



BUSINESS SCHOOL
Te Kura Pakihi

COURSE OUTLINE

ACFI459: Advanced Research Methods

Department of Accountancy and Finance

Semester One 2023

Paper Description and Aims

ACFI459 is a 20 point fourth-year paper for intending honours and graduate students who carry out research. The primary objective of the course is to provide students with an understanding of the research process and of research method, particularly in relation to, but not exclusive to, the disciplines of Accounting and Finance.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this paper, you should be able:

1. appreciate the philosophy of science and develop an analytical framework for evaluating accounting and finance research,
2. understand and critically appraise relevant academic and research literature in the fields of Accountancy and Finance and their sub-disciplines,
3. develop data acquisition and management skills,
4. discuss and evaluate statistical methods appropriate to research in Accountancy and Finance,
5. develop written communication and presentation skills,
6. develop, structure and present a research proposal, and
7. learn and research independently.

Teaching Staff

Paper Coordinator and Lecturer:

Name: Nicola Beatson

Office: OBS 508a

Email: nicola.beatson@otago.ac.nz

Office Hours: anytime, just email me for a meeting request.

Course Delivery

Lecture Day/Time:

Tuesday 12pm-1:50pm

Wednesday 12pm-1:50pm

Room: OBS227

The “lectures” will follow one of several formats depending on the style of the facilitator; in some cases they will be standard, formal lectures; in others they will be interactive sessions, conforming more to a seminar format.

This course emphasizes student-centered learning. Although the facilitators will provide brief material reviews, the main aim of the course is that students learn by doing. A primary outcome and assessment for the course is a written research proposal for a research study in Accountancy or Finance.

Students are expected to prepare for and attend all classes to gain full benefit from the course.

The course is intended to promote an active engagement with the material it contains, both in terms of assimilating and critically evaluating the material and in terms of students’ engaging with their peers, tutors, and Departmental staff.

The Course Programme (in this outline and online on Blackboard) gives days and dates of lectures, lecture topics, and due dates for assignment work. The programme may change as the course proceeds, but notice will be given both in lectures and on Blackboard of any change.

Course Materials and Course Resources

The set textbook for the course is:

- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A., (2019), Research Methods for Business Students, Financial Times Press, Pearson, London (8 th Edition).

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism)

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, submitting work written by someone else (including from a file sharing website, text generation software, or purchased work) taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else's misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University's Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University's Academic Integrity website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity, or ask at the Student Learning Centre (HEDC) or the Library, or seek advice from your paper co-ordinator.

For further information:

Academic Integrity Policy

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>

Student Academic Misconduct Procedures

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>

Turnitin on Blackboard

Turnitin is a text-matching software tool which reports matches between sections of student work submitted to it, and other material to which Turnitin has access (i.e. material available via the internet, and content of other student assignments which have previously been submitted to Turnitin). Turnitin is also often referred to as a plagiarism detection tool. All assignments submitted electronically through Blackboard are uploaded via Turnitin, and the report is available to the marker. You are able to check your draft assignment via Turnitin before you submit your final assignment. Full instructions and guidance for the use of Turnitin can be found at:

<https://help.otago.ac.nz/blackboard/assessing-your-students/turnitin/turnitin-for-students/>

Assessment

There are 4 assessment tasks (ATs) that are formally assessed as follows:

AT1 Due Wednesday 29th March 10%

AT2 Second Assignment in class during week eight of semester 25%

AT3 Critical Essay Wednesday 3rd May 25%

AT4 Research Proposal Thursday 1st June 40%

Total 100%

AT1 is due in class Wednesday 29th March. More information will be provided in class but will be a short essay on the philosophy of science. You will hand in a physical copy of the essay during the specified lecture and upload a digital copy to Turnitin via blackboard.

AT2 is pitching original research ideas. Students must provide 2 research ideas and must pitch their research ideas in class during week 8. More information will be provided in class. Please note you are expected to participate in the discussion of your peers' research proposals actively, critically and constructively during presentations.

AT3 is a critical essay. The topic will be provided at the beginning of midterm break. You will hand in a physical copy of the essay during the specified lecture and upload a digital copy to Turnitin via blackboard.

AT4 is a formal research proposal that can build from AT2 (but does not have to). You will hand in a physical copy of the research proposal to Nicola Beatson's mailbox (opposite the kitchen on the 5th floor of the OBS) by the due date and upload a digital copy to Turnitin via blackboard.

In addition, the following requirements are part of this paper:

- Students must have an attendance record that will allow them to engage with the material in a meaningful way
- Students must attend at least three Department of Accountancy and Finance Research Seminars
- As part of AT2 students must attend the presentations of their peers.

To pass ACFI459 a student must satisfy all requirements above and gain 50% or more as a final grade in the paper.

Quality Assurance

At the Otago Business School we monitor the quality of student learning and your learning experience. Your assessed work may be used for assurance of learning processes, such as evaluating the level of achievement of learning outcomes, with the aim of improving the quality of our programmes. All material used for quality assurance purposes will be treated as confidential and the outcome will not affect your grades.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome	AT1	AT2	AT3	AT4	Total
Appreciate the philosophy of science and develop an analytical framework for evaluating accounting and finance research	√	√	√	√	
Understand and critically appraise relevant academic and research literature	√	√	√	√	
Develop data acquisition and management skills	√	√	√	√	
Discuss and evaluate statistical methods appropriate to research in Accountancy and Finance	√	√	√	√	
Develop written communication and presentation skills	√	√	√	√	
Develop, structure and present a research proposal		√		√	
Learn and research independently	√	√	√	√	
Total					100%

Course Calendar

Week	Topics	Readings and other information
1	Introduction Research Careers and the nature of research	Chapter 1
2	The Research Process Generating Research Ideas	Chapter 2
3	Philosophy of Science	Chapter 4
4	Critically Reviewing Literature	Chapter 3
5	Theoretical development	Chapter 4
6	Research Design	Chapter 5 <i>7 April Good Friday</i>
MID-SEMESTER BREAK		
7	Research Quality and Primary Data	Chapter 7 and 10
8	Pitching presentations	<i>25 April ANZAC Day</i>
9	Secondary Data	Chapter 8
10	Questionnaires and Quantitative analysis	Chapters 11 and 12
11	Independent work on Research Proposals	
12	Independent work on Research Proposals	
13	Independent work on Research Proposals	

The above schedule is subject to change.