



UNSW Course Outline

INFS4886 Principles of Research Design - 2024

Published on the 28 Jan 2024

General Course Information

Course Code : INFS4886

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : UNSW Business School

Academic Unit : School of Information Systems and Technology Management

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This is a Level 4 Information Systems (IS) course that continues students' study of IS by furthering their knowledge and skills in relation to research methods and analytical skills. This course focuses on the understanding of IS research methodologies.

Topics to be covered in the lectures include an overview of knowledge in research methods and techniques of data collection and analysis, SPSS, experimental research, fieldwork, grounded theory, literature review and thesis writing. During the weekly practical workshops, students will learn from key IS literature how to develop a range of research designs. Students will learn to prepare independent studies including formulating research questions and selecting a research approach, applying research methodology – designing a study and selecting specific methods and techniques appropriate for answering the research questions.

Course Aims

The aim of this course is to further students' knowledge and skills in relation to developing research proposals by employing a qualitative or quantitative research design. The course also aims to develop students' understanding of IS research philosophies, and research design.

Relationship to Other Courses

While Principles of Research Design introduces students to IS research literature, research approaches and different methodologies, its major aim is help develop a research proposal, driven and justified from the literature. In doing so, the philosophical and epistemological assumptions underpinning the research approaches and methodologies should be clearly presented.

This course follows from the Principles of Research Design to provide deeper knowledge and experience in applying commonly used qualitative and quantitative research methods to the research process. In particular, students will learn how to implement a research plan. Students engage in the research process, from identifying, discussing and formulating a research problem, understanding, applying and extending a theory, to selecting and applying appropriate research approaches and methods of inquiry (both quantitative or qualitative), and in communicating and presenting their results and contributions both verbally and in writing. The course aims to provide an in-depth study of the IS field and the different techniques essential to the execution of high quality research in business and/or in IS. The objectives are to:

- Advance knowledge in IS research methods and techniques of data collection and analysis;
- Prepare students for conducting an independent study including formulating research questions and selecting a research approach, applying research methodology;
- Advance research skills including conducting literature review, understanding theories, analysing topic of research using selected theories
- Develop skills in developing theoretical and practical contributions;
- Assist students in developing research writing skills.

Prerequisite: INFS4886 AND enrolled in Honours majoring in Information Systems.

The course is essential for students' ability to conduct research and therefore INFS4887 is a mandatory course for all honours students in the IS discipline offered by the School of Information Systems and Technology Management. Principles of Research Design and Business Research Methods courses are designed to prepare students for independent research studies for their honours or master's thesis.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes	Program learning outcomes
CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PLO1 : Business KnowledgePLO2 : Problem Solving
CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PLO1 : Business KnowledgePLO2 : Problem Solving
CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PLO1 : Business KnowledgePLO2 : Problem Solving
CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PLO2 : Problem Solving
CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PLO1 : Business KnowledgePLO2 : Problem SolvingPLO3 : Business Communication

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation and ParticipationAssignment 1Assignment 2Oral Presentation
CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation and ParticipationAssignment 1Assignment 2Oral Presentation
CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation and ParticipationAssignment 1Assignment 2Oral Presentation
CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation and ParticipationAssignment 1Assignment 2Oral Presentation
CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Preparation and ParticipationAssignment 1Assignment 2Oral Presentation

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Microsoft Teams

Learning and Teaching in this course

This course adopts the principles of student-centred learning and dialectics. This involves a combination of providing information to students and motivating them to use this information in problem-solving environments. The manner in which students present and argue the reasoning behind their solutions demonstrates their knowledge of the area, as one cannot convincingly argue something that is not understood. Arguing an issue also expands one's understanding of a topic as one is forced to consider alternative points of view. Finally, dialectics empower students to collaboratively negotiate, rather than passively learn, an area or topic. This has implications for teaching strategies and assessment (discussed below) as well as for students' role, responsibilities, and expected contribution to knowledge creation.

First, the lecturer is responsible for creating a learning environment that is stimulating and interesting, and that encourages collaboration, knowledge sharing and co-creation by all participants. The aim is to develop an atmosphere of cooperation and a spirit of learning, inquiring, and innovating in all activities, underpinned by a sense of responsibility for our individual and collective learning.

Second, students as active participants are expected to take responsibility for their own individual and collective learning. While this course is designed to foster students' active participation and contribution to knowledge co-creation, this will not happen unless students take seriously their roles and responsibilities. As active contributors students are expected to be prepared for each class and take an active role in discussions and other learning activities.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates	Program learning outcomes
Preparation and Participation	15%	Start Date: Weekly Due Date: Weekly	• PLO1 : Business Knowledge • PLO2 : Problem Solving • PLO3 : Business Communication
Assignment 1	30%	Start Date: 16/02/2024 05:00 PM Due Date: 11/03/2024 05:00 PM	• PLO2 : Problem Solving • PLO1 : Business Knowledge • PLO3 : Business Communication
Assignment 2	30%	Start Date: 08/03/2024 05:00 PM Due Date: 25/03/2024 05:00 PM	• PLO1 : Business Knowledge • PLO2 : Problem Solving • PLO3 : Business Communication
Oral Presentation	25%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 18/04/2024 05:00 PM	• PLO1 : Business Knowledge • PLO3 : Business Communication

Assessment Details

Preparation and Participation

Assessment Overview

In-class Preparation and Participation

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.
- CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.
- CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.
- CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.

Detailed Assessment Description

Weekly participation in class room discussions, activities will be graded.

Assessment Length

NA

Submission notes

NA

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Assignment 1

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.
- CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.
- CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.
- CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.

Detailed Assessment Description

This assignment aims to further develop and assess your ability to apply and conduct quantitative research methods to specific problem areas.

Assessment Length

2000 words

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assignment 2

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.
- CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.
- CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.
- CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.

Detailed Assessment Description

This assignment aims to further develop and assess your ability to apply and conduct quantitative research methods to specific problem areas.

Assessment Length

2000

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Oral Presentation

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Understand the variety of approaches and methodologies to research.
- CLO2 : Explain how to conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.
- CLO3 : Construct and document an appropriate research design, including argumentation for data collection and analysis methods/techniques.
- CLO4 : Apply different data collection and data analysis techniques.
- CLO5 : Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.

Detailed Assessment Description

The assignment aims to assess and develop your research skills by giving you the opportunity to reflect on your past assignments and critically evaluate the research approach employed.

Assessment Length

8 minutes

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

General Assessment Information

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

You are expected to complete all assessment tasks for your courses in the School of Information Systems and Technology Management. Classes are highly practical and relevant to your assessments, so you are expected to attend at least 80% of all scheduled classes.

Where group assignments are used, team members are expected to work in a harmonious and professional fashion, which includes adequate management of non-performing members. You should inform your tutor as soon as possible if you experience problems within a project team.

You may be required to evaluate the contribution of each team member (including yourself) in group work and marks for individual students may be adjusted based on peer assessment.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

Achieve a composite mark of at least 50 out of 100.

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February	Workshop	Introduction to Research Design Qualitative Research Seminar I
Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February	Workshop	Qualitative Research Seminar II
Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March	Workshop	Qualitative Research Seminar III
Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March	Workshop	Quantitative Research Seminar I
Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March	Workshop	Quantitative Research Seminar II
Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March	Workshop	Flexibility Week
Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March	Workshop	Quantitative Research Seminar III
Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April	Workshop	Research Design Q&A I
Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April	Workshop	Research Design Q&A II
Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April	Workshop	Oral Presentations

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

Required and recommended reading will be provided on MS Teams.

Recommended Resources

Required and recommended reading will be provided on MS Teams.

Course Evaluation and Development

The course material is revised based on student feedback to shift the focus to equipping students with research skills that are necessary for them to conduct the research and complete the thesis.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Sandeep Mysore Seshadrinath		Microsoft Teams; Level 2 Quadrangle, Room 2086	Microsoft Teams	Consultation	No	Yes
Lecturer	Eric Lim		Level 2 Quad			No	No

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

COURSE POLICIES AND SUPPORT

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline and the UNSW and Business School learning expectations, rules, policies and support services as listed below:

- Program Learning Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Protocol for Viewing Final Exam Scripts
- Student Learning Support Services

Further information is provided on the [key policies and support](#) page.

Students may not circulate or post online any course materials such as handouts, exams, syllabi or similar resources from their courses without the written permission of their instructor.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) – under the Outcomes tab – are what you should be able to demonstrate by the end of this course, if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

CLOs also contribute to your achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), which are developed across the duration of a program. PLOs are, in turn, directly linked to [UNSW graduate capabilities](#). More information on Coursework PLOs is available on the [key policies and support](#) page. For PG Research PLOs, including MPDBS, please refer to the [UNSW HDR Learning Outcomes](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances beyond your control interfere with your performance in a specific assessment task or tasks, including online exams. Students studying remotely who have exams scheduled between 10pm and 7am local time, are also able to apply for special consideration to sit a supplementary exam at a time outside of these hours.

Special consideration is primarily intended to provide you with an extra opportunity to demonstrate the level of performance of which you are capable. To apply, and for further information, see Special Consideration on the UNSW [Current Students](#) page.

Special consideration applications will be assessed centrally by the Case Review Team, who will update the online application with the outcome and add any relevant comments. The change to the status of the application immediately sends an email to the student and to the assessor with the outcome of the application.

Please note the following:

1. Applications can only be made through Online Services in myUNSW (see the UNSW [Current Students](#) page). Applications will not be accepted by teaching staff. The lecturer-in-charge/ course coordinator will be automatically notified when your application is processed.
2. Applying for special consideration does not automatically mean that you will be granted a

- supplementary exam or other concession.
3. If you experience illness or misadventure in the lead up to an exam or assessment, you must submit an application for special consideration, either prior to the examination taking place, or prior to the assessment submission deadline, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so.
 4. If your circumstances stop you from applying before your exam or assessment due date, you must apply within 3 working days of the assessment or the period covered by your supporting documentation.
 5. Under the UNSW Fit To Sit/Submit rule, if you sit the exam/submit an assignment, you are declaring yourself well enough to do so and are cannot subsequently apply for special consideration.
 6. If you become unwell on the day of – or during – an exam, you must stop working on your exam, advise your course coordinator or tutor and provide a medical certificate dated within 24 hours of the exam, with your special consideration application. For online exams, you must contact your course coordinator or tutor immediately via email, Moodle or chat and advise them you are unwell and submit screenshots of your conversation along with your medical certificate and application.
 7. Special consideration requests do not allow the awarding of additional marks to students.

Further information on Business School policy and procedure can be found under “Special Consideration” on the [key policies and support](#) page.

LATE SUBMISSION PENALTIES

For assessments other than examinations, late submission will incur a penalty of 5% per day or part thereof (including weekends) from the due date and time. An assessment will not be accepted after 5 days (120 hours) of the original deadline unless special consideration has been approved. An assignment is considered late if the requested format, such as hard copy or electronic copy, has not been submitted on time or where the ‘wrong’ assignment has been submitted.

For assessments which account for 10% or less of the overall course grade, and where answers are immediately discussed or debriefed, the LIC may stipulate a different penalty. Details of such late penalties will be available on the course Moodle page.

FEEDBACK ON YOUR ASSESSMENT TASK PERFORMANCE

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course, other than a final assessment, will be assessed and students provided with

feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. laboratory and studio-based, workplace-based, weekly quizzes) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

Faculty-specific Information

PROTOCOL FOR VIEWING FINAL EXAM SCRIPTS

UNSW students have the right to view their final exam scripts, subject to a small number of very specific exemptions. The UNSW Business School has set a [protocol](#) under which students may view their final exam script. Individual schools within the Faculty may also set up additional local processes for viewing final exam scripts, so it is important that you check with your School.

If you are completing courses from the following schools, please note the additional school-specific information:

- Students in the **School of Accounting, Auditing & Taxation** who wish to view their final examination script should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Banking & Finance** should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Information Systems & Technology Management** should also refer to [this page](#).

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the [myExperience survey](#), which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will 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.

TEACHING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Please note that teaching times and locations are subject to change. Students are strongly advised to refer to the [Class Timetable website](#) for the most up-to-date teaching times and locations.