



UNSW Course Outline

COMM5501 Data Visualisation and Communication - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : COMM5501

Year : 2024

Term : Term 2

Teaching Period : T2

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : UNSW Business School

Academic Unit : School of Risk and Actuarial Studies

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Postgraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

How can data help you tell a story? How can you use data storytelling to then tackle some of the big challenges we are facing around the world?

Data visualisation and communication are critical skills in many professions. The creation of targeted, easily digestible visuals allows us to make sense of complex information in an accessible and easily understandable way. The ability to employ visuals will enhance almost any presentation to better engage our audience, make our messages more memorable, and facilitate more effective decision-making.

In this course, we will give you the tools to create your own data story addressing a pressing and current global challenge as identified by the UN SDGs. You will learn how to design your story for your chosen audience, how to criticise misrepresentations of data (especially the intentional ones), and drive action to address your chosen challenge.

So, how will you leave the world a better place?

Course Aims

This course aims to create a strong foundation in data storytelling for students. Students will receive hands-on experience in creating effective data visualisations with the aim of communicating complicated issues to diverse audiences, with the intention to bring about impactful change. This process will also involve students giving peer feedback on each other's work as part of building critical evaluation and reflection skills.

Relationship to Other Courses

The ideas introduced in this course around developing the skill of effective data storytelling will form a strong foundation for effective, evidence-based communication applicable to many disciplines.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes	Program learning outcomes
CL01 : Produce appropriate high quality data visualisations using a variety of software packages and techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL02 : Problem Solving• PL03 : Business Communication
CL02 : Critically evaluate and interpret data graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL03 : Business Communication
CL03 : Apply data storytelling techniques to a range of business and societal problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL05 : Responsible Business Practice• PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence
CL04 : Communicate data insights effectively to a variety of audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL02 : Problem Solving• PL03 : Business Communication

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CL01 : Produce appropriate high quality data visualisations using a variety of software packages and techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Formative tasks • Data Story Content • Data Story Project
CL02 : Critically evaluate and interpret data graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Formative tasks
CL03 : Apply data storytelling techniques to a range of business and societal problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Story Content • Data Story Project • Weekly Formative tasks
CL04 : Communicate data insights effectively to a variety of audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Story Content • Data Story Project • Weekly Formative tasks

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates	Program learning outcomes
Weekly Formative tasks Assessment Format: Individual	20%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Weekly, see Moodle for details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL02 : Problem Solving• PL03 : Business Communication• PL05 : Responsible Business Practice• PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence
Data Story Content Assessment Format: Individual	45%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Various, see Moodle for details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL02 : Problem Solving• PL03 : Business Communication• PL05 : Responsible Business Practice• PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence
Data Story Project Assessment Format: Individual	35%	Due Date: Week 10: 29 July - 04 August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL01 : Business Knowledge• PL03 : Business Communication• PL02 : Problem Solving• PL05 : Responsible Business Practice• PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence• PL07 : Leadership Development

Assessment Details

Weekly Formative tasks

Assessment Overview

Tasks designed to give students feedback on their progress

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Produce appropriate high quality data visualisations using a variety of software packages and techniques
- CL02 : Critically evaluate and interpret data graphics
- CL03 : Apply data storytelling techniques to a range of business and societal problems
- CL04 : Communicate data insights effectively to a variety of audiences

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Data Story Content

Assessment Overview

Structured set of activities for students to create content for their data story

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Produce appropriate high quality data visualisations using a variety of software packages and techniques
- CL03 : Apply data storytelling techniques to a range of business and societal problems
- CL04 : Communicate data insights effectively to a variety of audiences

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Data Story Project

Assessment Overview

Structured set of activities for students to assemble and showcase their content

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Produce appropriate high quality data visualisations using a variety of software packages and techniques
- CL03 : Apply data storytelling techniques to a range of business and societal problems
- CL04 : Communicate data insights effectively to a variety of audiences

General Assessment Information

Grading Basis

Standard

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 27 May - 2 June	Topic	Course Introduction
Week 2 : 3 June - 9 June	Topic	Finding and Interpreting Patterns in Data
Week 3 : 10 June - 16 June	Topic	Principles of Good and Bad Visualisations
Week 4 : 17 June - 23 June	Topic	Understanding your Stakeholders
Week 5 : 24 June - 30 June	Topic	Problems with Data
Week 6 : 1 July - 7 July	Topic	Flexibility week - no lectures or labs/tutorials
Week 7 : 8 July - 14 July	Topic	
Week 8 : 15 July - 21 July	Topic	Weaving your Narrative
Week 9 : 22 July - 28 July	Topic	Guest Lecture
Week 10 : 29 July - 4 August	Topic	Reflecting on your (Data) Story

Attendance Requirements

It is in the best interest of students to attend as many classes as possible, since there will be activities to support the completion of the data story project. Historically, students that have chosen not to attend class have found that their peers have received much more support and feedback for improving their data story projects.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

Course website on Moodle

Recommended Resources

Storytelling with data, A data visualisation guide for business professionals, C. N. Knaflic

Statistics, Illowsky and Dean

Course Evaluation and Development

There will be many opportunities for informal feedback collection throughout the term, and also the formal MyExperience survey at the end of the term. We will use the feedback to adjust your experience where possible, as well as improving future offerings.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Lecturer	Poon Leung				By appointment	Yes	Yes

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.