



Course Outline

OPTM7208

RESEARCH SKILLS

School of Optometry and Vision Science

Faculty of Medicine & Health

Term 1, 2022

1. Staff

Position	Name & Email	Consultation times and locations
Course Convenor	Blanka Golebiowski b.golebiowski@unsw.edu.au	By appointment, please email.
Research Supervisor	Specific to selected research project	By appointment and regular meetings determined by supervisor; please email.

2. Course information

Units of credit: 6 UOC in Total (3UOC/Term; Term 1 and 2. Full time. 2 Terms total = 6UOC)

Pre-requisite(s): None

Teaching times and locations: Terms 1, 2 and 3. Flexible times made by arrangement with the primary honours research supervisor. It is the responsibility of the student to organise times and meetings with the supervisor. The Honours Convenor can also provide guidance as needed.

2.1 Course summary

OPTM7208 Research Skills in Optometry consists of a research project, involving little or no didactic teaching, and a large component of hands-on learning. You will be required to work on a research project with supervision, and this may include data collection, data analysis and a written report of your work. This course is different from the Research Project course (OPTM7218) as you are not involved in the project design and typically not involved in a project that requires application for ethical approval. The course may focus on one of the following aspects of research:

- (1) Investigation of a research question, by conducting an extensive literature search, and developing aims and hypotheses. In this case, you will be involved in a research project at its developmental stages, including the refinement of the research question, the literature search, the ethical considerations, and the beginnings of project design. You would be required to write a report of your literature search findings, and your plans. You will also be required to present an oral summary of your work.
- (2) Involvement in an ongoing project. In this case, the project you work on will be one that is already underway, so project design has already occurred, and ethical approval has been granted. You will be involved in data collection and analysis, the interpretation of outcomes, and communication of findings (a written report, and oral presentation). Taking this path, the course would develop your skills in the practical elements of research, with some focus also on literature search skills.

At the beginning of this course, you will choose a topic of interest, and directly contact a member of academic staff able and willing to supervise you in that area. At the beginning of term, you will need to discuss with your supervisor the form your project will take.

Due to time limitations, you need to draft a timeline for your project soon after early discussions with your supervisor. Make sure you both agree that the timeline is realistic. Writing should take place throughout the course and will form a significant part of your research report, to be submitted at the end of the course.

2.2 Course aims

The aim of this course is to develop your skills in research, and your ability to interpret and communicate the findings of your literature search and review.

2.3 Course learning outcomes (CLO)

At the successful completion of this course you (the student) should be able to:

1. Understand and apply skills in reviewing, analysing and understanding published literature.
2. Demonstrate skills in developing research hypotheses and aims in the context of published literature.
3. Describe research methods and protocol development.
4. Explain and communicate disciplinary knowledge and your research findings in both written and oral form.

2.4 Relationship between course and program learning outcomes and assessments

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) can be found in the UNSW Handbook:

<https://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/postgraduate/programs/2022/8073?year=2022>

Course Learning Outcome (CLO)	LO Statement	Program Learning Outcome (PLO)	Related Tasks & Assessment
CLO 1	Understand and apply skills in reviewing, analysing and understanding published literature.	PLO: 1, 2, 5, 6	Presentation and final report
CLO 2	Demonstrate skills in developing research hypotheses and aims in the context of published literature.	PLO: 1, 2, 5, 6	Participation in meeting with your supervisor, final presentation and report
CLO 3	Describe research methods and protocol development.	PLO: 2, 3, 4, 6	Final presentation and report
CLO 4	Explain and communicate disciplinary knowledge and your research findings in both written and oral form.	PLO: 1, 4, 5	Participation in meeting with your supervisor, final presentation and report

3. Strategies and approaches to learning

3.1 Learning and teaching activities

Teaching in this course is primarily independent learning with ongoing research supervision. This encourages you to develop the skills required for independent research inquiry.

This course involves no didactic teaching, apart from any teaching that takes place during your meetings with your supervisor(s). Teaching styles will vary between supervisors. If applicable for the research that will be undertaken, students will work with their supervisor to write and submit an ethics application to the relevant ethics committee at UNSW. Supervisors will provide feedback to students in terms of draft applications.

You will need to conduct literature searches and to critically consider your findings and to question the previous findings of others. You will develop the ability and confidence to question received wisdom, and to form ideas based on prior work.

While the project is supervised, it is primarily aimed at developing self-directed learning, with an expectation that the student demonstrates substantial independence. This provides students the opportunity to engage in a project similar to 'real-world' research experiences.

The research project may include specialised techniques relevant to the chosen research area. This also includes critical thinking and problem solving ("trouble-shooting"), and evaluation and synthesis of information for scientific research communication in both oral and written forms.

You will be assessed on your understanding and consistent involvement, your ability to analyse and understand published literature, your skills in developing research hypotheses in the context of previous literature, your ability to describe research methods, and ability to communicate disciplinary knowledge and any research findings and answer questions. This will include a final written report, and a final research presentation at the end of the course. The final presentation will be held at the School of Optometry and Vision Science and involve academics and other postgraduate students.

The overall experience will provide guidance and training on research project rationale and design/methods, scientific and academic writing, and effective oral communication via a final presentation.

3.2 Expectations of students

<p>Expectations of Students</p>	<p>MOptom students are expected to participate actively in their research project with ongoing and regular interactions with their supervisor(s), either on-line or on campus (noting COVID19 restrictions). If there are any problems related to attendance at UNSW or other issues please contact the Course Convenor (b.golebiowski@unsw.edu.au) and/or supervisors asap. SOVS academic advice can be provided as needed (m.madigan@auns.edu.au).</p> <p>The University uses email as an official form of communication for students. All UNSW students have their own email account. The School of Optometry and Vision Science will also make use of this form of communication.</p> <p>It is extremely important that you know how to use your Zmail and ensure that you check it regularly. You are advised to link your official UNSW email address to your habitual email address (e.g. hotmail). You will miss out on vital information from the School and University if you do not check your Zmail.</p> <p>For more information or if you are having connection or access problems, see:</p> <p>IT Service Centre</p> <p>https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/</p> <p>Telephone: 02 9385 1333</p> <p>Contact Us: https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/contact-us</p>
----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

4. Course schedule and structure

Some of this information is available on the [Online Handbook \(http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au\)](http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au) and the [UNSW Timetable \(http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/\)](http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/).

Term 1	
Weeks 1-2	Discuss projects with course convenor. Email and meet potential supervisors. Agree on a final research project topic with supervisor. †
Weeks 3-10	Commence literature review; refine research questions and aims and hypotheses. Ensure access to bibliography management software and consult with UNSW Library and UNSW Learning Centre for guidance. If required, finalise and submit ethics application for consideration by ethics committee or panel. Weekly meetings with supervisor. †

Term 2	
Weeks 1-2	Ethics application review and response (as required by ethics committee) completed. Approval of ethics application and recruitment of subjects (where appropriate).
Weeks 3-8	Continue literature review; where appropriate undertake data collection and analysis, synthesis of research findings, in consultation with supervisor and statistician (as needed). Collate research results, discuss results with supervisor. If needed, consider appropriate statistics and overview with supervisor. Incorporate supervisor feedback into draft report. Submit draft research report to supervisor by beginning of Week 7, Term 2, and review and incorporate feedback. Report writing should take place throughout the course but is the sole focus of the final weeks.
Week 9-10	Finalise the written research report and submit final version to supervisor in Week 10, Term 2.# Prepare and review material for oral presentation to be held in the week after the end of Term 2.

† Communications and meetings between you and your supervisor are ongoing and should occur weekly; other academic staff with appropriate expertise may also be involved. The aim of these meetings and discussions is to identify main research questions and ideas and raise any concerns at a sufficiently early stage in the course, and for you to obtain feedback on your progress during the project.

Report submission should be the end of Week 10, Term 2, or as arranged with your supervisor and agreed by the course convenor, PRIOR to Week 10, Term 2. **Penalties may be imposed for late submission without a valid reason and prior approval.**

5. Assessment

5.1 Assessment tasks

Task	Assessment Criteria	Weight	Due Date
Supervisor's assessment	<p>Overall participation mark including regular meetings with supervisor, independent research of literature and effort during the course. The supervisor will provide feedback of participation during and at the end of the course</p> <p>Each student will be assessed by the supervisor on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of involvement and level of engagement in the research project Communication and clarity of ideas in oral and written communications and during meetings across the term. Demonstrated comprehension of the research topic and questions. Evidence of preparation for each meeting with the supervisor Willingness to take initiative in meetings/written communication; frequency of contributions to the project Willingness to raise relevant questions and ideas, discuss areas of lack of understanding, consider alternative viewpoints. 	25%	n/a
Written report*	<p>This major assessment will comprise of a written report submitted at end of the course encompassing a literature review and the student's research overview in the area including discussion and conclusions. The report should be no longer than 5,000 words and can be prepared as a journal submission in this field of research (the format will be discussed with supervisor). Variations are allowed based on how the type of research is usually reported. The report should generally be presented with an abstract, introduction, literature searching methods, findings and discussion and references.</p> <p>This report will be marked by one independent assessor in the school or elsewhere (when expertise is needed). This assessment is based on the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review showing knowledge of the topic area, rationale for the research aims and questions. Details of the methods used to perform literature review. Content and organisation of the report, coverage of key issues. Overall discussion and conclusions, including key issues in the context of existing literature and any limitations of the research conducted. Correctness and appropriate use of references Appropriate use of figures and tables, including complete legends and details; overall organisation, logic and clarity of the report. 	50%	Week 10 of Term 2, 2022*
Oral presentation	<p>On-line presentations will be assessed by academics and visiting attending the presentations. Feedback to the student and supervisor will be provided by the convenor.</p> <p>Academic and visiting staff will assess the quality of the scientific work and presentation using the following scheme:</p> <p>Excellent (3) Good (2) Acceptable Not attended (0)</p>	25%	During the week after end of Week 10 of Term 2, 2022

	<p><i>Presentation Style:</i> Super organised effort, interesting, logical presentation, very easy to follow; Well-organised, interesting, easy to follow; Mostly clear and organized; No presentation</p> <p><i>Communication:</i> Clear, engaging, easy to follow, interesting, excellent engagement with audience; Clear and understandable, good audience engagement; Clear and understandable; Limited audience engagement; No communication</p> <p><i>Content:</i> Detailed, critically reviewed, accurate; Detailed information, relevant, accurate; Most areas covered, some details missing or inaccurate, No content</p> <p><i>References:</i> Excellent and extensive evidence of resources and references in all areas, Good evidence of resources used in research, Limited evidence of resources used for research; No resources used</p>		
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

* Extensions for written reports may be requested PRIOR to the end of term, with discussion and agreement from supervisor and course convenor.

5.2 Assessment criteria and standards

Please refer to table in section 5.1 above

Further information

UNSW grading system: student.unsw.edu.au/grades

UNSW assessment policy: [Assessment Policy](#)

UNSW assessment information: student.unsw.edu.au/assessment

5.3 Submission of assessment tasks

Assessment Submissions	<p>Where appropriate, assessments should be submitted via Moodle (electronic submission) or by email as agreed, to your supervisor or course convenor.</p> <p>This may include completed laboratory reports and logs which should be scanned/photographed and submitted via Moodle.</p> <p>The School Policy on Submission of Assessments (including penalties for late assessments) are available from the School office (RMB3.003) and the School website at: https://www.optometry.unsw.edu.au/study/undergraduate-degrees/important-information-and-policies</p>
Assessment Procedures AUNSW Assessment Policy	<p>SPECIAL CONSIDERATION</p> <p>On some occasions, sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may prevent you from completing a course requirement, such as attending a formal end of semester examination. In these cases you may apply for Special Consideration. UNSW operates under a Fit to Sit/ Submit rule for all assessments. If a student wishes to submit an application for special consideration for an exam or assessment, the application must be submitted prior to the start of the exam or before an assessment is submitted. If a student sits the exam/ submits an assignment, they are declaring themselves well enough to do so. The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services > Online Services > Special Consideration and attach student's supporting documentation (such as a medical certificate).</p> <p>CHRONIC ISSUES AND PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS</p> <p>If you have chronic issues and pre-existing conditions, we recommend you apply for Educational adjustments for disability support through Disability Services.</p> <p>Register for Equitable Learning Support (formerly Disability Support Services) at https://student.unsw.edu.au/els/register</p>

5.4. Feedback on assessment

Task	Feedback		
	WHO	WHEN	HOW
Supervisor's assessment	Research Supervisor(s)	Regularly throughout course duration and at course completion.	Verbal discussions.
Written report	One independent assessor in the School or elsewhere (when expertise is needed).	At course completion	Written comments.
Oral presentation	Academic or visiting staff in attendance.	At course completion	Verbal discussion with supervisor and with course convenor if appropriate.

6. Academic integrity, referencing and plagiarism

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at student.unsw.edu.au/referencing

Academic integrity is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.¹ At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity and **plagiarism** can be located at:

- The *Current Students* site student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism, and
- The *ELISE* training site subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise

The *Conduct and Integrity Unit* provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: student.unsw.edu.au/conduct.

¹International Center for Academic Integrity, 'The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity', T. Fishman (ed), Clemson University, 2013.

7. Readings and resources

Please consult with research supervisor.

8. Administrative matters

Required Equipment, Training and Enabling Skills

Equipment Required	<p>This is research project-dependent and specific to, and co-ordinated by the research supervisor in consultation with the student. The Course Convenor may also provide guidance as needed.</p> <p>For ALL laboratory-based projects, once appropriate training is satisfactorily completed, personal protection equipment (PPE) including lab coat and safety glasses will be required, and enclosed shoes are to be worn at all times for laboratory work.</p>
Enabling Skills Training Required to Complete this Course	<p>This is research project-dependent and specific to, and co-ordinated by the research supervisor in consultation with the student. The Course Convenor may also provide guidance as needed.</p> <p>Those with limited English skills (relating to writing, oral delivery, grammar, expression) are encouraged to visit the Learning Centre for help as often and as soon as possible. Assistance via UNSW Library is also available.</p> <p>For ALL laboratory-based projects, appropriate training may need to be satisfactorily completed (eg PC2 training) to access and use laboratories.</p>

Course Evaluation and Development

Student feedback is gathered periodically by various means. Such feedback is considered carefully with a view to acting on it constructively wherever possible. This course outline conveys how feedback has helped shape and develop this course.

Mechanisms of Review	Last Review Date	Comments or Changes Resulting from Reviews
Major Course Review	Reviewed as part of the change to BVisSci + MCLinOptom and also as part of the Academic Program Review for the Master of Optometry (8073) and Graduate Certificate in Optometry (7435) conducted in 2019.	n/a
myExperience https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/myexperience	n/a due to low enrolment numbers.	n/a

Other

Work Health and Safety https://www.safety.unsw.edu.au/staff-student-resources/students	<p>Information on relevant Occupational Health and Safety policies and expectations both at UNSW and if there are any School specific requirements.</p> <p>Information on relevant policies and expectations is provided during General Safety Induction training. A copy of the Induction booklet distributed at this training is available from the School of Optometry and Vision Science office (RMB3.003) and the School website at: https://www.optometry.unsw.edu.au/about/information-and-policies/work-health-and-safety</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Equity and Diversity	<p>Those students who have a disability or are dealing with personal circumstances that affect their study that requires some adjustment in their teaching or learning environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course Convenor prior to, or at the commencement of, their course, or with the Equity Officer (Disability) in the Equitable Learning Services (formerly Disability Support Services). Appointments with Equitable Learning Services are now being offered as video, phone and in person at the Kensington Campus. Contact ELS via Email: els@unsw.edu.au or https://student.unsw.edu.au/els</p> <p>Issues to be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional exam and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.</p>		
Student Complaint Procedure https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaint	<p>School Contact</p> <p>A/Prof Sieu Khuu, School of Optometry and Vision Science</p> <p>Tel: +61 2 9385 4620</p> <p>Email: s.khuu@unsw.edu.au</p>	<p>Faculty Contact</p> <p>Professor Gary Velan, Senior Vice Dean, Education, Faculty of Medicine and Health</p> <p>Tel: +61 2 9385 1278</p> <p>Email: g.velan@unsw.edu.au</p>	<p>University Contact</p> <p>Student Conduct and Integrity Unit, UNSW</p> <p>Tel: +61 2 9385 8515</p> <p>Email: studentconduct@unsw.edu.au</p>
Psychology and Wellness	<p>Information on Psychology and Wellness: https://student.unsw.edu.au/counselling</p> <p>Telephone:</p> <p>Students in Australia: 02 9348 0084 (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm) or 1300 787 026 (after hours)</p> <p>International students not in Australia: +61 2 8905 0307 (any time of day or night)</p> <p>Students who visited Psychology and Wellness in 2021: 02 9385 5418 (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm)</p>		

9. Additional support for students

- The *Current Students* Gateway: student.unsw.edu.au
- Academic Skills and Support: student.unsw.edu.au/skills
- Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety: student.unsw.edu.au/wellbeing
- Equitable Learning Services (formerly Disability Support Services): <https://student.unsw.edu.au/els>
- UNSW IT Service Centre: <https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/>