UNSW SYDNEY

Course Outline

OPTM7218

RESEARCH PROJECT

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: 12 UOC (4 UOC/Term; Term 1, 2 and 3. Full time. 3 Terms total = 12UOC)

Pre-requisite(s): None.

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

2.1 Course summary

OPTM7218 Research Project is a directed research investigation into a topic in Optometry or Vision Science with a duration of one year. This may be carried out either on campus or within the student's professional practice with primary supervision from the University. In exceptional circumstances research may be conducted remotely with primary supervision from the University.

OPTM7218 involves 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.

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 the course is to develop skills in the process of research, including an ability to search and critically read the literature, to consider ethical aspects of research, to analyse and interpret data, to effectively communicate effectively research findings and to identify ways in which these findings may change current thinking in the relevant research area.

2.3 Course learning outcomes (CLO)

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

1. Undertake independent research in optometry and vision science.
2. Communicate disciplinary knowledge and research findings in both written and oral form.
3. Show strong information literacy skills by conducting an analytical literature review.
4. Demonstrate an ability to undertake scientific research and understanding of the research process as applied to optometry and vision science.
5. Construct a research project report that demonstrates critical thinking and judgement in developing new understanding.
6. Demonstrative cognitive skills that review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge.

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	Undertake independent research in optometry or vision science.	PLO 3181: 1-7	Research report; presentation; participation in the project.
CLO 2	Communicate disciplinary knowledge and research findings in both written and oral form.	PLO 3181: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7	Research report; presentation
CLO 3	Show strong information literacy skills by conducting an analytical literature review.	PLO 3181: 1, 2, 3, 7	Research report; presentation
CLO 4	Demonstrate an ability to undertake scientific research and understanding of the research process as applied to optometry and/or vision science.	PLO 3181: 1-7	Research report; presentation; participation in the project
CLO 5	Construct a research project report that demonstrates critical thinking and judgement in developing new understanding.	PLO 3181: 1, 3, 4, 7	Research report; participation in the project
CLO 6	Demonstrative cognitive skills that review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge.	PLO 3181: 1, 3, 4, 7	Research report; presentation; participation in the project

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 be involved in a research project, from beginning to completion. In the process, you will need to conduct literature searches and to critically consider your findings and to question the previous findings of others. While interpreting your research findings and taking into consideration previous findings, you will develop the ability and confidence to question received wisdom, and to form ideas based on your findings and 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 an ongoing project similar to 'real-world' research experiences.

The research project can 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 in the research project, your ability to analyse and interpret your data, and ability to communicate your 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 design, an understanding of the ethical implications of research and procedures required, scientific and academic writing, statistics and data analysis, and effective oral communication via a final presentation.

3.2 Expectations of students

Expectations of Students	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). The research project extends over three terms (4UOC per term). 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). 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. 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. For more information or if you are having connection or access problems, see: **IT Service Centre** https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/ Telephone: 02 9385 1333 Contact Us: https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au/contact-us

4. Course schedule and structure

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

Term 1	
Week 1-2	Discuss projects with course convenor. Email and meet potential research supervisors, agree on the research project topic with supervisor.∞ Set up meeting schedule with research supervisor.
Week 3-10	Literature search and review; refine research questions, aims and hypothesis. Project planning and timelines, including dates for ethics application submission.
Week 7-10	Ethics application process, including aims and hypotheses, and develop research plan. Finalise and submit ethics application for consideration by ethics committee or panel. Pilot data collection as appropriate.

Term 2	
Week 1-5	Ethics application review and response (as required by ethics committee). Approval of ethics application. Recruitment of subjects (where appropriate).
Week 9-10	Once ethics approved, commence data collection. Begin to collate research results, and discuss results with research supervisor. Data analysis, synthesis of research findings. Consider appropriate statistics, graphical presentations and overview in consultation with research supervisor, and incorporate supervisor feedback.
Week 1-10	Continue with literature review. Start writing research report.

Term 3	
Week 1-5	Complete data collection, final data analysis and synthesis of findings. Continue with writing research report incorporating literature review from Term 1 and 2.
Week 5-8	Submit draft research report to supervisor and review and incorporate feedback. Note that report writing should take place throughout the course but is the sole focus of the final weeks of Term 3.
Week 9-10	Finalise written research report and submit at end of Week 10.# Prepare and review material for oral presentation in the two weeks following end of Term 3.‡

∞Communications and meetings between you and your supervisor are ongoing and should occur weekly throughout Terms 1-3; other academic staff with appropriate expertise may also be involved. The aim of these 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, including on the literature review, final report and presentation.

The final report submission should be in Week 10 of Term 3, or as arranged with your supervisor and agreed by the course convenor, PRIOR to Week 10 of Term 3. **Penalties may be imposed for late submission without a valid reason and approval.**

‡ Oral presentations usually take place in the week following the end of Term 3, or as per discussion with supervisors and the course convenor.

5. Assessment

5.1 Assessment tasks

Task	Assessment Criteria	Weight	Due Date
Supervisor's assessment	Overall participation mark including regular meetings with research supervisor, independent review of literature and effort during the course. The supervisor will provide feedback of participation during and at the end of the course. Each student will be assessed by the supervisor on the following: a. Quality of involvement and level of engagement in the research project. b. Communication and clarity of ideas – both oral and written, and during meetings across all the terms. c. Demonstrated comprehension of the research topic and questions. d. Evidence of preparation for each meeting with the research supervisor. e. Willingness to take initiative in meetings and in written communication; frequency of contributions to the project. f. Willingness to raise relevant questions and ideas, discuss areas of lack of understanding, consider alternative viewpoints.	25%	N/A
Written report	This major assessment will be comprised of a written report submitted at end of the course encompassing a literature review and the student's research including results, discussion and conclusions. The report should be no longer than 10,000 words and can be prepared as a journal article 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, methods, results and discussion and references. This report will be marked by two independent assessors in the school or elsewhere (when expertise is needed). This assessment is based on the following components. a. Literature review showing knowledge of the topic area, rationale for the research aims and question b. Comprehensive details of the methods and techniques applied for the research (this will reflect level of understanding of the research methodology) c. Content and organisation of the report, coverage of key issues d. Overall discussion and conclusions, including key issues in the context of existing literature and any limitations of the research conducted e. Correctness and appropriate use of references f. Appropriate use of figures and tables, including complete legends and details; overall organisation, logic and clarity of the report	50%	Week 10 of Term 3*

Oral presentation	Oral presentations will be assessed by academics attending the presentations. Feedback to the student and supervisor will be provided by the convenor. Academic staff will assess the quality of the scientific work and presentation using the following scheme: Excellent (3) Good (2) Acceptable (1) Not attended (0) *Presentation Style* Super organised effort, interesting, logical presentation, very easy to follow; Well-organised, interesting, easy to follow; Mostly clear and organized; No presentation *Communication* Clear, engaging, easy to follow, interesting, excellent engagement with audience; Clear and understandable, good audience engagement; Clear and understandable; Limited audience engagement; No communication *Q&A* All questions understood and well answered with no difficulties at all; Most questions understood, attempted to answers all questions; Limited understanding of questions; Not present for questions *Content* Detailed, critically reviewed, accurate; Detailed information, relevant, accurate; Most areas covered, some details missing or inaccurate, No content *References* 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	25%	During the 2 weeks after the end of Term 3#

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

^ The final report will be reviewed and marked by external examiners with relevant research experience in the area of study. The final mark will be the average of these assessments.

Oral presentations will usually be held following the end of Term 3; this is usually in the 2 weeks after the Term 3 ends. The final mark will be the average of the marks recorded during this assessment.

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	Where appropriate, assessments should be submitted via Moodle (electronic submission) or by email as agreed, to your supervisor or course convenor. This may include completed laboratory reports and logs which should be scanned/photographed and submitted via Moodle. 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
Assessment Procedures UNSW Assessment Policy	**SPECIAL CONSIDERATION** 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). **CHRONIC ISSUES AND PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS** If you have chronic issues and pre-existing conditions, we recommend you apply for Educational adjustments for disability support through Disability Services. Register for Equitable Learning Support (formerly Disability Support Services) at https://student.unsw.edu.au/els/register

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	Two external assessors with appropriate research experience. ^	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.

[1]International 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	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. 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.
Enabling Skills Training Required to Complete this Course	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. 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. For ALL laboratory-based projects, appropriate training may need to be satisfactorily completed (eg PC2 training) to access and use laboratories.

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	Information on relevant Occupational Health and Safety policies and expectations both at UNSW and if there are any School specific requirements. 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		
Equity and Diversity	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 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.		
Student Complaint Procedure https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaint	**School Contact**	**Faculty Contact**	**University Contact**
	A/Prof Sieu Khuu, School of Optometry and Vision Science Tel: +61 2 9385 4620 Email: s.khuu@unsw.edu.au	Professor Gary Velan, Senior Vice Dean, Education, Faculty of Medicine and Health Tel: +61 2 9385 1278 Email: g.velan@unsw.edu.au	Student Conduct and Integrity Unit, UNSW Tel: +61 2 9385 8515 Email: studentconduct@unsw.edu.au

Psychology and Wellness	Information on Psychology and Wellness: https://student.unsw.edu.au/counselling Telephone: **Students in Australia:** 02 9348 0084 (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm) or 1300 787 026 (after hours) **International students not in Australia:** +61 2 8905 0307 (any time of day or night) Students who visited Psychology and Wellness in 2021: 02 9385 5418 (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm)		

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/