

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

SACS 301

Methods in Social and Cultural Research

Course Outline

CRN 13132: 24 POINTS : TRIM 1, 2009
(2 March – 5 June)

COURSE COORDINATOR: ASSOC. PROF. JENNY NEALE

Room 1013, Murphy Building

Tel: (04) 463 5827

Email: Jenny.Neale@vuw.ac.nz

LECTURES: TUESDAY 2-4PM, & FRIDAY, 3-4PM, COTTON 119

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COURSE COORDINATOR: Assoc. Professor Jenny Neale
Level 10, Murphy Building, MY1013
Phone: 463 5827
Email: Jenny.Neale@vuw.ac.nz

OFFICE HOURS: By arrangement

LECTURES: Tuesday 2 - 4 pm & Friday 3 - 4pm
Cotton 119

COURSE READINGS

There is a set text and a book of student notes assigned to this course.

Set Text

Davidson, C., and Tolich, M., (eds) 2003 *Social Science Research in New Zealand*, Pearson Education New Zealand Ltd., Auckland.

The text can be purchased from the Victoria University Book Centre in the Student Union Building. Cost \$74.95.

Student Notes

The reading notes can be purchased from the Student Notes Centre in the Student Union Building. Cost: approximately \$29.20.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

The notice boards for this course are located on level 9 and 10 of Murphy bldg and course related information will be available on Blackboard.

COURSE AIMS

- To introduce students to a range of key methodological approaches and techniques employed by social science researchers.
- To critically discuss the theoretical underpinnings of qualitative and quantitative approaches, ethics and the practice of social and cultural research.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To develop an understanding of:

- the theoretical underpinnings of social research
- the relationship between research and theory
- a range of social research perspectives
- research ethics
- the principles of quantitative and qualitative research design
- a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods
- data analysis, interpretation and presentation

ASSESSMENT

This course is internally assessed. Three pieces of work are required.

1. *Short Essay - 20%* *Due 23 March*
2. *Exercises in Statistical analysis - 35%* *Due 4 May*
3. *Critique of Research Papers - 45%* *Due 2 June*

Please note: All assignments are due at 4pm on the day indicated. The assignment box is located next to the lifts on level 9 Murphy Building.

1. *Short Essay*

Due: 4pm, Monday 23 March

Percentage of final grade: 20%

Word Count: 1500 words

Submit a fully referenced short essay on one of the following titles:

1. Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a positivist approach to researching socio-cultural issues.
2. What are the main principles of interpretivism?
3. What is kaupapa Māori research, and how might it be applied in your discipline area?
4. What are feminist methodologies, and what is their value to socio-cultural research?
5. Jupp (1996:145) argues that 'the aim of critical research and analysis is to confront prevailing knowledge – and the structures which underpin it – by providing an alternative reading and understanding of it'.

Evaluate this statement with reference to research within your discipline.

2. *Exercises in Statistical Analysis*

Due: 4pm, Monday 4 May

Percentage of final grade: 35%

This assignment will build on the workshop with Statistics New Zealand. You will be provided with several research questions. You will be required to choose one of the questions and find the relevant empirical data from official statistical sources, analyse this information, provide some commentary on it and integrate what you present to provide the answers to your chosen research question.

The information for this assignment will be available to be collected from the SACS admin office on level 9 Murphy Building from 9am on 8 April and on Blackboard.

3. *Critique of Research Papers*

Due: 4pm, Tuesday 2 June

Percentage of final grade: 45%

Word length: maximum 2500 words

Objective

An important task for social researchers is the analysis of completed research papers and reports. This final assignment encourages you to apply what you have learnt to produce a critical review of two **contrasting** research studies. They can be in the same general topic area or cover two different topic areas.

Choose **TWO** articles from your course handbook – one each from the Quantitative and Qualitative Sections. Write an abstract and prepare an analysis of each paper following the guidelines below.

1. Write an **abstract** (150-200 words) for each of the chosen articles giving a brief description **in your own words**, of the issue addressed, research methods and key findings giving a brief account of the scope of the study, research methods and main findings.
2. Write a review of each paper covering the following aspects:
 - a) the aims of the research
 - b) the way in which the data was collected
 - c) why, or why not, the method chosen was appropriate
 - d) the way in which ethical issues were identified and dealt with (or not) and any areas of concern

- e) the significance of the study and its place in the field more generally
 - f) overall presentation of the research results and evidence for the conclusions drawn.
3. Compare the data-gathering and analysis methods used for the two papers. Comment on their appropriateness to the research question(s) being examined?
 4. From your reading of the two papers, discuss the key issues that would need to be considered if you were to research a similar area.

In marking this assignment, credit will be given where there is evidence of the application of principles learned during the course and from the book of readings.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

Students should expect to set aside 18 hours per week, including class contact hours, for this course as per the faculty recommendations for a 300-level, 24 points course.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

All written work submitted for assessment in the School of Social and Cultural Studies must have a School Assignment Cover sheet, see sample at the back of this Course Outline. Further copies can be located on the reception counter at the Administration Office, and on the Assignment Box, on level 9 of Murphy building. You may wish to have a front sheet of your own, but a School Cover sheet must be used. This is critical for accurate identification and recording of your work.

EXTENSIONS AND LATENESS

No extensions will be granted unless illness or another extreme emergency prevents you from submitting an assignment. *Any extension must be arranged with the course co-ordinator before the due date and any such extension will not be extended beyond the period of certified illness or emergency.*

Note: Assessment work will not be accepted for marking more than 7 days after the due date or 7 days after an approved extension date. However, work must still be submitted to meet the mandatory course requirements.

LATE PENALTIES

Late submissions for student assignments 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.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To meet mandatory course requirements students must complete *all* assignments.

Students are strongly urged to attend all the timetabled sessions as assignment work is closely related to the lecture content and required reading.

GRADES

University policy is followed and letter grades are given for all internally assessed work. The following table sets out the range of marks within which each letter grade is assigned. Your final grade and marks for the course will be an aggregate of the grades you achieve during the course.

Pass	A+	85% or over	Evidence of familiarity with relevant reading, sound understanding of relevant theoretical/methodological issues, plus individual interpretation and insights of a higher order. An A grade will not be achieved without such insight. Work well presented with logical structure that includes an introduction and a conclusion in addition to clarity of expression.
	A	80%-84%	
	A-	75%-79%	
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	B+	70-74%	As above, but less individual insight and preparation.
	B	65%-69%	High level of understanding exhibited. Assignment well presented.
	B-	60%-64%	
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	C+	55%-59%	Work lacks originality, individual insights and not strong on understanding. However, material used is relevant and presentation is satisfactory.
	C	50%-54%	
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Fail	D	40%-49%	Little evidence of reading or comprehension. No insight. Poor presentation.
	E	Below 40%	A clear failure to reach an adequate standard on the criteria set out.

COURSE TIMETABLE 2009

Week	Date	Topic	Lecturer	Reading
1	03.03 06.03	Introduction & film and discussion	Assoc Prof Jenny Neale (JN)	Davidson & Tolich (D&T) chaps 1&2 Campbell, R. (2002)
2	10.03 13.03	Theory and research Critical research	Dr Lizzy Stanley(LS)	D&T Chapt 3 Walters, R. (2003)
3	17.03	Minority Research perspectives	JN	D&T Chapt 6, Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (1993) Beatson & Perry (2002)
	20.03	Maori Research Perspectives	Prof Chris Cunningham	D&T Chaps 4 &5
4	24.03 27.03	Ethics & Research Workshop	Dr Allison Kirkman	D&T Chapt 7 Wilkinson T (2001) Denzin N (1968) Wallis R (1977)
5	31.03 03.04	Research Design Developing Research Questions & Hypotheses Data Sources	JN	D&T Chapt 8 & 9 Bouma, G.D. (1996), de Vaus, D. (1995) D&T Chapt 25
6	07.04	<i>MY 221</i> Workshop session	Leah Cammell, StatsNZ	
<i>Mid Trimester Break</i>				
7	28.04 01.05	Data Collection & Surveys Choice of methods for data collection, Sampling	JN	D&T Chapt 10, Appendix 1 &2 Fink, Arlene (2006)
8	05.05 08.05	Data Collection & Surveys Questionnaire design, Survey analysis	JN	D&T Chaps 11, 13 & 26 Bryman, A. (2001) Gobo, G (2001)
9	12.05 15.05	Qualitative methods (includes analysis) Semi and unstructured interviews & Focus Groups	LS	D&T Chaps 17, 18, 22 Leibrich, J (1993)
10	19.05 22.05	Fieldwork & ethnography	Mary Theberge	D&T Chapt 20 Geertz, C (1993)
11	26.05 29.05	Policy & Research Evaluation	JN Dr Venezia Kingi,CJRC	Weiss et al (2008) D&T Chapt 16
12	02.06 05.06	Writing reports Mixed Methods	JN	D&T Chapt 12 Neale(2004)

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* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

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>

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Head of School:	Assoc. Professor Jenny Neale, MY1013 Tel: 463 5827 E-m: jenny.neale@vuw.ac.nz
International Student Liaison:	Dr Hal Levine MY1023 Tel: 463 6132 E-m: hal.levine@vuw.ac.nz
Maori and Pacific Student Liaison	Dr David Pearson, MY1020 Tel: 463 6748 E-m: david.pearson@vuw.ac.nz
Students with Disabilities Liaison:	Dr Russil Durrant, MY1120 Tel: 463 9980 E-m: russil.durrant@vuw.ac.nz
School Manager:	Carol Hogan, MY918 Tel: 463 6546 E-m: carol.hogan@vuw.ac.nz
School Administrators:	Monica Lichti, Adam Meers, MY921 Tel: 463 5317, 463 5258 E-m: sacs@vuw.ac.nz

Office use only

Date Received:

(Date Stamp)

School of Social and Cultural Studies

Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

ANTHROPOLOGY

CRIMINOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL POLICY

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Assignment Cover Sheet

(please write legibly)

Full Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Course (eg SACS 301): _____

Tutorial Day: _____ Tutorial Time: _____

Tutor's Name (if applicable): _____

Assignment No.: _____ Due Date: _____

CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I certify that this paper submitted for assessment is the result of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Signed: _____ Date: _____