



MDIA 489 Research Project

Trimester 1+2 2014

3 March to 2 July 2014

30 Points

IMPORTANT DATES

Trimester dates:	3 March to 16 November 2014
Teaching dates:	3 March to 17 October 2014
Easter/Mid-Trimester break:	18 April to 4 May 2014
Mid-year break:	3 to 13 July 2014
Mid-trimester break 2/3:	25 August to 7 September 2014
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

There are no regularly scheduled classes for MDIA 489 because this is a self-directed course of independent research. The staff member you will work most closely with in completing your research essay is your supervisor. Students are expected to meet regularly with their supervisor to discuss their progress. You should expect to be meeting with your supervisor every 2-3 weeks during the trimester period.

What you can expect from your supervisor:

- Regular meetings to discuss your project, and progress on it.
- Written and oral feedback on written work within 2 weeks of submitting it.

What your supervisor will expect of you:

- Regular meetings to discuss your project, and progress on it.
- Adherence to any deadlines set.
- The incorporation of feedback into subsequent drafts of your work.
- Notification as soon as possible of any problems you are having with your research.
- Notification as far in advance as possible of any reason why you may not be able to reach a milestone deadline.

Workshops

Depending on the needs of the MDIA 489 cohort, study/research workshops may be run periodically (usually on Thursday afternoon 3.00-4.00pm in 81FT103). You will be notified of their availability.

Seminars

Students in MDIA 489 are strongly encouraged to attend the Film and Media Studies Research Seminars. These normally take place during the trimester, Thursdays 12pm to 1pm unless stated otherwise. Full details will be conveyed via email and made available on the MDIA 489 Blackboard site.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator: Your principal contact will be your supervisor, but otherwise the Honours Coordinator is:

Peter Thompson, Room 305, 83 Fairlie Terrace. Phone 04 463 6827. Email peter.thompson@vuw.ac.nz

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1.00-2.30 pm or by appointment.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be posted on Blackboard.

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

This course gives students the opportunity to pursue an individual research project with regular guidance and support from a supervisor. This project is developed and completed as a 10,000 word research essay. Students who have been approved for and enrolled in MDIA 489 will be contacted by the coordinator prior to the start of trimester one regarding their research topic and supervision.

COURSE CONTENT

There are two main components to MDIA 489: the MDIA 489 research essay and supervision meetings. Workshops on specific research project may be provided periodically.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. conceive and implement a project
2. conceptualise and clarify a problem and
3. cogently present the results of the inquiry.

TEACHING FORMAT

Students should have arranged support from a supervisor in advance of enrolment, but otherwise one will be assigned. Students will work with their supervisor to develop a suitable course of study, depending on the topic of interest. There may also be periodic workshops and seminars that will develop relevant research skills.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must submit the research essay on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).

WORKLOAD

The expected basic workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours over two trimesters or 10 hours per teaching week. However, MDIA 489 students need to be aware that their individual project will usually entail periods of higher workload, depending on the nature of the research and subject matter.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Research Essay. 10,000 words	100%	1, 2 and 3	2pm, Friday 10 October 2014 via MDIA drop slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace and emailed to media-studies@vuw.ac.nz

10,000 Word Research Essay: 100% of final grade.

This piece of assessment relates to all learning objectives

The largest component of MDIA 489 is the individual research project you develop and complete as a 10,000 word research essay in consultation with your supervisor. This is a theoretically informed piece of writing that should demonstrate that you are able to conceive and implement a project, to conceptualise and clarify a problem, and to cogently present the results of the inquiry. Your research essay should include:

- A research question
- A thesis statement
- A theoretical and methodological framework/mode of data collection
- Demonstration of familiarity with relevant literature
- Research findings and analysis

- A reference list

In Media Studies, it is recommended that the research essay is structured around a number of milestones, which you should set out in consultation with your supervisor. These milestones are intended to ensure that steady progress is made on the research project throughout both trimesters, and to identify research difficulties in a timely manner. If you find these milestones are not being met, your project may be at risk of non-completion. In this case, you should discuss your progress with your supervisor as early as possible. Students who do not complete milestone tasks on time may also be required to meet with the Honours Coordinator.

The recommended milestones are:

1. Research outline, including research question, identification of data/information required to answer question, method of collecting data, and theoretical framework of analysis (Suggested date: 1st week of April)
2. Demonstration of familiarity with relevant literature (Suggested date: mid- June) PLEASE NOTE: The form this takes will depend on the specifics of your individual research project, and may differ from what other 489 students are submitting. Your supervisor will advise you on his/her expectations for this milestone.
3. Submission of a completed chapter. (Suggested date: mid- July) PLEASE NOTE: Which chapter you submit will depend on the specifics of your individual research project, and may differ from what other 489 students are submitting. Your supervisor will advise you on his/her expectations for this milestone.
4. Full first draft (Suggested date: mid- September)

Required final milestone:

5. Submission of Research Essay (Due 2pm Friday 10 October).

Formatting your research essay

There is no prescriptive template for formatting a MDIA 489 research essay, however you should consider the following:

- This is a long document that someone has to read, and you would like that person to look as favourably upon your essay as possible. Clearly separated sections/chapters with subtitles make it much easier for the reader to understand how your essay is organised, and when you are moving from one section to another.

- The examples on the MDIA 489 Blackboard site may be helpful to consult when deciding how best to set out your own essay.
- You should follow the general rules for formatting Media Studies essays (12-pt font, double-spacing, easy to read font).
- Make sure you have page numbers. This makes it easy for the marker to indicate parts that are particularly problematic or particularly successful in their report.

Reference styles

There is no compulsory referencing style in Media Studies. The most common is MLA, and extensive referencing guidelines for MLA are contained in the SEFTMS handbook (available on Blackboard). You should use a recognised referencing style for your in-text citations and bibliography (e.g. MLA, Chicago, Harvard) and you must make sure you use that consistently throughout your essay.

The marking process

The marking process for a MDIA 489 research essay is: a Media Studies staff member is appointed to mark the essay in consultation with the supervisor and the Honours Coordinator. They mark the essay and write a report. The student's supervisor then writes a short response to the report and the grade given. Both reports are forwarded to the external Honours moderator. Your final grade is determined at the Media Studies Honours Examiners' Meeting.

Marking criteria

MDIA 489 markers are asked to respond to the following criteria:

- Clarity of the research question and thesis statement
- Whether the essay conforms to its stated scope, methodology and theoretical framework
- Knowledge of literature relevant to the topic
- Quality of the analysis and
- Quality of the written expression.

Receiving your grade and feedback

Grades are entered in Student Records following the Honours Examiners' Meeting, and are usually available to students a couple of days later. You will be notified closer to the time when those grades will be available. If you would like to see feedback on your essay, contact the MDIA 489 Coordinator once your grade is available.

Please note: Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin, the online plagiarism prevention tool.

Your marked assignment will be returned after they have been marked and the examination meeting has been held. Assignments will be held in the Administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the Administration office.

Each assignment is submitted in two formats:

- Two soft-bound or stapled hard copies into the MDIA drop slot outside the Administration office in 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form to your assignment, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your supervisor's name.
- Email your essay as a MS Word file to media-studies@vuw.ac.nz by the deadline.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Friday 14 November 2014.**

Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

SET TEXTS

Students will determine appropriate readings for their research project through their own research and through discussion with their supervisor.

RECOMMENDED READING

There is no set recommended reading because your research project is specific to your selected topic. Your supervisor will suggest some material but you will need to be proactive in sourcing other material relevant to your topic.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

The MDIA 489 course is no longer a compulsory component of Honours in Media Studies. It now has a more specific entry requirement (including advance approval from your supervisor) and some of the mandatory requirements (such as compulsory milestones) have been devolved to the supervisor and student.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

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-progress (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

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
MEDIA STUDIES PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE MDIA 489

- 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/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

The MDIA 489 course entails an individual research project. You should make contact with your supervisor in week 1 and arrange for a schedule of regular meetings.