



**MONASH** University  
Information Technology

**FIT5190**  
**Introduction to IT research methods**

**Unit Guide**

**Semester 2, 2012**

The information contained in this unit guide is correct at time of publication. The University has the right to change any of the elements contained in this document at any time.

*Last updated: 08 Jun 2012*

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# **FIT5190 Introduction to IT research methods - Semester 2, 2012**

This unit introduces students to IT research. Specifically, it introduces major research methods that are used by IT researchers including experiments, surveys, case studies, and design science. It also addresses the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Students will learn how to effectively communicate research. Skills developed and knowledge acquired from this unit will prepare students to conduct their own research, as well as to be knowledgeable consumers of others' research.

## **Contact Hours**

Two hours of lecture and two hours of studio/tutorial per week.

## **Workload**

Students will be expected to spend a total of 12 hours per week during semester on this unit as follows:

Lectures: 2 hours per week

Tutorials: 2 hours per week per tutorial

and a minimum of 2-3 hours of personal study per one hour of contact time in order to satisfy the reading and assignment expectations.

## **Chief Examiner**

Associate Professor Chung-Hsing Yeh

## **Campus Lecturer**

# Academic Overview

## Outcomes

On completion of this unit students will be able to understand:

- the major philosophies and principles of research;
- the major research methods used in IT research,;
- when a particular method is appropriate for a particular project;
- how to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative research data;
- how to communicate research findings to a variety of audiences;
- how to critically review research designs and literature.

## Graduate Attributes

Monash prepares its graduates to be:

1. responsible and effective global citizens who:

- a. engage in an internationalised world
- b. exhibit cross-cultural competence
- c. demonstrate ethical values

critical and creative scholars who:

- a. produce innovative solutions to problems
- b. apply research skills to a range of challenges
- c. communicate perceptively and effectively

## Assessment Summary

In-semester assessment (assignments and class tests): 100%

<b>Assessment Task</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Assignment 1: Literature Review	30%	10 August 2012
Assignment 2: Overview of a Research Project	40% (A Research Project Report 30% and Class Presentation 10%)	7 September 2012
Assignment 3: Research Project Evaluation	30%	28 September 2012

## Teaching Approach

### Lecture and tutorials or problem classes

This teaching and learning approach provides facilitated learning, practical exploration and peer learning.

## Feedback

### Our feedback to You

Types of feedback you can expect to receive in this unit are:

- Graded assignments with comments

### Your feedback to Us

Monash is committed to excellence in education and regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through SETU, Student Evaluation of Teacher and Unit. The University's student evaluation policy requires that every unit is evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys. The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

For more information on Monash's educational strategy, and on student evaluations, see:

<http://www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions/directions.html>

<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/student-evaluation-policy.html>

### Previous Student Evaluations of this unit

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to

<https://emuapps.monash.edu.au/unitevaluations/index.jsp>

## Unit Schedule

Week	Activities	Assessment
0		No formal assessment or activities are undertaken in week 0
1	The Nature of Research	
2	Literature Analysis	
3	Research in Information Technology	
4	Design Science	
5	Experiments	
6	Surveys	
7	Case Studies	
8	Introduction to Data Analysis	Assignment 1 due
9	Quantitative Data Analysis 1	
10	Quantitative Data Analysis 2	
11	Qualitative Data Analysis	Assignment 2 due
12	Communication of Research	
	SWOT VAC	No formal assessment is undertaken during SWOT VAC. Assignment 3 due 28 September 2012
	Examination period	LINK to Assessment Policy: <a href="http://policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-policy.html">http://policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-policy.html</a>

\*Unit Schedule details will be maintained and communicated to you via your MUSO (Blackboard or Moodle) learning system.

# Assessment Requirements

## Assessment Policy

Faculty Policy - Unit Assessment Hurdles

(<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/staff/edgov/policies/assessment-examinations/unit-assessment-hu>)

Academic Integrity - Please see the Demystifying Citing and Referencing tutorial at

<http://lib.monash.edu/tutorials/citing/>

## Assessment Tasks

### Participation

#### • Assessment task 1

**Title:**

Assignment 1: Literature Review

**Description:**

The purpose of the assignment is to learn about a significant area of IT research by undertaking a literature review. The aim of this assignment is to ensure that you are capable of critically analysing published research.

In this assignment, you will select a topic in IT research and conduct a critical review of the key published literature on the topic. Most of the literature will be journal and conference papers, but it could include books, book chapters, technical reports, blogs, white papers, and industry reports.

The topic for the review must be approved by the unit lecturer.

**Weighting:**

30%

**Criteria for assessment:**

The assignment will be assessed by:

- clarity and logic of the structure,
- level of critical analysis,
- referencing,
- standard of English expression,
- and quality of conclusions.

**Due date:**

10 August 2012

#### • Assessment task 2

**Title:**

Assignment 2: Overview of a Research Project

**Description:**

Write a brief overview report of a research project and give a presentation about the research project suitable for use as a seminar talk.

**Weighting:**

40% (A Research Project Report 30% and Class Presentation 10%)

**Criteria for assessment:**

## Assessment Requirements

The assignment will be assessed by:

- clarity and logic of the structure,
- level of critical analysis,
- referencing,
- standard of English expression,
- and quality of conclusions.

**Due date:**

7 September 2012

### • Assessment task 3

**Title:**

Assignment 3: Research Project Evaluation

**Description:**

Write and explain an evaluation plan for a research project. Students are strongly encouraged to write about a research project that they are conducting or intend to conduct.

**Weighting:**

30%

**Criteria for assessment:**

The assignment will be marked on

- ◆ clarity and logic of the evaluation plan,
- ◆ the degree to which the plan assesses whether the project achieves or fails to achieve its research aims,
- ◆ level of critical analysis,
- ◆ referencing, and
- ◆ standard of English expression.

**Due date:**

28 September 2012

## Assignment submission

It is a University requirement

(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-procedures.html>) for students to submit an assignment coversheet for each assessment item. Faculty Assignment coversheets can be found at <http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/>. Please check with your Lecturer on the submission method for your assignment coversheet (e.g. attach a file to the online assignment submission, hand-in a hard copy, or use an online quiz).

## Online submission

If Electronic Submission has been approved for your unit, please submit your work via the VLE site for this unit, which you can access via links in the my.monash portal.

## Extensions and penalties

Submission must be made by the due date otherwise penalties will be enforced.

You must negotiate any extensions formally with your campus unit leader via the in-semester special consideration process:

<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/equity/special-consideration.html>.



## **Returning assignments**

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later.

## Other Information

### Policies

Monash has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University's academic standards, and to provide advice on how they might uphold them. You can find Monash's Education Policies at:

<http://policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/index.html>

Key educational policies include:

- Plagiarism  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-policy.html>)
- Assessment  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-p>)
- Special Consideration  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/special-consideration-policy.h>)
- Grading Scale  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/grading-scale-policy.html>)
- Discipline: Student Policy  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/student-discipline-policy.html>)
- Academic Calendar and Semesters (<http://www.monash.edu.au/students/key-dates/>);
- Orientation and Transition (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/orientation/>);  
and
- Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/complaints-grievance-policy>)
- Codes of Practice for Teaching and Learning  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/suppdocs/code-of-practice-tea>)

### Student services

The University provides many different kinds of support services for you. Contact your tutor if you need advice and see the range of services available at [www.monash.edu.au/students](http://www.monash.edu.au/students). For Sunway see <http://www.monash.edu.my/Student-services>, and for South Africa see <http://www.monash.ac.za/current/>

The Monash University Library provides a range of services and resources that enable you to save time and be more effective in your learning and research. Go to <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au> or the library tab in my.monash portal for more information. At Sunway, visit the Library and Learning Commons at <http://www.lib.monash.edu.my/>. At South Africa visit <http://www.lib.monash.ac.za/>.

Academic support services may be available for students who have a disability or medical condition. Registration with the Disability Liaison Unit is required. Further information is available as follows:

- Website: <http://monash.edu/equity-diversity/disability/index.html>;
- Email: [dlu@monash.edu](mailto:dlu@monash.edu)
- Drop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1 Gallery Building (Building 55), Monash University, Clayton Campus, or Student Community Services Department, Level 2, Building 2, Monash University, Sunway Campus
- Telephone: 03 9905 5704, or contact the Student Advisor, Student Community Services at 03 55146018 at Sunway

## **Reading list**

Loraine Blaxter, Christina Hughes, and Malcolm Tight (2010). *How to research*, 4th Edition. Open University Press, Maidenhead.

John W. Creswell (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, Calif., USA.

Catherine Dawson (2009) *Introduction to Research Methods: A Practical Guide for Anyone Undertaking a Research Project*, 4th Edition. How To Books, Oxford.

W.G. Zikmund, B.J. Babin, J.C. Carr and M. Griffin (2010). *Business Research Methods*, 8th Edition. South-Western, Cengage Learning, Mason, OH.

Additional readings will be provided for each lecture. See the unit Moodle site for further details.