Course Outline

Research for Business Decision Making

BUSS 5397 Study Period 6 - 2016

Internal - City West Campus

Introduction

Welcome

Every business organisation needs to incorporate some research activity in order to understand the current trends and respond effectively and efficiently to the changing global environment. Research can also be used to assess issues internal to organisations e.g. employee engagement, customer satisfaction. This course is designed to give you an opportunity to learn the nature of research, practice appropriate ways of conducting research and learn how to use research in business decision making. This is a fundamental activity for successful business operations.

Through the teaching and learning arrangements in this course, we aim to instill a problem-solving and critical thinking approach within students. To this end, the course material focuses on developing your knowledge and understanding of how, when, where and why of using appropriate research approaches and research results to intelligently inform business decision making.

At the completion of the course, you will have developed your research skills to investigate internal and external issues relevant to a business. As professionals in your respective disciplines, you will also be able to identify, analyse and evaluate relevant issues addressed in industry and/or government research reports, consultant proposals and reports and academic journal articles. These skills are useful for both your work and study.

The preferred means for students to communicate regarding the course, its content, assessment and any queries are either via email generated from a UniSA student email account, or a Discussion Forum on the Course Learnonline site. Your discussion on any forum must be of a professional standard and must not involve any personal attack or openly derogatory statements. The attention of students is drawn to the University of South Australia's code of conduct when exchanging emails with academic staff and other students: http://w3.unisa.edu.au/policies/codes/miscell/it-student.asp

I hope you will find this course a challenging but a rewarding experience.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Dr Chad Chiu

Course Coordinator

Course Teaching Staff

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* Please refer to your Course homepage for the most up to date list of course teaching staff.

School Contact Details

School of Management

Physical Address:	Level 2, Room 32, Elton Mayo Building (EM) North Terrace City West Adelaide 5000
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School Email:	mgn.enquiries@unisa.edu.au
School Website:	http://www.unisabusinessschool.edu.au/management/

Course Overview

Prerequisite(s)

Completion of 18 units in a postgraduate business program.

Corequisite(s)

There are no corequisite courses to be completed in conjunction with this course.

Course Aim

Business research skills play a key role in providing the information business managers need to ensure that their businesses can develop, compete, expand and remain sustainable. The course aims to introduce students to the advanced business research skills necessary to acquire, process and analyse information that will support quality business decision making.

Course Objectives

On completion of this course, students should be able to:

CO1. Discuss the business research process

CO2. Define and analyse business research problems

CO3. Acquire, process and analyse information to help make effective business decisions

CO4. Evaluate alternative solutions to business problems

CO5. Communicate solutions to business problems

Upon completion of this course, students will have achieved the following combination of Graduate Qualities and Course Objectives:

	Graduate Qualities being assessed through the course						
	GQ1	GQ2	GQ3	GQ4	GQ5	GQ6	GQ7
CO1		•				•	
CO2		•	•				
CO3		•	•				
CO4		•	•				
CO5						•	

Graduate Qualities

A graduate of UniSA:

GQ1. operates effectively with and upon a body of knowledge of sufficient depth to begin professional practice

GQ2. is prepared for life-long learning in pursuit of personal development and excellence in professional practice

GQ3. is an effective problem solver, capable of applying logical, critical, and creative thinking to a range of problems

GQ4. can work both autonomously and collaboratively as a professional

GQ5. is committed to ethical action and social responsibility as a professional and citizen

GQ6. communicates effectively in professional practice and as a member of the community

GQ7. demonstrates international perspectives as a professional and as a citizen

Course Content

The role of business research; information systems and knowledge management; business analytics; the research process; research design; quantitative and qualitative data collection methods; data analysis and presentation communication of research results.

Teaching and Learning Arrangements

Seminar   3 hours x 10 weeks

Unit Value

4.5 units

Additional assessment requirements

There are no additional assessment requirements identified for this course.

Learning Resources

Textbook(s)

You will need continual access to the following text(s) to complete this course. The library does not hold multiple copies of the nominated text books. It is strongly recommended that you purchase the book(s).

Zikmund, WG, Babin, BJ, Carr, JC & Griffin, M 2013, *Business Research Methods*, 9th Edition, South-Western Cengage Learning, Mason, Ohio.

Reference(s)

Bouma, G D 2000, The Research Process, 4th ed, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne.

Bryman, A and Bell, E 2011, Business Research Methods, 3rd ed, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Cavana, RY, Delahay, BL & Sekaran, U 2001, Applied Business Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods, John Wiley & Sons, Milton, Queensland.

Dawson, C 2002, Practical Research Methods: A User Friendly Guide to Mastering Research Techniques and Projects, How To Books, Oxford.

Leedy, P & Ormrod, J 2005, Practical Research: Planning and Design, Pearson, New Jersey.

Neuman, WL 2004, Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Pearson, Boston.

Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R, 2013, Research Methods for Business: A Skills Building Approach, 6th ed, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

There are many other potentially useful references in the library and on the web. Students are required to use a wide range of up-to-date resources such as books, journals, newspapers, government/industry reports and magazines in this course. Students are also expected to use peer reviewed academic journals as much as possible, see for example, the list of journals from the Financial Times list:

1. Academy of Management Journal (Academy of Management)
2. Academy of Management Perspectives (Academy of Management)
3. Academy of Management Review (Academy of Management)
4. Accounting, Organisations and Society (Elsevier)
5. The Accounting Review (American Accounting Association)
6. Administrative Science Quarterly (Cornell University)
7. American Economic Review (American Economic Association)
8. California Management Review (UC Berkeley)
9. Contemporary Accounting Research (Wiley)
10. Econometrica (Econometric Society, Wiley)
11. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice (Baylor University, Wiley)
12. Harvard Business Review (Harvard Business School Publishing)
13. Human Resource Management (Wiley)
14. Information Systems Research (Informs)
15. Journal of Accounting and Economics (Elsevier)
16. Journal of Accounting Research (University of Chicago, Wiley)
17. Journal of Applied Psychology (American Psychological Association)
18. Journal of Business Ethics (Kluwer Academic)
19. Journal of Business Venturing (Elsevier)
20. Journal of Consumer Psychology (Elsevier)
21. Journal of Consumer Research (University of Chicago)

22. Journal of Finance (Wiley)
23. Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis (Cambridge University Press)
24. Journal of Financial Economics (Elsevier)
25. Journal of International Business Studies (Academy of International Business)
26. Journal of Management Studies (Wiley)
27 Journal of Marketing (American Marketing Association)
28. Journal of Marketing Research (American Marketing Association)
29. Journal of Operations Management (Elsevier)
30. Journal of Political Economy (University of Chicago)
31. Journal of the American Statistical Association (American Statistical Association)
32. Management Science (Informs)
33. Marketing Science (Informs)
34. MIS Quarterly (Management Information Systems Research Centre, University of Minnesota)
35. Operations Research (Informs)
36. Organization Science (Informs)
37. Organization Studies (SAGE)
38. Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes (Academic Press)
39. Production and Operations Management (Wiley)
40. Quarterly Journal of Economics (MIT)
41. Rand Journal of Economics (The Rand Corporation, Wiley)
42. Review of Accounting Studies (Springer)
43. Review of Financial Studies (Oxford University Press)
44. Sloan Management Review (MIT)
45. Strategic Management Journal (Wiley)

Catalogues and databases

Students are expected to use the University Library catalogue and databases. Students can access the University Library at http://www.library.unisa.edu.au/.

Click on Databases

Find database subjects, then click on subject/topic of your choice. As no single database will give access to all the relevant journals, students must use several databases to cover any topic.

Materials to be accessed online

learnonline course site

All other course related materials can be accessed through your learn**online** course site which you will be able to access from the my Courses section in myUniSA.

myUniSA

All study related materials can be accessed through: https://my.unisa.edu.au

Assessment

Assessment Details

Details of assessment submission and return are listed under each assessment task. Assessment tasks will be returned to you within two to three weeks of submission.

If the Course Coordinator allows submissions in hard copy format, you will be required to attach an Assignment Cover Sheet which is available on the <u>learnonline student help</u> and in myUniSA.

Assessment Summary

#	Form of assessment	Length	Duration	Weighting	Due date (Adelaide Time)	Submit via	Objectives being assessed
1	Research project proposal	1500 words	N/A	30%	9 Oct 2016, 11:00 PM	learnonline	CO1, CO2
2	Research based decision making case study	1500 words	N/A	25%	30 Oct 2016, 11:00 PM	learnonline	CO2, CO4, CO5
3	Group Research Project Report with peer evaluation (5% of weighting)	3500 words	N/A	45%	*See assessment activities for details*	*See assessment activities for details*	CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5

Feedback proformas

The feedback proforma is available on your learn**online** course site. It can be accessed via the Feedback Form link in the Course Essentials block.

Assessments

Assessment #1 - Research Essay (Graded)

Weighting: 30%

1500 words (+/- 10% in-text words, which excludes the references list).

Research Essay: Writing an Article for Time Magazine Australia

Imagine that you work for Time Magazine Australia, and that the managing editor, Randall Lane, has asked you to write a story about the "State of the science: What organisational research has discovered in the past 5-years." Randall also gave you a couple of other important pieces of information.

First, the article must be around 1500 words in length (+/- 10%). Second, since an enormous amount of research has been published in the past 5 years, it won't be possible to summarise all of it in less than 1350 words. As a result, you will need to focus the article on one particular topic listed as below. Third, **your submitted article must be extremely well written, easy to understand, visually appealing** (can include graphics, call-out boxes, etc.), and formatted as if it would appear in print the next day (you may want to get a copy of the most recent edition of Time from the library to get a sense of how to format the article). Topics (please choose ONE topic):

1. Abusive Supervision
2. Servant Leadership
3. Gender Diversity in the Workplace
4. Agency Theory

To help you prepare to write this article, you are required to find and **summarise at least five (5) research**

articles on your topic that **have been published within the past 5 years (2012 -2016)**. **Please make your article interesting**. Grab the attention of the audience with a story, counterintuitive facts, or some other memorable way of introducing your topic. Make sure you provide a clear definition from the academic literature of the construct you have chosen.

All cited articles **MUST** be sourced from one of the following journals:
Academy of Management Journal
Academy of Management Review
Journal of Applied Psychology
Personnel Psychology
Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process
Leadership Quarterly
Journal of Organizational Behavior
Journal of Management
Journal of Vocational Behavior
Human Relations
Journal of Management Studies
Organizational Research Method
Organization Science
Human Resource Management
Organization Studies

The references should be appeared following the **Harvard Style Referencing** format.

Assessment #2 - Research based decision making case study (Graded)

THIS IS AN INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

The objective of this assessment is for you to use course material to respond to a specific business case related to using research for business decision making. During the course you will be given access to a business case. You are required to review the case and respond to the questions included in the case.

Use the textbook and the other course material to respond to the questions, please note that you are expected to draw on material other than the textbook in responding to the questions. We will be discussing cases from the textbook during our weekly sessions so you will get several opportunities to gain hands on experience in class.

Your case study response should include the following sections:

o Introduction
A brief introduction (no more than 250 words) that summarises the issues highlighted in the case and your proposed plan as to how you would respond to each issue.

Detailed responses to each question included in the case. Start each response with the numbered question as the heading. Ensure each response is separated by a heading.

Provide a detailed response to each question. Support your arguments by referring to the material provided in the textbook, other course material and your own readings.

You are encouraged to use tables, graphs and other tools that will assist you to present your response in a succinct and user friendly manner.

o References
Your response should be accompanied by a full reference list (not part of the word limits). A minimum of five academic references including the textbook and at least one reference from the recommended e-readings are

expected in this assessment.

Submit your complete case study response as one document through the LearnOnline system.

On each page, insert a footer that includes your student ID, Name and the page number, on the first page top right hand corner include the word count of the document.

Assessment #3 - Group Research Project Report with peer evaluation (5% of weighting) (Graded)

Assessment Activities

Name	Sub-weighting	Due date (Adelaide Time)	Submit via
Group Research Project Report	89%	2 Dec 2016, 11:00 PM	learnonline
Peer Review feedback	11%	2 Dec 2016, 11:00 PM	learnonline

Assessment Activities

Total Weigh: 45%

THIS IS A GROUP ASSESSMENT

The objective of this assessment is for students to work in a group to produce a comprehensive research report that is based on the findings of their group's research project. This assessment has two parts: 1. Group Research Project Report, 2. Peer Evaluation.

During Week One, students will be assigned into a 5 or 6 person group. During your initial group discussions, select one person as the group leader who will be responsible for communicating with the Lecturer and submitting the assessment on behalf of the group. The group leader must email the Lecturer a list of group members.

Discuss in your group and choose a research topic. In your group, you are required to collect primary and/or use secondary data relevant to the research question, then analyse the data using appropriate research method(s) and report your findings with recommendations in a comprehensive report. You are expected to provide samples of your recruitment and data collection material (e.g. recruitment flyers, surveys, interview protocols) as appendices

Please note that your Lecturer needs to approve your data collection plan regardless of the type of data you collect (i.e. primary/and or secondary data).

Student guidelines for collecting primary data

If you wish to collect primary data in order to complete Assessment Three i.e. Group Research Project Report, you need to ensure that you participate in the Week Four session where we will cover data collection and ethical issues related to research with human subjects. During this session we will review the full ethics application that was submitted to obtain course approval. A copy of this application will also be made available via Learnonline website. Some important elements of the ethics application have been highlighted below:

1. Ensure that your Lecturer has reviewed and approved your data collection plan including the following documents before you commence data collection. Samples of these also need be submitted with your Research Report.
a. Any recruitment material (e.g. flyers/posters) developed to recruit participants
b. Any project information sheets developed to recruit participants
c. Any screening questions developed to select participants

d. Participant consent form

2. Your research needs to be conducted in English, so all recruitment material and data collection tools needs to be in English.
3. You can only recruit participants who are 18 years of age or above.
4. You can only collect data in Australia.
5. You can only recruit people who have a sufficient command of English to understand the research information and are in a position to provide informed consent.
6. If you wish to recruit any UniSA staff or students, you need to get written permission from an appropriate authorised person. See more information here http://w3.unisa.edu.au/res/ethics/human/default.asp
7. If you wish to recruit participants who are employees of an organisation, ensure you obtain written permission from the CEO or equivalent (e.g. member of the senior leadership team) before you start recruiting participants.
8. You cannot provide your participants incentives (e.g. coffee voucher, draw to win $20) to encourage them to participate.
9. Ensure that your data is stored securely as hard copies and/or soft copies. All data collected need to be provided to the Lecturer for storage once the project has been completed.
10. Your participants need to be given identity numbers to ensure confidentiality and only the research team should have access to participant information.

Your group's project report should include the following sections:

o Table of contents
A table of contents including page numbers, list of figures and tables (if relevant).

o Executive summary
A 250 words summary of your research.

o Introduction
In this section, you are required to illustrate: [1] what is your primary research question, [2] why the raised question is important to the field of Business/Management studies, and [3] what are the expected to contributions to either academia or business practice.

o Methods and analyses
Provide information about your sample, how data was collected, details of data analyses, justification for these method/s.
Describe your recruitment material and data collection tools (e.g. interview or focus group questions, surveys) and provide samples of these material as appendices.

o Findings
This is the same as results. Describe your findings in detail; you are encouraged to use tables, graphs and other tools that will assist you to present your data in a succinct and user friendly manner.
If you use, figures, graphs and tables, ensure that they are numbered and there is a heading for each figure, graph or table.
Structure this section using headings based on your findings. Describe each finding preferably starting with the most important.

o Recommendations and limitations
This section should include any recommendations you can make based on your findings and discuss these by integrating them to the material presented in the literature review.
This section should also include limitations of the project.

o References
Your research report should be accompanied by a full reference list (not part of the word limits).
A minimum of 5 additional academic references that were not cited in the research proposal as part of Assessment One are expected in this assessment (with a total of at least 15 references). At least 3 of the minimum 15 references should be from the recommended e-readings. Mark the additional references by highlighting them in a different font colour.

o Appendices
Include any additional material which is not essential to the report but will enhance the readers' understanding.

Length (i.e. 3,500 words) does not include the material reproduced as part of the research proposal, table of contents, reference list and appendices.
Submit your complete research report including the material reproduced as part of the research proposal, references and appendices as one document through the LearnOnline system.
On each page, insert a footer that includes the page number and on the first page top right hand corner include the word count of the document. On the first page, also list all the names and student ID numbers of group members.

PEER EVALUATION
Each group member will confidentially evaluate their own group participation and the effort/performance of their co-members and then submit this via Learnonline website. An individual group member's overall final grade for Assignment 3 will be determined by their group's assessment of their contribution. For example, if peers rate a group member's overall contribution as 100%, that member will earn the full 11 marks. If the combined peer evaluations say that the member only contributed 80% effort, then the member will receive only a portion of 11 marks allocated to peer evaluation. Peer evaluations that are not completed will be considered as missing data.

Peer evaluation form will be available via Learnonline course page.

The peer evaluations must be submitted in one of the following formats: PDF, Doc, Docx.

PLEASE NOTE: Since this is a group project, the involvements of all the team members are essential. Thus, the course coordinator has the right to adjust your final grade for the assessment 3 based on the peer-evaluation results.

Supplementary Assessment

Supplementary assessment is not available for this course.

Important information about all assessment

All students must adhere to the University of South Australia's policies about assessment: http://w3.unisa.edu.au/policies/manual/default.asp.

Students with disabilities or medical conditions

Students with disabilities or medical conditions or students who are carers may be entitled to a variation or modification to standard assessment arrangements. See Section 7 of the Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual (APPM) at: http://w3.unisa.edu.au/policies/manual/default.asp

Information for students with disabilities is available at:
http://www.unisa.edu.au/Disability/Current-students/

Variations to assessment tasks

Variation to assessment methods, tasks and timelines can be provided in:

Unexpected or exceptional circumstances, for example bereavement, unexpected illness (details of unexpected or exceptional circumstances for which variation can be considered are discussed in clauses 7.8 - 7.10 of the Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual). Variation to assessment in unexpected or exceptional circumstances should be discussed with your course coordinator as soon as possible.

Special circumstances, for example religious observance grounds, or community services (details of special circumstances for which variation can be considered are discussed in clause 7.11 of the Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual). Variations to assessment in expected circumstances must be requested within the first

two weeks of the course (or equivalent for accelerated or intensive teaching).

Extra time in exams (ENTEXT) and the use of a dictionary may be available to some students (for example, Indigenous Australian students and those of non-English speaking background) as follows:
- the use of an English print dictionary, and
- extra time for reading or writing. This will be an extra ten minutes per hour for every hour of standard examination time

More information about variation to assessment may be found by consulting the relevant policy: http:// w3.unisa.edu.au/policies/manual/default.asp (section 7).

Academic Integrity

UniSA is committed to fostering and preserving the scholarly values of curiosity, experimentation, critical appraisal and integrity. Students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of academic integrity.

Academic integrity is a term used at university to describe honest behaviour as it relates to all academic work (for example papers written by staff, student assignments, conduct in exams, etc) and is the foundation of university life. One of the main principles is respecting other people's ideas and not claiming them as your own. Anyone found to have used another person's ideas without proper acknowledgement is deemed guilty of Academic Misconduct and the University considers this to be a serious matter.

The University of South Australia wants its students to display academic integrity so that its degrees are earned honestly and are trusted and valued by its students and their employers. To ensure this happens and that students adhere to high standards of academic integrity and honesty at all times, the University has policies and procedures in place to promote academic integrity and manage academic misconduct for all students. Work submitted electronically by students for assessment will be tested using the text comparison software Turnitin http://www.turnitin.com.

More information about academic integrity and what constitutes academic misconduct can be found in Section 9 of the Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) at: http://w3.unisa.edu.au/policies/manual/ or on the Academic Integrity Module website at: https://lo.unisa.edu.au/mod/book/view.php?id=252142

Submission and return of assessment tasks

See above under Assessment details.

Action from previous evaluations

The previous evaluation of the course helps to improve the direction of the course. Evaluation questionnaires of the course will be distributed electronically at the end of the course.

Conceded and Terminating Passes

Conceded and Terminating passes are not available in this course.

Further Assessment Information

Extensions may be available subject to negotiation with the Course Coordinator as per the standard policy of the Business School. Please note that work circumstances will NOT be accepted as a reason for requesting an extension. Please also note that a student given a formally approved extension for Assessment One (under exceptional circumstances) does not automatically qualify for an extension for Assessment Two. It should be clearly understood that missing an assignment has roll-on consequences.

Within the Business School a standard penalty is applicable when students submit assignments after the due date/time (taking into account of any extension that has been formally approved). Please note that assignments

submitted after the due date, without an authorised extension, will receive a penalty of 10% per day deducted from the total awarded mark for the assignment for up to 7 calendar days. After 7 calendar days the assignment will no longer be accepted and a zero mark will be awarded.

However, late submission is not possible for some assignments, for example:

Submitting an assignment after other students in the class have received feedback on that assignment;
Making online postings on a topic in discussion forum after discussion on that topic has closed;
Submitting answers to case study questions after the solution to the case study has been provided.

Course Calendar

Study Period 6 - 2016

	Weeks	Topic	Assessment Details (Adelaide Time)	Public Holidays
	12 - 18 September	Pre-teaching		
1	19 - 25 September	Topic 1: Overview of research and business decision making processes		
2	26 September - 02 October	Topic 2: Credible sources and literature review		
3	03 - 09 October	Topic 3: Research process: Choices and dilemmas	Research Essay due 09 Oct 2016, 11:00 PM	Labour Day 03 Oct 2016
4	10 - 16 October	Topic 4: Data collection (primary and archival) and ethical issues		
5	17 - 23 October	Topic 5: Qualitative research in business decision making		
6	24 - 30 October	Topic 6: Measurement: Reliability and validity issues in business research	Research based decision making case study due 30 Oct 2016, 11:00 PM	
7	31 October - 06 November	Topic 7: Survey research in business decision making		
8	07 - 13 November	Topic 8: Descriptive and relational studies in business decision making		
9	14 - 20 November	Topic 9: Communicating research results		
10	21 - 27 November	Topic 10: Research findings and business decision making		
11	28 November - 04 December		Group Research Project Report with peer evaluation (5% of weighting): Peer Review feedback due 02 Dec 2016, 11:00 PM Group Research Project Report with peer evaluation (5% of weighting): Group Research Project Report due 02 Dec 2016, 11:00 PM	