflecting on their class readings and what they learnt from their practical experience.

Data analysis project

Using the data collected from one of the first three exercises (either observations, surveys or interviews), students will work in a group to collate, analyse and interpret the findings. These findings will be reported through a group presentation and an individual written report.

THIRD ASSIGNMENT (Research proposal module)

In this final assignment students will choose an individual topic and complete a detailed research proposal including the following sections:

- Title
- Abstract
- Research Context
- Research Questions
- Research Design
- Methods
- Research schedule
- Costing
- Bibliography

This assignment draws on the previous coursework, plus a module on writing a research proposal and a series of class discussions aimed at helping students to develop their individual topics. For most students this proposal will be the basis of the dissertation they will undertake the following year.

Relationship between assessment and course objectives

The assignments are structured to ensure that by the end of the course the student has completed a research proposal with a well developed research design, including ethical considerations and a sound methodological approach. Students will also understand the main theoretical and practical considerations in carrying out social research, particularly in a museum & heritage setting.

A note on referencing styles

Strict adherence to a particular style is a very important part of academic writing that students are expected to master during the course of the year. It is expected that writing will be presented in Times New Roman font sized at 12 pt one and spaced at one a half. Text should be justified left and ragged on the right margin. Block quotes of more than 3 lines should be offset and single space. All essays should correspond to the Chicago style. If you prefer to use footnotes, use Chicago A. If you prefer in-text references, use Chicago B.

Please consult the online examples for references in footnotes, citations and bibliography under reference guides/online reference collection on the library website:

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

For all other queries, consult the style guide in the reference section of the central library: *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Sample references:

Book

Chicago A

Footnote:

Wendy Doniger, *Splitting the Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 65.

Subsequent footnotes:

Doniger, 1999, 76.

NB Ibid may be used only if the citation is exactly the same in every respect.

Bibliography:

Doniger, Wendy. *Splitting the Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Chicago B

In text reference:

(Doniger 1999, 65)

References:

Doniger, Wendy. 1999. *Splitting the difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Journal article:

Chicago A

Footnote:

John Maynard Smith, "The Origin of Altruism," *Nature* 393 (1998): 639.

Bibliography:

Smith, John Maynard. "The Origin of Altruism." *Nature* 393 (1998): 639–40.

Chicago B

In text reference:

(Smith 1998, 639)

References:

Smith, John Maynard. 1998. The origin of altruism. *Nature* 393: 639–40.

For help with writing

Please attend the very useful workshops run by the library, PGSA and Student Learning Support on aspects of research skills and writing. Do not hesitate to consult one of the advisors at SLS about your essays:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/index.aspx

Consult the study hub for resources and tips:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/studyhub.aspx

Communication of additional information

Any additional information will be posted in the postgraduate room (OK 302), sent via email, or delivered in the classroom.

WORKLOAD AND MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Workload Guidelines

As a general rule, each course requires a time commitment equivalent to a full working day (inclusive of teaching or seminar time) for every week of the academic year. The total workload for the course, including class time should be approximately 300 hours.

Mandatory course requirements

The minimum course requirements are:

- completion of all three assignments and seminar
- attendance at 90% of seminars (i.e. 21 out of 24 seminars).

Statement on penalties

There are penalties to be incurred for late submission of work or for exceeding word limits without prior arrangement: 1% of the assessment will be deducted per day for every day it is overdue and every 100 words over the limit.

Communication of additional information

Additional information or information on changes will be conveyed to all students in class, via handouts and by email.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

A statement that a class representative will be elected in the first class, 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.

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>

READING

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 7 February to 11 March 2011, 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 of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 3 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.

Required readings from the MHST 513 course book are listed in the course outline and should be read as preparation prior to the relevant class. Further appropriate readings will be advised where necessary. Additional readings and resources are listed in the course book for the preparation of assignments.

Some basic background reading includes:

- Alasuutari, P., Bickman L. & Brannen J. (Eds) (2008) *SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods*.
- Beach, D. (1996) *The Responsible Conduct of Research*.
- Booth, W.C., Colomb, G. G. & Williams, J. M. (2008) *Craft of Research*. 3rd ed.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*.
- Cryer, P. (2006) *The Research Student's Guide to Success*.
- Israel, M. & Hay, I. (2006) *Research Ethics for Social Scientists: Between Ethical Conduct and Regulatory Compliance*.
- Rountree, K. & Laing, T. (1996) *Writing By Degrees: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses and Research Papers*.
- Thody, A. (2006) *Writing and Presenting Research*.
- Tolich, M. (Ed) (2001) *Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, Practice, Critique*.
- Staines, G. M., Johnson, K. & Bonacci, M. (2008) *Social Sciences Research: Research, Writing, and Presentation Strategies for Students*. 2nd ed.