

MHST 513 RESEARCH METHODS

Museum & Heritage Studies
School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON



COURSE OUTLINE

Trimester 1 & 2
4 March to 17 November 2013

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: Dr Lee Davidson
Room: OK 304
Office hours: Mondays 3-4pm (by appointment)
Phone: 463 5929
lee.davidson@vuw.ac.nz

Administrator/School Manager: Annie Mercer
Room: OK305
Phone: 463 5807
annie.mercer@vuw.ac.nz

Class Times: Monday 1.10-3pm (plus 2 workshops 1.10-4pm)
Full year course trimester 1 & 2

Venue: OK 301

Trimester dates

Trimester dates: 4 March to 17 November 2013

Teaching dates: 4 March to 18 October 2013

Easter break: 28 March to 3 April 2013

Mid-trimester break 1/3: 22–28 April 2013

Mid-year break: 4–14 July 2013

Mid-trimester break 2/3: 26 August to 8 September 2013

Aegrotat period begins: 30 September, so at least 30% assessment due on or before Friday 27 September (or preferably by $\frac{3}{4}$ -point of course, i.e. 23 August)

Study week: 21–25 October 2013

Examination/Assessment Period: 25 October to 16 November 2013

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds

Communication of additional information

The Blackboard system will be in use for this course. Check it for notices, as well as for material relating to lectures and assignments etc. Students should ensure that they are accessing messages sent via Blackboard to their VUW student email accounts.

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

This course introduces a variety of research methodologies, approaches, sources and theories which are employed in the study of cultural heritage. It provides an essential platform for those students planning to do dissertation or thesis research and writing.

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.

Teaching/learning summary

The course is delivered through 18 two-hour discussion based seminars and 2 three-hour workshops.

OUTLINE OF COURSE CONTENT

Introductory module

Mar 4 **Orientation day: no class**

Mar 11 **Introduction to research methods**

Reading:

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

Mar 18 **Research ethics & perspectives**

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.

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

Mar 25 **Designing research / questions and objectives: An overview**

Reading:

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

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

EASTER BREAK

Apr 8 **Introduction to visitor research in museums (location: Te Papa)**

Readings:

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

Apr 15 **Discussion of research projects for the second assignment**

MID TRIMESTER BREAK

Research methods module

Apr 29 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

May 6 Questionnaires and surveys

Readings:

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

May 13 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 20 Workshop 1.10-4pm: Principles of quantitative data analysis

Readings:

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

Gray, D.E. (2009) 'Analysing and presenting quantitative data', In *Doing Research in the Real World*. pp.449-465.

May 27 Workshop 1.10-4pm: 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

June 3 Queen's birthday

tbc Group presentation of research projects (second assignment)

MID YEAR BREAK

July 15 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 22 Visit to Archives New Zealand

July 29 Archival research exercise: discussion

Aug 5 Introduction to the dissertation & the proposal

Reading:

Punch, K.F. (2006) *Developing effective research proposals*. pp.9-17
& 38-42.

Aug 12 Library seminar (library training room RB901)

Aug 19 The Proposal (part II): research context

Reading:

Hart, C. (1998) *Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science
research imagination*. pp.172-198.

MID TRIMESTER BREAK

Sept 9 The proposal (part III): research questions

Sept 16 The proposal (part IV): research design & methods

Sept 23 Student presentations and discussion of draft proposals

Sept 30 Proposal due - no class

Oct 7 Where next? Dissertation writing & supervision

Oct 14 Final week - No class

ASSESSMENT

This course is internally assessed on the basis of four pieces of written work 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

Group presentation	20-30 mins	tbc	10%
Written report	(3000 words)	22 July	30%
Archival research exercise	(1000 words)	5 August	10%

Third assignment: Research Proposal

Written assignment	(4000 words)	30 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.

Submission will be via Blackboard. The assignments should be typed, with at least 1½ spacing, and uploaded as either a Word or PDF file.

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.

Penalties

Late assignments will only be accepted if a suitable reason is given well in advance of the due date. The only exception will be on medical grounds (including a medical certificate) or in other exceptional circumstances. Any late work that does not meet these requirements will have their mark reduced by 1% for each day it is overdue.

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 ways in which these can be addressed in the research design process. (4/10)
2. Consider the impact of a researcher's perspective on the research process and how you as a researcher might address this. (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 visitor research projects and undertake an archival exercise. The aim of this module 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:

- Visitor research project: Group presentation (10%)
- Visitor research project: Individual written report (30%)
- Archival research exercise: Individual written report (10%)

THIRD ASSIGNMENT (Research proposal module)

In this final assignment you 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 you to develop your 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 and historical research 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 and spaced at one and 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), posted on Blackboard, 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
- attendance at 90% of seminars (i.e. 18 out of 20 seminars / workshops).

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>

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 (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the Academic Office website, at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic.

READING

Required readings will be posted on Blackboard and should be read as preparation prior to the relevant class. Further appropriate readings will be advised where necessary. Additional readings and resources for the preparation of assignments will be made available on Blackboard.

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.