



Course Outline (Higher Education)

School:	School of Arts
Course Title:	RESEARCH METHODS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
Course ID:	FEAFN3001
Credit Points:	15.00
Prerequisite(s):	(Two Intermediate (2000-2999) level courses)
Co-requisite(s):	Nil
Exclusion(s):	(ATSGC2831 and SOCIO2597 and SOSCI2001)
ASCED:	090301

Description of the Course :

This course introduces students to the nature, design and processes of social research. Students will develop an in-depth understanding of research approaches, designs and methods available to social researchers, and will develop critical skills in planning research by integrating methods and practice. The course guides students through the various stages of the research process, from the formulation of a research topic to the development of a research design framework and research proposal. Students will also develop their ability to critically reflect on the ethical and political considerations of social research and to deconstruct the implicit assumptions of social scientific methods.

Grade Scheme: Graded (HD, D, C, etc.)

Supplementary Assessment: Yes

Where supplementary assessment is available a student must have failed overall in the course but gained a final mark of 45 per cent or above and submitted all major assessment tasks.

Program Level:

Level of course in Program	AQF Level of Program					
	5	6	7	8	9	10
Introductory	■	■	■	■	■	■
Intermediate	■	■	■	■	■	■
Advanced	■	■	✓	■	■	■

Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge:

- K1.** Understand the nature of social research and the research process
- K2.** Examine the uses of quantitative and qualitative research methods in social research
- K3.** Identify which methods are appropriate for particular research questions and topics
- K4.** Analyse critically the strengths and limitations of social research methods
- K5.** Evaluate the ethical and political concerns of social research

Skills:

- S1.** Develop advanced research skills in the social sciences
- S2.** Design a research topic based on critical reflection of the research literature, professional practice, lived experience and/or personal narrative
- S3.** Construct a research design framework
- S4.** Apply appropriate social research methods to particular social questions and problems
- S5.** Support and justify a project in a research proposal

Application of knowledge and skills:

- A1.** Analyse critically the research process and develop a research topic
- A2.** Evaluate research methods to formulate a research design framework
- A3.** Construct a research proposal
- A4.** Apply advanced critical thinking skills to ethical and political issues in social research

Course Content:

Topics may include:

- What is social research?
- Research design
- The research process
- Literature reviews
- Ethics, politics and values in research
- Analysing quantitative data
- Analysing qualitative data
- Surveys and sampling
- Narrative, life history and case study analysis
- Discourse analysis
- Evaluation research in practice settings

Values:

- V1.** Professional autonomy and accountability in social research
- V2.** Importance of building an understanding of research methods and methodologies
- V3.** Appreciation and understanding of the various approaches to social research
- V4.** A critical understanding of the ethical and political concerns within social research

Graduate Attributes

The Federation University FedUni graduate attributes (GA) are entrenched in the Higher Education Graduate Attributes Policy (LT1228). FedUni graduates develop these graduate attributes through their engagement in

explicit learning and teaching and assessment tasks that are embedded in all FedUni programs. Graduate attribute attainment typically follows an incremental development process mapped through program progression. **One or more graduate attributes must be evident in the specified learning outcomes and assessment for each FedUni course, and all attributes must be directly assessed in each program**

Graduate attribute and descriptor		Development and acquisition of GAs in the course			
		Learning Outcomes (KSA)	Code A. Direct B. Indirect N/A Not addressed	Assessment task (AT#)	Code A. Certain B. Likely C. Possible N/A Not likely
GA 1 Thinkers	Our graduates are curious, reflective and critical. Able to analyse the world in a way that generates valued insights, they are change makers seeking and creating new solutions.	K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, S2, S3, A1, A2, A3	B, B, B, A, B, B, B, A, A, A	AT1, AT2, AT3	B, B, A
GA 2 Innovators	Our graduates have ideas and are able to realise their dreams. They think and act creatively to achieve and inspire positive change.	S5	B	Not applicable	Not applicable
GA 3 Citizens	Our graduates engage in socially and culturally appropriate ways to advance individual, community and global well-being. They are socially and environmentally aware, acting ethically, equitably and compassionately.	K1	B	AT1, AT2	B, B
GA 4 Communicators	Our graduates create, exchange, impart and convey information, ideas, and concepts effectively. They are respectful, inclusive and empathetic towards their audience, and express thoughts, feelings and information in ways that help others to understand.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
GA 5 Leaders	Our graduates display and promote positive behaviours, and aspire to make a difference. They act with integrity, are receptive to alternatives and foster sustainable and resilient practices.	K5	B	Not applicable	Not applicable

Learning Task and Assessment:

Learning Outcomes Assessed	Learning Tasks	Assessment Type	Weighting
K1, K5, S1, S2, A1, A4	Develop a research topic informed by the research literature, professional practice, lived experience and/or personal narrative.	Research topic	10-25%
K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, S1, S3, S4, A2, A4	Prepare a research design framework that outlines the focus, aims, significance, conceptual framework, methodology and methods, and ethical and political considerations.	Research design framework	20-35%
K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, A1, A2, A3, A4	Construct a research proposal that details and justifies the focus, aims, significance, conceptual framework, methodology and methods, and ethical and political considerations.	Research proposal	40-60%

Adopted Reference Style:

APA