



School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

LALS 541, The Research Process, Trimester 2, 2007

Lecturers

Rebecca Adams

VZ403

Ext. 5625

Office hours: Wednesday, 2:00-3:00

Email: Rebecca.Adams@vuw.ac.nz

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals>

Class times and rooms:

Wednesdays, 4:10-6:00

KK 104

Announcements:

Additional information concerning this course will be posted on the course blackboard site.

LALS main office:

VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

Course Administrator:

Jane Dudley, Postgraduate administration

Tel: 463-5600

Web contact: www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz

Aims:

This course explores the use of valid methodology for conducting second language research. During the course, we will follow the research process from choosing a research topic to the finished research report. Different types of research designs and data analysis will be discussed, with an emphasis throughout on the validity and reliability of research methods.

This course relates closely to LALS 540 (Evaluating Research in Applied Linguistics) which is taught in the first trimester; we would encourage students with an interest in conducting applied linguistics research to complete both courses. While LALS 540 focuses understanding second language research, LALS 541 focuses on conducting second language research.

The course will provide members with opportunities to study:

- a. The stages of the research process
- b. The relationship between research questions and research design
- c. The nature of second language data analysis
- d. The dissemination of second language research

Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will:

- Be able to apply research literature to formulate research questions.
- Be able to develop appropriate research methodology to address a specific question
- Be able to collect, analyze, and synthesize second language data, drawing appropriate implications and conclusions.

Content:

(Note: Tasks for on-campus student are underlined, tasks for distance students in *italics*.)

Date	Topics	Reading from Mackey & Gass	Other reading	Task
18/7	Overview of the research process	Chapter 1	None	<u>None/Introductions on wiki</u>
25/7	Research questions and hypotheses	Chapter 4	Shohamy & Seliger Ch. 3 Wallace Ch. 2	Draft RQs <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
1/8	Review of the literature	None	Article reading in preparation for Assignment 1	Outline of literature review including RQs <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
8/8	Fixed (quantitative) designs	Chapter 5	Hatch & Lazaraton Ch.3	<u>None/definitions of terms on wiki</u>
*15/8	Flexible (qualitative) designs	Chapter 6	Adams, Fujii, & Mackey (2006)	<u>None/definitions of terms on wiki</u>
5/9	Human ethics requirements / quality assurance & data collection procedures	Chapter 2	Human ethics (link on website)	Draft Human Ethics forms <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
12/9	Statistical analysis	Chapter 9	Assigned research article.	Outline of the analysis <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
19/9	Qualitative data analysis	None	Assigned research article.	Outline of the analysis <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
No 541 Class week of 26/9				
3/10	Writing up and disseminating research	Chapter 10	Freeman Ch. 7	Draft conference abstract <u>on forum/on wiki</u>
10/10	Presentations of research proposals	None	Full presentation (with 1 page handout) of research proposal <u>in class/on wiki</u>	

* There will be no lecture on 15/8. On-campus students will review materials online and contribute to a special discussion forum this week.

Texts:

Mackey, A. & Gass, S.M. (2005). *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

LALS 541: The Research Process Readings (available from Student Notes)

Assignments:

There are two assignments in LALS 541. The purpose of the assignments is to allow you to engage in the research process. Each of the assignments forms part of a complete research proposal.

During the class, you will also be expected to complete specific tasks, as outlined in the course content above. These will not be graded, but are mandatory and considered part of your participation in the class. Completion of the class requires completion of these tasks as well. Tasks should be posted to blackboard one day before the lecture. Part of class time (for on-campus students) or online participation (for distance students) will be reading and critiquing one another's tasks. See also pages 18-19 of the MA Handbook.

Component	Value	Word count	Due date
Tasks	10%	n/a	See schedule above
Assignment 1	45%	1800-2000	Friday, 7 September
Assignment 2	45%	1800-2200	Friday, 19 October.

Tasks:

In this course, you will go through the stages of designing a research project. The tasks are designed to workshop this project at various stages, so you can receive feedback from your classmates and from me on your project as you develop it. The idea is for us to collaboratively learn about the research process. The topic for most of the workshop tasks is your own research (distance students will also have tasks that involve writing definitions of concepts).

10% of your grade will be based on timely completion of workshop tasks, as noted above in the course content. For the on-campus students, this entails submitting workshop tasks to the blackboard on-campus student discussion forum before the relevant class day. For distance students, your workshop tasks will be submitted on wikis (simple, group built websites) on blackboard. You'll receive instructions on what/how to submit from week to week. For the workshops to be successful, people need to submit their tasks and comment on others' tasks in a timely manner. Late submissions and late comments will not be accepted.

Assignment 1: Literature Review

Choose a research topic, and conduct a thorough literature review. You should include 12-17 sources, no more than two of which can be web-only sources. Your review should go beyond summarizing articles, to drawing connections between them to build a research-based explanation of your topic area. The literature review should lead into your specific research question(s) (and hypothesis(es) where appropriate) that should also be included. You should follow APA citation guidelines.

Assignment 2: Methods Section

Starting from your research question(s) (and hypothesis(es) where appropriate) explain how you will conduct the investigation. Your report should include a detailed description of the intended participants and setting, the materials used in the study (included in the appendix), procedures for pilot study(ies), the study procedure and timeline, human ethics considerations, and the proposed method for coding/categorizing the data (including examples) and the method of analysis, and a projection of the implications/value of the proposed research for language teaching or language learning and directions for future study. You may also need to include a discussion of the second language form(s) investigated. References should be cited where appropriate following APA guidelines.

Deadlines

No specific penalty will be imposed if you obtain permission to submit the assignment after the deadline. If you find that you need an extension, you **must** get explicit permission from the course coordinator before the due date. Extensions will only be granted when the assignment is not completed due to unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or family emergencies.

Submitting assignments and tasks

General guidelines

- Set margins to at least 2.5 cm
- Set line spacing to 1.5
- Set font size of 12 point
- Include page numbers
- Include a title page which shows the course number and name, your name, the course lecturer, the title of the assignment, and the date the assignment is due
- Provide a word count at the end of the assignment (not including the Reference section)
- **If submitting via the internet, email to the course email (LALS-541@vuw.ac.nz), not to the instructor's email**

Hard copy submissions

- Type on one side of A4 paper
- Staple pages together
- Avoid presenting assignments in bulky folders or sleeves unless necessary
- Avoid inserting individual pages in clearfile sleeves

Penalties:

As noted above, late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the course coordinator. Plagiarism will result in failure in the course. See also page 17 of the MA Handbook.

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 identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. **At the discretion of the School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.** You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

Relationship between assessment and course objectives:

Assignment 1 is designed to evaluate objective (a), assignment 2 to evaluation objectives (b) and (c).

Workload:

It is anticipated that you will invest a minimum of 12 hours per week on this course, including lecture attendance. However, in order to achieve a high grade in the course, most students will find it necessary to spend more time on this course.

Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms):

In order to pass this course, you must attend all lectures unless otherwise excused (on-campus students) or participate weekly online (distance students), and complete both assignments. Additionally, you should prepare weekly tasks ahead of time and upload them to the team website (distance) or discussion forum (on-campus) on blackboard by the Tuesday before the relevant lecture. You must also participate in the on-campus or virtual workshop on the tasks. More information on the team website and virtual workshopping are available on blackboard

General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at: http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Student and staff conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct

The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct

Academic grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Students with Impairments

The University has a *Policy on Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments* (<http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/Amphora!~policy.vuw.ac.nz~POLICY~00000001116.pdf>). This policy aims

to give students with impairments the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

telephone: 463-6070

email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus, or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407** and **Dr Stuart Brock, Murphy Building, room 312**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

This programme offers:

- Academic mentoring for all Māori & Pacific students at all levels of undergraduate study for the faculties of Commerce & Administration and Humanities & Social sciences. Contact Manaaki-Pihipihinga-Programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 6015 to register for Humanities & Social Science mentoring and 463 8977 to register for mentoring for Commerce and Administration courses
- Post graduate support network for the above faculties, which links students into all of the post grad activities and workshops on campus and networking opportunities
- Pacific Support Coordinator who can assist Pacific students with transitional issues, disseminate useful information and provide any assistance needed to help students achieve. Contact; Pacific-Support-Coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 5842.

Manaaki Pihipihinga is located at: 14 Kelburn Parade, back court yard, Room 109 D (for Humanities mentoring & some first year commerce mentoring) or Room 210 level 2 west wing railway station Pipitea (commerce mentoring space). Māori Studies mentoring is done at the marae.

Student Services

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.