MN3202 – Research Methods 2

MODULE TYPE/SEMESTER: Junior Honours/Core (20 Credits)/Semester 2

CO-REQUISITE(S): MN3201

MODULE REQUIRED FOR: MN4301

MODULE CO-ORDINATOR: Dr Lisi Gordon

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AIM:
This module builds on the material from MN3201. It consolidates key research competencies in problem definition, literature review, project management and study design. These competencies will be further developed using a combination of class lectures, skills sessions, progress meetings, one-on-one work with members of staff and self-directed research. Students are expected to explore library research techniques, including the use of electronic resources in research; literature analysis and synthesis; research problem formulation; and the preparation of clear and focused proposals. Upon successful attainment of these objectives students may choose to proceed to implement their proposals as dissertations through MN4301 in their final year, provided they have a mark of 14 or above for MN3202.

METHOD OF TEACHING & LEARNING:
There are five two-hour lecture/workshops (Weeks 1-4 & Week 9). Additionally, students will be split into groups of 6-8 and set tasks in preparation for sessions in Weeks 3 & 4. Students are also expected to contribute to the weekly discussion forums set up in Moodle.

At the end of Week 3 students will be expected to submit a 2-page summary of their proposed project (to facilitate this a form will be provided for completion). The purpose of this is to help with supervisor allocation and to provide some initial feedback on the proposal.

From Week 4 onwards: students are expected to meet regularly with their supervisors to discuss the development and progress of their proposals. There will be at least 3 of these meetings to be arranged at mutually agreeable times.

Throughout the module, the Module Co-ordinator will be available to students by appointment or on a first-come-first-served basis during office hours which will be Mondays 1-4pm.
LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the module, students should be able to:
- Synthesise appropriate literature in order to develop research questions on a relevant topic
- Create a research proposal with alignment of theory, methodology and methods
- Identify and reflect on ethical issues and responsible conduct in research
- Communicate constructively with peers and academic supervisors in order to meet project deadlines
- Reflect on their learning experiences and identify future application of their learning and any further learning needs

INDICATIVE MODULE OUTLINE:
Lecture/workshop Topics:
Week 1 Introduction to constructing a research proposal; Selecting a research topic; Exploring research aims and questions
Week 2 Building on relevant research Finding, reviewing and synthesizing the literature; revisiting your research questions
Week 3 Methodology and Methods; data collection and data analysis
Week 4 Ethical considerations; research quality
Week 9 Communicating your research findings; thinking about research impact; writing a reflective essay; addressing any outstanding queries

Self-Directed Learning:
Week 1 Identify topic of Interest
Group work for weeks 3 & 4
Week 2 Develop a research question and initial project idea
Group work for weeks 3 & 4
Week 3 Deadline for submission of 2-page project summary
Week 4 Contact supervisor to arrange appointment
Week 5 Substantive discussion with supervisor on project scope and key milestones
Week 7 Submission of draft literature review to supervisor
Week 9 Submission of draft methodology to supervisor
Weeks 10 Progress and completion to be discussed with supervisor
Week 11 Submission of research proposal and reflective essay
**ASSESSMENT:**
This module will be assessed in 2 ways:

1. **A 5,000 word research proposal forms 70% of the marks for this module.**
   - This proposal will incorporate a critically engaged literature review pertinent to the proposed area of research; and a review of the methodological/methods literature, leading to a proposed methodology and methods approach pertinent to the proposed study.
   - Your proposal will be first marked by your supervisor and second marked by another member of academic staff.

2. **A 1,000 word reflexive essay forms 30% of the marks for this module.**
   - This essay will be a thoughtful and reflexive account of the student’s learning associated with BOTH MN3201 and MN3202 (Research Methods 1 & 2). More details will be provided to the student within class time and on Moodle. This essay will be first marked by the module co-ordinator.

**CORE READING LIST:**
There is no set textbook for this module. The following texts will give some essential background as well as an introduction to many of the areas covered in the course. However, students are expected to identify additional reading on their own initiative and as guided by their supervisor. Students will also refer to notes from MN3201.


**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**
For those students intending to proceed to MN4301: Research Project, the School acknowledges that the presentation of work for that module will almost certainly contain material previously submitted for MN3202: Research Methods 2, namely aspects of the Literature Review and the Methodology. Students will not therefore be penalised for this inclusion, where it occurs, under the terms of the University’s Academic Misconduct Policy.