Unit Outline*

BUSN7402

Research Seminar

Semester 1 & 2, 2011
Crawley

Unit Coordinators
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Doina Olaru (IM)
Simone Pettigrew (Marketing)

Business School
www.business.uwa.edu.au

* This Unit Outline should be read in conjunction with the Business School Unit Outline Supplement available on the Students web site http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students
UNIT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Research seminars are an important aspect of university culture and display the cutting edge research conducted at your university. Honours students are expected to participate in the research culture of their university, with attendance at seminars an important component. This may seem daunting to you initially, but the UWA facility encourage young researchers to be creative and enthusiastic when it comes to developing new knowledge. So please participate and enjoy stretching your knowledge in new and different areas.

This unit is designed to introduce you to research practice as conducted by current UWA facility. The emphasis in the course is placed on critiquing the research process undertaken by the seminar presenter. The unit is designed to complement current material covered in BUSN7661 and BUSN7403 and allows you to further broaden your understanding of different research methodologies, rather than specific knowledge in one methodology only.

The Goal of the unit

On completion of this unit, you should be able (as a researcher) to critically assess research seminars and presentations.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

• A sound understanding of the research process in a wider context;
• A high level of knowledge of the applications of research in academic (basic) domains;
• The ability to effectively evaluate research seminars;
• The ability to recognise the advantages and limitations of commonly used research techniques.

Educational Principles and Graduate Attributes

In this unit, you will be encouraged and facilitated to develop the ability and desire to:

• Undertake problem identification, analysis, and find the research methods appropriate to describe the phenomena;
• Apply and adapt the acquired knowledge/paradigms to data summarisation, analysis, and presentation of information;
• Work independently
• Think and reason logically and creatively about data analysis and reporting;
• Communicate/present the information/result clearly, concisely and logically
TEACHING AND LEARNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching and learning strategies

Seminar critique: These assignments will assist you in critically assessing the many research seminars that you will attend and present during your honours year.

Attendance

Participation in class, whether it be listening to a lecture or getting involved in other activities, is an important part of the learning process. It is therefore important that you attend classes. More formally, the University regulations state that ‘to complete a course or unit students shall attend prescribed classes, lectures, seminars and tutorials’.

CONTACT DETAILS

We strongly advise students to regularly access their student email accounts. Important information regarding the unit is often communicated by email and will not be automatically forwarded to private email addresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Coordinator:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
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| Name: | Doina Olaru (Business Info Management) |
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| **Consultation hours:** | Upon Request |

| Name: | Simone Pettigrew (Marketing) |
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| **Phone:** | 6488 1437 |
| **Consultation hours:** | Upon Request |
TEXTBOOK(S) & RESOURCES

Recommended/required text(s)

There are no required textbooks or resources. Students are expected to use the resources from BUSN7661 and BUSN7403.

ASSessment meChanism

The purpose of assessment

There are a number of reasons for having assessable tasks as part of an academic program. The assessable tasks are designed to encourage you to explore and understand the subject more fully. The fact that we grade your work provides you an indication of how much you have achieved. Providing feedback on your work also serves as part of the learning process.

Assessment mechanism summary

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Critiques</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>31 Oct 2011</td>
<td>Submit to WebCT <a href="https://webct.uwa.edu.au">https://webct.uwa.edu.au</a></td>
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Note 1: Results may be subject to scaling and standardisation under faculty policy and are not necessarily the sum of the component parts.

Note 2: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning outcomes as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the unit.

Assessment components

Assessment item # 1 Seminar Critiques

- Students should submit 7 seminar critiques
- The grading of the Seminar Critiques is pass/fail.
- To calculate the class of honours attributed from this unit a % grade will be taken from the thesis mark. i.e. If you receive 75% for your final honours dissertation – you will also receive 75% for BUSN7402 to go towards the calculation of first/second or third class honours.
WHICH SEMINARS SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

Research seminars are conducted in every faculty of the university and students should not be limited to only those presented only in their discipline area. Therefore, it is encouraged for students to consider attending relevant seminar presentations that could occur within the Business School. Students can find information on the UWA Business School seminar series at the following website:

http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students/research-seminars

To broaden your research understanding you are expected to attend seminars that cover a range of different methodologies. Therefore, when planning which seminars to attend it is recommended that students included seminars that present different types of data analysis. Although allocated as a semester two unit, students need to start attending seminars early in semester 1 and continue to attend seminars through both semesters in order to obtain the pre-requisite 7 seminars. Note previous students have been able to complete this unit by August, thus allowing them more time to write up their thesis.

Not all research seminars will be applicable to this unit. Students will need to choose seminars that allow them to apply the criteria outlined. Seminars that meet these criteria are those that present data analysis and draw conclusions from their results. To determine if the seminar is appropriate it is recommended that students read the abstract that is posted on each seminar.

The following seminars are probably not applicable for this unit: PhD/DBA proposals, conceptual models only, and seminars on how to conduct research. If you are unsure about the applicability of a seminar then please consult your honours co-ordinator.

SUBMISSION OF FINAL REPORTS

You will receive before the seminar (upon request) the full paper related to the presentation in order to assist you with preparing the checklist for seminar.

Final reports need to be 3-5 pages per critique (1.5 spacing, 2.5 cm margins and 12 point font). Each critique must include the title, date and presenter details, plus the abstract used in the promotional materials. Best of all would be to include a copy of the promotional flyer for the seminar. This does not count towards the page limit.

Checklist for Critiquing a Research Seminar

Following is a checklist for critiquing a research seminar. If the presenter doesn’t cover the area or is not clear then ask questions (usually at the end of the seminar).

Introduction:

1. Was the statement of purpose achieved? If not or not completely, why? What was the objective of the study? What is the basic research question, or problem?

2. What philosophical stance did the presenter take? Is the presenter coming from one of the following perspectives: explanatory, evaluative, exploratory or descriptive? Does the presenter draw on positivist, interpretive or critical tradition of research? Note this aspect may also be covered in the methodology discussion.
Literature and Theory:

3. What prior literature was reviewed? Was it relevant to the research problem? To the theoretical framework?

4. Was a theoretical framework presented? What was it? Did it seem appropriate for the research question studied?

Methods:

5. Why was the method chosen? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen method?

6. What other methods could have been used if more resources were available to the researcher? What could have these alternative methods given that the chosen method did not?

7. Was enough information on the method presented to make a judgement on research quality? Could the study methodology be replicated from the information given? **Does the validity of this study depend upon it being able to be duplicated? * Does the presenter reflect on their role as data-makers?

8. Review the method for possible flaws or limitations. Is the sample selection adequate? Is the experimental design appropriate? Is the approach suited to the context and to the research question? Was the design modified in response to research constraints or opportunities?

Results:

9. Scrutinise the data. *Are tables and illustrations clear and easily followed? *Is the statistical data organised allowing for ready comparison and interpretation? **Does the presenter give quotes, words and content analysis providing evidence for the argument? **Is the handling of the qualitative data transparent, consistent and thorough?

10. **Is the descriptive data clearly and transparently conveyed and give an understanding of how people create and maintain their social world.

11. Review the results in the light of the stated objective/s. Does the presenter reveal what the research intended? To what extent does the presenter believe they are engaged in value-free science?

Discussion:

12. Does the interpretation arise logically from the data, or is it too far-fetched? Have shortcomings of the research being addressed? Were the conclusions well grounded in the findings?

13. Reflect on directions for future research. Has the author suggested further work? Did the study seem consistent with current ethical standards?

Overview:

14. Reflect on the presenters thinking and presentation style. Does the presenter show this research logically and clearly?

* relates to quantitative research

** relates to qualitative research
Submission of assignments
Electronic Submission only via WebCT - https://webct.uwa.edu.au

Student Guild
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Website: http://www.guild.uwa.edu.au

Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Appeals against academic assessment
The University provides the opportunity for students to lodge an appeal against assessment results and/or progress status (refer http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/appeals).