TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

# VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES*

*SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY*

# SOSC/SPOL 489

# RESEARCH PROJECT

*30 POINTS*

**TRIMESTERS 1 & 2, 2016**

## Key dates

**Trimester dates:** 29 February to 13 November 2016

**Teaching dates**: 29 February to 16 October 2016

**Easter break**: 24–30 March 2016

**Mid-trimester break:** 25 April to 1 May 2016

**Mid-year break**: 30 June to 8 July 2016

**Mid-trimester break 2/3**: 22 August to 4 September 2016

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

## Class times and locations
Guided reading groups (led by staff) and peer tutorials: Tuesday 2.10 – 4.00 pm Murphy MY401

## Names and contact details
The staff member with overall responsibility for this course is Dr Mike Lloyd who is available to discuss any student queries about the course and assessment.

**Course Coordinator:**  Mike Lloyd

Level 10, Murphy Building, MY 1015

Tel: 04 463 5678

E-mail: mike.lloyd@vuw.ac

Office hours**:** to be advised

## Communication of additional information
Additional information will be communicated in class sessions and via group email.

## Prescription
In this course students will choose and conduct an independent research project and write an extended essay. They will receive individual supervision from a staff member, and also work as a group learning foundational research skills, such as formulating a research question, writing a literature review and developing an argument.

## Course content
The aim of the course is to provide students with an extended period of research experience on a topic of interest chosen after consultation with the coordinator and other staff in the Programme. The topic might well be one which comes within the general area of another Honours course, though the Research Report for SOSC / SPOL 489 should be envisaged as a separate exercise and cannot be submitted as a project for another Honours course. For some students the course can be envisaged as a pilot project for an MA. The course should not be viewed as an attempt to complete a major and polished research project producing original findings. It should be seen as a pilot project or case study in sociological/social policy research. In particular, the course is directed at developing the research potential and competence of students in these disciplines.

## Course learning objectives (CLOs)
Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. demonstrate conceptual ability - conceptualising the project and relating it to the existing body of knowledge and research on the subject chosen
2. demonstrate methodological competence - developing an appropriate research design and strategy for the project. This includes justifying your sample selection
3. demonstrate field experience - dealing with the practical problems of data collection and accessibility
4. demonstrate analytical skills - the ability to integrate the data collected and conceptual/theoretical issues raised in the final report
5. *demonstrate resource utilisation* - participation in research seminars. This includes the ability to develop interest and provide feedback on your colleagues' research projects; consultation with the supervisor, coordinator and other interested researchers or organisations at each stage of the research process
6. *demonstrate management of research* - developing your personal schedule on conducting and completing the research within the constraints of time and resources. While no formal evaluation is made in these areas, research students should set these as their personal goals.

## Teaching format

### Supervision
Supervisors will be allocated, as far as possible, on the basis of the theoretical and methodological interests of students. Subject to enrolment numbers, no staff member shall supervise more than four students. One-on-one supervision meetings will be held throughout the year.

### Classroom sessions
During the first trimester different staff members will lead classes on various aspects of research design and thesis writing. Additionally, throughout the year students will participate in peer-conducted tutorials to discuss on-going projects and share research.

## Workload
The workload should be at least 10 hours per week throughout the course (at least 300 hours across the course). The actual workload will vary at various stages of the research process - sometimes it is likely to be more than 10 hours, at others less. It is likely students will spend at least 60 hours preparing their research proposal, 60 hours on their literature review, and 180 hours on the final research report. The remaining time will be spent in the classroom and peer tutorial sessions and in supervision.

## Assessment

|   | Assessment items and workload per item | % | CLO(s) | Due date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Research Proposal and Design Report | 15% | 1, 2 | 4pm April 22 |
| 2 | Literature and Methodology Report | 15% | 2, 3 | 4pm June 10 |
| 3 | Final Research Report (10,000 words) | 70% | 1-5 | 4pm October 14 |
|   |   |   |   |   |

The course coordinator will monitor progress with supervisors and students.  Three reports are required and will be assessed by the supervisors.  The format of these reports are:

**Research Proposal and Design Report**                                    **Weighting: 15%**
**Due date:** 4pm, 22 April 2016
Provide an outline of your research problem, specifying questions you are interested in investigating. Indicate conceptual/theoretical interests and issues. Set out briefly the research design you propose to use.

**Literature and Methodology Report**                                    **Weighting 15%**
**Due date:** 4pm, 10 June 2016
This will summarise the state of knowledge about your topic, stating its relevance to your present research. The report will also include a discussion of the research strategy you are going to adopt and the methodological problems anticipated arising from the first report.

**Final Research Report -**                                    **Weighting 70%**
**Final date:** 4pm, 14 October 2016
**Word limit**: 10,000 words
The maximum word limit is normally 10,000 words (excluding bibliography and appendices) but this will depend on the nature of the research. The final report should be typewritten. It will incorporate the preceding reports though not necessarily in the same form as originally presented. As this piece of work will also be read by the external examiner it should be complete and not assume the reader has knowledge of the earlier progress reports. Three copies of this report will be required. The Programme reserves the right to retain one copy.

Only a letter grade will be given to students for reports 1 and 2. In recognition of the fact that varying rates of progress are demonstrated by each individual student at a different stage in the

research process, the assessment procedure has been made flexible. If the final report turns out to be better than the marks for the first two reports, the latter will be ignored.

You are expected to discuss a draft outline of the final report with your supervisor before proceeding to the writing up of the final version. Supervisors will be happy to comment on a first draft if this is handed in by the end of September at the latest.

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**Please note:** Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until the completion of honours moderation. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made at the Honours moderation meeting.

# Submission and return of work

Submit a paper copy to the Assignment Box at the SACS Administration Office, Level 9, Murphy Building (to the side of the lifts), by 4pm on the due date. Your essay MUST NOT be placed in individual staff pigeonholes, or under staff office doors, or handed to lecturers or tutors. The Assignment Box is cleared at 4pm every day. All work is date-stamped, recorded and then handed to the appropriate markers.

Marked assignments not collected in lectures or tutorials can be collected at the Murphy 9th floor reception desk, between **11.00 am and 3.00 pm only from Monday to Friday**.

# Extensions and penalties

### Extensions
Students must speak to their supervisor if seeking an extension.

### Penalties
Late submissions for student assignments in all Sociology and Social Policy courses 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.

**You are advised to always keep a copy of any work you submit for assessment.**

# Set texts

There is no set text for this course.

# Student feedback

This is the first time that this lecturer has taken this course so there is no feedback from previous students.

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
- 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
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- 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
- Subject Librarians: http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- 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

## School Contact Information

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|---|---|
| Head of School: | Prof Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, MY1019 |
| | Phone: 463 6528, Email: brigitte.bonisch-brednich@vuw.ac.nz |
| International Student Liaison: | Dr Hal Levine, MY1023 |
| | Phone: 463 6132, Email: hal.levine@vuw.ac.nz |
| Māori and Pacific Student Liaison: | Dr Trevor Bradley, MY1101 |
| | Phone: 463 5432, Email: trevor.bradley@vuw.ac.nz |
| Students with Disabilities Liaison: | Dr Sarah Wright, MY1115 |
| | Phone: 463 5874, Email: sarah.wright@vuw.ac.nz |
| School Manager: | La'Chelle Pretorius, MY918 |
| | Phone: 463 6546, Email: lachelle.pretorius@vuw.ac.nz |
| School Administrators: | Suzanne Weaver, Heather Day, Gill Blomgren, MY921, |
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School of Social and Cultural Studies: www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs