TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

**VICTORIA**
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**MASTER OF ARTS**
**LALS 541 THE RESEARCH PROCESS**
**15 POINTS**

**TRIMESTER 2 2015**

## Important dates

**Trimester dates:** 13 July to 15 November 2015
**Teaching dates:**
The following are the dates for the ten on-campus sessions:
14 July, 21 July, 28 July, 4 August, 11 August, 18 August,
22 September, 29 September, 6 October and 13 October.
**Mid-trimester break:** 24 August to 6 September 2015
**Last assessment item due:** 26 October 2015
**Study period:** 19–23 October 2015

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

## Class times and locations

Tuesday, 16.10 – 18.00

VZ 104

## Names and contact details

Associate Professor **Frank Boers**

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**MA course administration at LALS:**

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# 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.

# 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/foreign language acquisition. During the course, we will follow the research process from the formulation of research questions 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 develop their own research project, report on their progress and the challenges to be overcome, and give constructive feedback to their peers.

# Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. synthesise research publications addressing a topic of their interest in the domain of applied linguistics;

2. formulate answerable research questions in response to an unresolved issue;

3. make a justified choice of research methods to address a specific question;

4. demonstrate knowledge of appropriate procedures for quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

# Teaching format

The course is delivered in two modes: on campus and by distance.

On campus classes are run as seminars/workshops.

For distance students, the course is delivered on-line through http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz.

In both modes, students are expected to participate actively in activities and discussions.

# 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.

# Assessment

The following table outlines the assessment components for LALS 541:

| | Component | Value | Word count | Due date | CLOs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Writing a draft literature review and research question(s) | 30% | 1500 | 24 August | 1, 2 |
| 2. | Writing the full research proposal (including revised/updated literature review and research questions) | 70% | 5000 | 26 October | (1, 2,) 3, 4 |

The criteria for marking correspond to those commonly used in evaluations of research papers (*cf*. LALS 540), most notably: the coherence and clarity of argumentation, the pertinence and answerability of the research questions, the connections with the research literature on the chosen topic, the suitability of the research method chosen to answer a research question, the appropriateness of the data analysis, and the logic of the conclusions and implications drawn from the data.

# Submission and return of work

Both assignments are to be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Feedback will be given to students also via Blackboard and/or e-mail, within two weeks after submission.

# Extensions and penalties

No 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.

# Set texts

Articles to exemplify diverse types of research methods in applied linguistics will be made available on the LALS 541 Blackboard site.

# Recommended reading

Many good research manuals are available for our field. One example is Mackey, A. & Gass, S. (Eds.) (2012) 'Research methods in second language acquisition: A practical guide' (Wiley-Blackwell), which has chapters with concrete guidelines for diverse types of applied linguistics research.

However, the nature of the course is such that individual students will be advised by the lecturer on potential sources that are pertinent to their specific choice of research topic. Recommended reading will also be made available on Blackboard to cater to individual students' needs and interests.

## Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. There is one representative for the LALS MA students. If a representative has already been elected, his/her name and contact details will made available at the start of the course. Otherwise a call for nominees will be made at the start of the course.

## Student feedback

Student feedback is welcome at all times and will be solicited formally in the last week of the course. As a result of feedback on a previous version of the course, students are strongly encouraged to include in their final assignment a brief report on piloting any instruments they have developed for the proposed research project.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at
www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

## Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progess (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz