

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

School of Social and Cultural Studies

Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

SACS 401

Methods in Social Science Research

Course Outline

CRN 13122: 30 POINTS: TRIM 1+2/2011

Teaching dates: 28 February to 1 July 2011

Mid trimester break: 18 April – 1 May 2011

COURSE COORDINATOR: DR ANNETTE BEASLEY

Room 1004, Murphy Building

Tel: (04) 463 6130

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LECTURES: FRIDAY 1 - 3PM: KK201: COMMENCE: 11 MARCH

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OFFICE HOURS: Fridays 3 – 3.30pm

LECTURES: Trimester 1, Friday 1-3pm, in KK201
Lectures commence 11 March

COURSE CONTENT

This course provides a critical appraisal of methodological approaches and techniques used by social researchers. A variety of quantitative and qualitative social science methods and techniques are examined within the context of relevant theoretical perspectives.

COURSE DELIVERY

SACS 401 is taught in a two-hour sessions during the first trimester during which students are required to actively participate in a mix of lectures, student seminars and workshops as detailed in the timetable.

Please note that this course commences in *Week 2* of Trimester 1, on Friday 11 March.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information for SACS 401 not covered in this course outline will be posted on BlackBoard.

COURSE READINGS

The set text for this course will be Grbich, C., 2005: *New Approaches in Social Research*, Sage: London.

Additional readings will be made available on Blackboard.

The text can be purchased from the Victoria University Book Centre in the Student Union Building for approx. \$59.

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.

Students 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 students or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Students will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8am–6pm, Monday–Friday during term time (closing at 5pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students should be able to develop skills and understanding of the research process, in particular:

- Exploring the feasibility of a research topic
- Formulating a research question, aims and objectives (assessed with assignment 1)
- preparing a literature review (assessed with assignment 2)
- developing a research design
- the ethical implications of approaches to social research
- alternative approaches/perspectives to social research
- the relationship between research theory and research design (assessed with assignment 3)

ASSESSMENT

SACS 401 is 100% internally assessed with the following assessments:

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 1) | Developing a research topic
<i>Due 4pm, Wednesday 13 April</i> | Weighting: 25% |
| 2) | Literature review
<i>Due 4pm, Wednesday 18 May</i> | Weighting: 30% |
| 3) | Exploring a postmodern or poststructuralist research design
<i>Due 4pm, Wednesday 22 June</i> | Weighting: 40% |
| 4) | Reading seminars
<i>As scheduled</i> | Weighting: 5% |

1) Developing a Research Topic

Due: 4pm, Wednesday 13 April

Weighting: 25%

Word count: 2500 max

Identify an area of research interest and explain why. Drawing on the supporting literature, background the topic and the area of interest that stimulated your research question. Identify, discuss and justify your research question, aim and objectives, defining any specialised terms. Finally, consider the feasibility of researching this topic in terms of access to data and resources, and possible ethical issues.

The aim of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to:

- conceptualise a potential research project
- formulate a clear, concise and researchable research question, aim and objectives
- justify the aim and objectives in terms of how/what they will contribute to the research question
- justify the relevance of the topic to yourself, others and society
- critically assess the operational and ethical feasibility of the research.

2) Literature Review

Due: 4pm, Wednesday 18 May

Weighting: 30%

Word Count: 3500 words max

Prepare a literature review literature of 15 - 20 items journal articles or book chapters relevant to your topic. In addition to critiquing the literature, the review should include a background to the topic that identifies where items were sourced, the criteria for their inclusion in the review, and an assessment of their possible relevance for your research topic.

The aim of this assignment is to demonstrate:

- you have the skills to locate and critique a range of literature around a selected research topic
- the ability to organise wide ranging perspectives or material into a coherent, critical discussion.

3) Exploring a postmodern/post structuralist research design

Due: 4pm, Wednesday 22 June

Weighting: 40%

Word Count: 5000 max

Drawing on the relevant literature, choose and describe a postmodern and/or post structuralist research approach to research a topic of interest to you. Critique the merits and limitations of your approach in relation to your

research question, aim and objectives, and against other approaches you considered and rejected.

The aim of this assignment is to demonstrate that you have an understanding of:

- the principles of research design
- postmodern/poststructuralist approaches to research design
- the theoretical underpinnings of research design
- the rationale behind the choice of a methodology
- the relationship between methodology and method
- the relationship between the researcher, the research participants and the reader
- challenges/techniques associated with data interpretation, presentation and representation

4) Reading seminars

Due: dates to be confirmed with students

Weighting: 5%

The reading seminars are central to the course programme, and are designed to complement the lecture material and to foster critical thinking. The focus of these seminars are selected readings and the set text, *Grbich (2004): New Approaches in Social Research, Sage, London.*

All students are expected to have read the material prior to the class and to actively participate in class discussion.

A seminar schedule assigning each student responsibility for joint seminar presentations (if numbers permit) of **two** readings will be drawn up during the first class meeting.

Please note that once the schedule has been drawn up, it is each student's responsibility to negotiate a replacement if unable to present at the scheduled seminar. Seminar presentations are a mandatory requirement to pass the course.

Students assigned to the same reading are required to work together to prepare the seminar which must include the following:

- a joint *PowerPoint* presentation of the key aspects of the set reading - **not to exceed 15 minutes!**

and either

- a minimum of **four** questions or points raised in the reading to stimulate a class discussion

or

- a class exercise/demonstration which illustrates/explains/develops/clarifies the content of the set reading (40 minute time allocation)\
- an electronic copy of the *Power Point* slides (including the note sheet) to be emailed to the lecturer for posting on *Blackboard* prior to or on the day of the class presentation.

PowerPoint guidelines

- Don't over overload/over-animate the slides (particularly transitions) - less is more!
- Rule of thumb – 5 lines *max* per slide, 1 line per point
- Limit data slides to max of 8 for a 15 minute presentation
- Number and title slides
- Minimum font size 28 pt – larger for titles
- When presenting avoid using the mouse as a pointer and PowerPoint karaoke ie verbatim reading of the text

EXTENSIONS AND LATENESS

An important aspect of the graduate learning process is an ability to manage workloads to meet deadlines. For this reason **no extensions will be granted**

Note: If serious illness or a genuine unforeseen event delays planned submission of an assignment, *other than an emergency situation no extension will be considered unless arranged before the due date. Any emergency or request for an extension must be accompanied by a doctor's or similar certificate and will not be granted beyond the period of certified illness or emergency.*

Assessment work will not be accepted for marking more than 7 days after the due date or 7 days after an approved extension date.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in this course students must

- Attend all scheduled lectures unless previously arranged.
- Complete all assignments, including scheduled seminar presentations
- Active participation in seminar discussions – this requires coming to class having read the set readings

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

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

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

In accordance with the guidelines from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences it is recommended that you devote 20 hours per week for SACS 401, being a 30 point course.

LATE PENALTIES

Late submissions for student assignments are subject to a penalty. The exact deduction will be calculated on the basis of one half mark per day late for each 10 marks, i.e. 1 mark will be deducted each day for an assignment worth 20% of the total course mark.

GRADES

Letter grades are given for all internally assessed work. The following table sets out the range of marks within which each letter grade is assigned. As is common with all Honours courses your final grade is subject to external moderation.

Pass	A+	85% or over	Evidence of familiarity with relevant reading, sound understanding of relevant theoretical/methodological issues, plus individual interpretation and insights of a higher order. An A grade will not be achieved without such insight. Work well presented with logical structure that includes an introduction and a conclusion in addition to clarity of expression.
	A	80%-84%	
	A-	75%-79%	
	B+	70-74%	As above, but less individual insight and preparation. High level of understanding exhibited. Assignment well presented.
	B	65%-69%	
	B-	60%-64%	
	C+	55%-59%	Work lacks originality, individual insights and not strong on understanding. However, material used is relevant and presentation is satisfactory.
	C	50%-54%	
Fail	D	40%-49%	Little evidence of reading or comprehension. No insight. Poor presentation.
	E	Below 40%	A clear failure to reach an adequate standard on the criteria set out.

COURSE TIMETABLE 2011

Week	Date	Topic	Activity	Reading
1	4 Mar	NO CLASS		
2	11 Mar	Course introduction. T1. Choosing a research topic, developing a research question, aim(s) and objectives. Locating relevant literature	Lecture/ workshop	No readings
<i>Class Preparation Week 3</i> <i>Identify and bring to class 6 journal articles or chapters from separate books relevant to your chosen research topic</i>				
3	18 Mar	T2. Preparing an annotated bibliography and lit. review	Workshop	No readings
4	25 Mar	T3. Ethics and indigenous research	Seminar 1 Seminar 2	Ball (2005) Smith (2005)
<i>Assignment I Developing a Research Topic. Due: 4pm Wednesday 13 April</i>				
5	1 Apr	T4. Ethical issues in research T5. Preparing a VUW ethics application	Seminar 3 workshop	Tolich (2010)
6	8 Apr	T6. The elements of research design research T7. Modernity to Modernism	Class discussion Seminar 4	Crotty (2003) Grbic (2004) Chpt 1
7	15 Apr	T8. Postmodernity and postmodernism T9. Structuralism and poststructuralism	Seminar 5 Seminar 6	Grbic (2004) Chpt 2 Grbic (2004) Chpt 3
8	6 May	T10. Research design	Seminar 7 Workshop	Grbic (2004) Chpt 4
9	13 May	T11. The position of the researcher T10. The researcher, the research participants and the reader	Seminar 8 Seminar 9	Grbic (2004) Chpt 5 Grbic (2004) Chpt 6
<i>Assignment II Literature review. Due: 4pm Wednesday 18 May</i>				
10	20 May	T12. Data presentation and representation	Seminar 10	Grbic (2004) Chpt 7
11	27 May	T13. A postmodern piece of research, and continuums and continuities	Seminar 11	Grbic (2004) Chpt 8 & 9
12	3 June	Research design work in progress	Workshop	No readings
<i>Assignment III Exploring a postmodern research design. Due 4pm Wednesday 22 June</i>				

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>

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.

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Head of School:	Dr Allison Kirkman, MY1013 Tel: 463 5676 E-m: Allison.Kirkman@vuw.ac.nz
International Student Liaison:	Dr Hal Levine MY1023 Tel: 463 6132 E-m: Hal.Levine@vuw.ac.nz
Maori and Pacific Student Liaison:	Dr Trevor Bradley, MY1101 Tel: 463 5432 E-m: Trevor.Bradley@vuw.ac.nz
Students with Disabilities Liaison:	Dr Russil Durrant, MY1120 Tel: 463 9980 E-m: russil.durrant@vuw.ac.nz
School Manager:	Carol Hogan, MY918 Tel: 463 6546 E-m: Carol.Hogan@vuw.ac.nz
School Administrators:	Monica Lichti, Alison Melling, Heather Day MY921, Tel: 463 5317; 463 5258; 463 5677 E-m: sacs@vuw.ac.nz

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

All written work submitted for assessment must have a School Assignment Cover sheet, see sample following page. Further copies can be located on the reception counter at the Administration Office, and on the Assignment Box, on level 9 of Murphy building. You may wish to have a front sheet of your own, but a School Cover sheet must be used. This is critical for accurate identification and recording of your work.

Office use only

Date Received:

(Date Stamp)

School of Social and Cultural Studies

Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

CRIMINOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL POLICY

Assignment Cover Sheet

(please write legibly)

Full Name: _____
(Last name) *(First name)*

Student ID: _____ Course (eg ANTH101): _____

Tutorial Day: _____ Tutorial Time: _____

Tutor (if applicable): _____

Assignment Due Date: _____

CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I certify that this paper submitted for assessment is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signed: _____ Date: _____