FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS
LALS 541: THE RESEARCH PROCESS

TRIMESTER 2 2012
16 July to 17 November 2012

Trimester dates
Teaching dates: 23 July to 14 October 2012
Mid-trimester break: 27 August to 9 September 2012
Last piece of assessment due: 26 October. This is in Study Week, as there is no exam.
Study Week: 22-26 October 2012
Examination/Assessment Period: 26 October to 17 November 2012

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

Names and contact details
Course coordinator
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Co-lecturer
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MA course administration at LALS:

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Class times and locations
Wednesday, 16.10 – 18.00
24 Kelburn Parade, room 103

Teaching learning summary
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.

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.

Course prescription
A study of the design and implementation of research studies in Applied Linguistics.

Course content
This course explores methodological issues in conducting applied linguistics research, especially research in the area of (instructed) second language acquisition. During the course, we will follow the research process from the formulation of a research question to the research report. Different types of research designs and data analysis will be exemplified and discussed, with an emphasis throughout on the validity and reliability of research methods, and the need for caution in interpreting findings. Students will set up their own research project, report on its development and give constructive feedback to peers.

Learning objectives
Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Formulate answerable research questions in response to unresolved issues in applied linguistics;
2. choose/adapt/develop appropriate research methodology to address a specific question;
3. make appropriate modification to a chosen research methodology after having piloted it;
4. analyse and synthesize data, and draw justified conclusions from the findings;
5. report research in a way that accords with EAP customs in our research community.

Expected workload
It is anticipated that students will invest 150 hours in this course, which includes attending classes / contributing to the discussion board on Blackboard, reading the essential and recommended texts, and preparing the assessment items.

Readings
Set texts:
Mackey, A. & Gass, S. (Eds.) (2012) 'Research methods in second language acquisition: A practical guide' (Wiley-Blackwell)

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 9–27 July 2012, 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 4 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.

Recommended reading:
Recommended reading will be made available on the LALS 541 Blackboard site.

Assessment requirements
The following table outlines the assessment components for LALS 541:

	Component	Value	Word count	Due date	Learning objectives
1.	Writing a literature review and research question(s)	30%	1500	25 August	1, 5
2.	Writing a methods section	30%	1500	8 October	2, 3, 5
3.	Writing a results/findings section	30%	1500	26 October	4, 5
4.	Responses to questions posted on Backboard	10%	N/A	N/A	1, 2, 3, 4

Penalties
No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Also consult the course coordinator in case your text exceeds the word limit. Without prior arrangements in that regard, the course coordinator maintains the right to give only minimal feedback on the text.

Mandatory course requirements
To gain a pass in this course each student must:
- Submit all three assignments
- Attend at least 8 of the 10 two-hour sessions (campus students)
- Respond to all 10 questions posted on Blackboard by the instructor (distance students).

Class representative
A student representative for the MA students at LALS will be elected. The role of the representative is 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

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.

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 http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.aspx. 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 Academic Office website, at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.