Subject Outline
ACCY907/407 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH
METHODS

(6 credit points)
(Session 1, 2007)
SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

COORDINATOR & TEAM

Coordinator: Faculty of Commerce
Associate Professor Mary Kaidonis

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Room 40.327
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Professor David Steel

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Phone 42213823
Room 15 110
Consultation times: SEE WEB PAGE FOR TIMES

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject provides an overview of the ways accounting and finance researchers identify, formulate and investigate empirical questions. The topics include: the criteria adopted to select research projects, assumptions about methodologies, knowledge and research, issues of experimental design, validity threats, measurement problems and statistical analysis. Selected published accounting and finance research will be used to illustrate established methods of empirical research.

OBJECTIVES

The subject has been designed to enable you to understand a range of research methods and methodologies having both an appreciation of the theoretical and practical implications of their application. Students will be able to understand the advantages and disadvantages of a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
WORKLOAD

This is a 6 credit point subject and it is expected that the student (you) spends a **minimum** of 12 hours per week of class contact and private study.

SEMINARS

**Structure:**

There will be:
- one two hour seminar per week
- on Monday 4.30pm to 6.30pm
- in Room 19.2002 (please note change from original timetable)

**Learning Objectives of Seminars:**

These seminars are designed to stimulate interest in the topic, to challenge, and to stimulate independent study. Your weekly preparation for seminars will include sharing your understanding, questions and comments as well as participating in discussions. These skills are also important in the long term since your role as professionals will require participating in meetings, boards, committees of management or project teams as well as research teams. This process also provides practice in formulating clear and articulate answers for exams.

PREScribed Reading

- There will be selected readings from articles, books, and other sources that will be made available on the web as e-readings where possible, or available in the resources room.

OTHER REFERENCES

There are many references that you can seek to augment your reading. Here is an example of some:


**WEBPAGE**

*Seminar notes:*

On occasions there will be specific lecture notes. However, the main learning and communication mode will be the seminars.

*Announcements:*

There will also be announcements from time to time, which will be made in seminars.

*Cover pages:*

There will also be cover pages for the assessment and proformas or guidelines for the reports.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assessment submission</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>26 February</td>
<td>KAIDONIS, GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations and qualitative research</td>
<td>1,2,5</td>
<td>tba</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accounting as a social science and getting started</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theory &amp; research</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>19 March</td>
<td>GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Field research</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>26 March</td>
<td>GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Historical research</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>2 April</td>
<td>GAFFIKIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis &amp; reports</td>
<td>15 &amp; 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quantitative research: Planning &amp; preparation</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>23 April</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental research</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Survey research</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>7 May</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Survey research</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Survey research</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis of quantitative data</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>KAIDONIS, STEEL</td>
<td></td>
<td>REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SECTION B ASSESSMENT

Penalties for late submission of assessment
Assessed work must be handed in by the date and time given. Assessed work handed in late can be penalised by the deduction (from the mark given to the assessed work) of 5 percentage points per 24 hours of the weekday or part thereof. The operation of this rule will not result in a negative mark being carried forward.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism means using the ideas of someone else without giving them proper credit. For example, that someone else may be an author, critic, journalist, artist, composer, seminar or tutor or another student. Unintentional plagiarism can result if you don't understand and use the acceptable scholarly methods of acknowledgement. Whether plagiarism is deliberate or unintentional, the University may impose penalties, which can be very severe. When it is desirable, or necessary, to use other people's material, take care to include appropriate references and attribution. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and has led to expulsion from the University.

Students should visit the following University website and become familiar with the University's policy on Plagiarism.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (2 at 30% each)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination (3-hours)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

Submission of assignments:
Assignments must be submitted in person at the beginning of the seminar in the weeks indicated below. Assignments will not be accepted if they are mailed, emailed or faxed.

Schedule of submission and return of assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT 1</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Week 1-6</td>
<td>Week 7-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions &amp; requirements will be on the web</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due date for submission – at the seminar</td>
<td>Week 7 Monday 16 April</td>
<td>Week 12 Monday 21 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return date of marked assignments</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extensions
Extensions may be granted if circumstances beyond the control of the student interfere with their ability to complete the task on time. These will only be granted by
the subject co-ordinator and must be applied for before the due date. Please Note: Extensions will not be granted after the due date.

ASSIGNMENT 1

REFER:
Refer to the following newspaper article:

REQUIRED:

1. Identify three possible research projects that you could investigate linking each to the Hooper (2007) AFR article. Prepare a one page summary of the research overview (see guidelines for research proposal below). That is prepare 3 A4 pages, times roman font 12point for each summary. In describing the scope and how you will do the research you should consider theoretical underpinnings of the topic, methodological approach, and include references.

2. Choose one of the research projects you have identified above and prepare a detailed research proposal according to the requirements below (ie 5 A4 pages, times roman font 12point). You do not need to repeat the research overview.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL:

should have:

Research Overview:
• outline the research question, aims, significance, approach and originality of the project
• determine the scope of the research
• explain how you will do the research

Research Plan:
• this should provide more detailed information
• include information about the project’s background,
• how it will be approached both theoretically and methodologically
• outline of the thesis chapters and draft timelines for completion of the project (envisage a project to be completed in one semester).
• In addition, it should identify any ethical, intellectual property and safety issues relevant to the project and how these will be addressed, and any potential problems likely to impede progress and suggest solutions to these problems.

Preliminary Literature Review:
• This literature review should demonstrate that you have a good knowledge of the field of the research project including the published findings of other researchers and the areas requiring original research.

Statement of the resources required to complete the project:
• This statement should identify any materials, training, travel or access to infrastructure required to expedite completion of the project.

(these steps have been adopted and adapted from the University of Wollongong Postgraduate Proposal guidelines available on: http://www.uow.edu.au/crearts/PG/RarchProposalGuidelines.html)
ASSIGNMENT 2
Details of requirements will be made available on the e-learning space by week 7.

EXAMINATIONS
Students are required to pass the examination (attain at least 50%) in order to fulfil the first requirement to pass the subject. The cumulative total of all assessment must also be at least 50% in order to fulfil the final requirement of the subject.
SECTION C: RULES, CODES OF PRACTICE & POLICIES

C1 University Policies
Information on the following University Policies can be found at the websites below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* see brief explanation of policy below.

C1.1 Non-discriminatory Language
The Faculty of Commerce supports the University’s policy on the use of non-discriminatory language. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they understand and abide by this policy. The policy is available at:
http://staff.uow.edu.au/eeo/nondiscrimlanguage.html

C1.2 Special Consideration Policy
The Faculty of Commerce recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure equity and consistency across its subjects for all students. Sometimes, in exceptional circumstances, students need to apply for special consideration in order to complete all assessable work.

The University applies strict criteria to the granting of special consideration. Before applying for special consideration students should carefully read the University’s policy. The policy can be found at:

C1.3 Student Academic Grievance Policy
The Faculty of Commerce aims to provide a fair, equitable and productive learning environment for all its students. The Student Academic Grievance Policy seeks to support the achievement of this goal by providing a transparent and consistent process for resolving student academic grievances.
Any student who has a grievance over a result should obtain a Faculty of Commerce Appeal of Assessment Form from the Schools or the Sub-Dean’s Unit. The student should firstly take the form to the marker/seminarr to discuss the matter and, if the student is still not satisfied, s/he should take the next step as outlined on the form. Once the grievance has been considered by the Faculty, if the student still feels the situation has not been fully resolved s/he may consult the Dean of Students. However, the Dean of Students can have no input into the academic judgement of the seminarr and can only review the grievance to ensure proper procedure has been followed. For more information, please consult the policy in full at http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/studacgrievpol.html

C2 Faculty and school policies

Referencing

WHY DO YOU NEED TO REFERENCE?

At University it is necessary to acknowledge the sources of information and ideas that you have incorporated in your assignments. Failure to do this thoroughly may result in accusations of plagiarism: this is the academic equivalent of stealing (because by not acknowledging someone else's work, you are presenting it as your own). Plagiarism is taken very seriously by the University and may result in expulsion from the University.

Referencing is not only about acknowledging other people's work: accurate referencing and lists of references are beneficial when researching a topic as they allow the reader to follow up information and read further into the area. In a sense, references provide readers with clues to help them explore different avenues of a topic. This aspect of referencing will become more valuable to you as you progress in your studies. There is a correct procedure that must be followed when referencing and using footnotes. Not complying with these set techniques and format will most likely result in loss of marks.

When writing an essay it is easiest to reference as you go, making sure you are writing down all relevant information. This will save hours trying to find the source again in the library.

THE HARVARD SYSTEM OF REFERENCING

The Faculty of Commerce uses the Harvard system of referencing. This system makes use of short references within the body of the text. It is supplemented by a detailed list of references at the end of the text, which provides all the information necessary to find the source material. In-text references include the author and year of publication, and where necessary the page number(s).

It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are familiar with the Harvard system of referencing and that they use it accurately in all written work submitted.

Students should consult the following University Library website for a detailed explanation and examples of the Harvard system of referencing.

Citation of Electronic Sources

It is necessary for students to reference all sources used in their written work, including file transfer protocol sites, worldwide web sites, telnet sites, synchronous communications (MOOs, MUDs, IRC, etc.) GOPHER sites, and email, Listserv and Newsgroup citations. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are familiar with the accepted Faculty of Commerce practice for referencing electronic material and that they use it accurately in all written work submitted. Students should consult the following University Library website for a detailed explanation and examples of how to reference electronic material:


School Calculator and Spreadsheet Policy

All accounting and finance subjects involve problems requiring calculation. Many of these can be solved using a scientific calculator (addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, powers, square roots, logarithms and exponentials, statistical functions) and students should make sure they have access to such a calculator at the beginning of each subject. Students will also find a range of statistical, scientific and financial functions in electronic spreadsheets like Microsoft Excel, and these are useful for the preparation of submitted work where manual calculation is not strictly required or recommended.

However, students should also consider purchasing a financial calculator. These offer nearly all of the functions found in scientific calculators, as well as compound interest and discounting, amortization, bond yields and investment appraisal functions (including net present value and the internal rate of return). Students will find these are of great benefit in their studies and their future careers. Examples of suitable calculators include the Casio FC-100V and 200V, Sharp EL733A and EL735, Hewlett-Packard HP 10bII, 12c, 12c Platinum and 17bII+ and Texas Instruments BA II Plus.

Learning Resource Centre

Learning Development offers a range of free services to all enrolled students who wish to improve their academic or English language skills. There are a range of workshops available including; essay writing and editing; reading for assignments; grammar; presentation skills; pronunciation and exam preparation. For information on language and academic skills workshops, or to make appointments for consultations, please visit the Learning Resource Centre (LRC), Building 19, Ground Floor, Room G102, or Phone 02 4221 3977. For further information visit the website:


Faculty Librarians

Each faculty has a Faculty Librarian who is available to help with research related enquiries. Research Help Desk staff are also available in the Library to assist with research needs.

The Faculty Librarians for Commerce can be contacted as follows:
Disability Liaison Officer

The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) can provide advice on how particular disabilities affect university study and information on resources available at the University for assisting students with disabilities. Students commencing courses are advised to contact the Disability Liaison Officer prior to the beginning of their first session of study.

For further information on services offered, consult the Disability Services website or contact the office.

- Telephone: 42 213445
- Fax: 42 215667

Faculty Disability Advisers

Faculty Disability Advisers are academic staff who provide assistance and support to students with disabilities within their Faculty and act as an intermediary between the student and the Faculty's academic and general staff. They provide support, educational advice and referral to appropriate staff on issues related to teaching and learning within the Faculty and the University. Students are advised to communicate specific information about the ways in which their disability affects learning to the Faculty Disability Adviser as soon as possible after enrolment.

The Faculty of Commerce Disability Adviser is Mr. Ron Perrin. Mr Perrin can be contacted as follows:

- Office location: Building 40, room 224
- Email address: Ron_perrin@uow.edu.au
- Telephone: 42 214118

Woolyungah Indigenous Centre

The Woolyungah Indigenous Centre (WIC) provides academic and personal support for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and other indigenous students. The Centre also runs an Indigenous Specific Orientation Program for students who gain entry to the University through the alternative admissions program.

For further information on services offered, consult the Woolyungah Indigenous Centre website or contact the office.

- Centre location: Building 30
- Web address: http://www.uow.edu.au/aec/
- Telephone: 42 213563
- Fax: 42 214244
- E-mail: wic_feedback@uow.edu.au