

Course Title	Capstone Project: Research Dissertation
Course Code	FVA4305
Recommended Study Year	4
No. of Credits	3
Mode of Tuition	Individual Consultations
Class Contact Hours	weekly consultation
Category	Required course to choose among FVA4302 Capstone Project: Research Dissertation, FVA4303 Capstone Project: Creative Project and FVA4304 Capstone Project: Curatorial Project (for students from the 2020-21 intake)
Discipline	-
Prerequisite(s)	NIL
Co-requisite(s)	NIL
Exclusion(s)	NIL
Exemption Requirement(s)	NIL

Brief Course Description

Year 4 students of Visual Studies major will work individually to undertake a Research Dissertation:

Approach	No. of Credits		Project Size	Pre-requisites
Research Dissertation	3		1 student	Nil

Aims

To explore in-depth relevant topics of personal interest, and to further develop the skills necessary for writing a substantial research dissertation.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the Capstone Project: Research Dissertation, students will be able to:

1. Identify a suitable topic for a research dissertation.
2. Apply standard research, writing, and presentation skills in the execution of a research project.
3. Review existing work on the topic in a manner that is fair and critical.
4. Justify that the project in its executed form is worthwhile.

Indicative Content

Varies with the topic of the project. The topic should be fixed in accordance with the guidelines below.

Teaching Method

Independent study, supplemented with biweekly consultations with a supervisor. To facilitate the matching of project supervision, Year 4 students will be asked to submit a brief project proposal. They need to provide project details, such as the topic, three choices of preferred supervisors in order of priority and the courses that have been taken to fulfill the pre-requisites of respective project approach.

Research Dissertation

Year 4 students are expected to complete their final year project in Term 2, while their supervisors will oversee and assess the development, progress and outcome of the research project.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4
Research dissertation (approx. 6,000-7,000 words in English)	x	x	x	x

Assessment

20% Project Proposal

20% Continuous assessment

60% Final research dissertation.

Required/Essential Readings

Varies with the topic of the project. To be determined in consultation with the supervisor.

Recommended/Supplementary Readings

Gibaldi, J., & Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (8th ed.). New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

The Chicago Manual of Style (17th ed.) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017. Available at https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html?_ga=2.42389095.395402768.1585893013-1504355538.1585893013

Important Notes:

1. Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
2. Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
3. Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
4. To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.
5. Students must adhere to the University’s guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents “Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University” and “Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments” can be found here: <https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificial-intelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices>.

Rubrics for Final Research Dissertation (60%)

	Excellent A (90-100%)	Good B (80-90%)	Fair C (70-80%)	Pass D (60-70%)	Failure F (0-60%)
Approach and Argument (30%)	The project addresses a clearly-stated and logically formulated research question; All key terms and concepts are clearly defined; The project's thesis is clear, plausible, significant, and original. It focuses on critical analysis rather than mere description The argument is entirely persuasive.	The project addresses a clearly-stated research question, posed with some minor logical flaws in framing it; Most key concepts are clearly defined; The project's thesis is clear plausible, and significant. It is largely, partially successful in critical analysis; The argument is mostly persuasive.	The project addresses a research question that can be identified with some difficulty, with lapses in its logical framing; Some key terms and concepts left undefined; The project's thesis is clear and plausible, but not significant Focus shifts between critical analysis and mere description; The argument is sometimes persuasive, and sometimes not.	The project has an identifiable question, but its framing is illogical or otherwise unsound Most of key terms and expressions left undefined; The project has an identifiable thesis, but it is only marginally plausible, or insignificant The writing is largely descriptive rather than analytical; The argument is mostly unpersuasive.	No identifiable question. Key terms are left undefined. The project has no discernible thesis. The paper lacks any clear thesis and analysis; There is no discernible argument.
Research skills (30%)	Able to identify and engage critically with primary sources relevant to the question posed; Demonstrates a thorough awareness of the origins, authors/sources, contexts of all primary sources, and their analysis are well-situated within their historical contexts; Demonstrates sound understanding of relevant secondary scholarship; Demonstrates informed assessment of secondary scholarship and their	Able to identify and engage with primary sources relevant to the question posed; Demonstrates an awareness of the origins, authors/sources, contexts of the primary sources, but at times their analysis departs from their historical contexts. Demonstrates careful reading of relevant secondary scholarship; Demonstrates generally sound assessment of secondary scholarship	Able to identify and engage with most of the relevant primary sources Demonstrates an awareness of the origins, authors/sources, contexts of only some of the primary sources, and their analysis often departs from their proper historical contexts Demonstrates a basic familiarity with some relevant secondary scholarship; Some assessment of secondary scholarship and their relationship to the thesis of the project.	Limited ability to identify, analyze, and engage with the relevant primary sources; Limited demonstration of an awareness of the origins, authors/sources, contexts of the relevant primary sources, resulting in anachronistic or historically unfounded analysis Limited engagement with secondary scholarship Limited or irrelevant use of secondary scholarship.	Demonstrates no awareness of the identity, sources, and significance of the primary sources relevant to the question pursued by the project; No meaningful analysis of primary sources; no evidence is offered to support the thesis of the project. No meaningful engagement with any secondary scholarship.

	Excellent A (90-100%)	Good B (80-90%)	Fair C (70-80%)	Pass D (60-70%)	Failure F (0-60%)
	relationship to the thesis of the project.	and their relationship to the thesis of the project.			
Communication skills (30%)	Rigorously structured paper with clear introduction and conclusion; Thesis and argument's direction announced at the start of the paper in a succinct and comprehensible manner; Argument unfolds through a logical sequence of points; The entire thesis directly relates to the central issues posed in the question	Generally well-structured paper with clear introduction and conclusion; Statement of thesis is clear but may not appear in the opening of the paper; argument's direction clearly laid out. Argument is laid out in a structured sequence of points; Good coverage of the central issues posed in the question	Paper fairly well structured; Thesis stated, but not at the opening section of the paper; argument's direction meanders somewhat throughout the paper Difficult to detect a logical sequence to the points raised in the paper; Parts of the essay digress from the central focus of the question.	Paper poorly structured; Thesis not clearly stated; no clear statement of argument's direction; Sequence of points raised in the argument are disjointed and confused; Significant parts digress from the central issues posed in the question.	Paper is unstructured; Thesis not offered; Organization of argument is incomprehensible; Fragmented, disorganized, and does not address the question posed.
Bibliographic thoroughness (10%)	Bibliography cites all the sources used in the project; All sources cited can be considered reliable and/or trustworthy; Citations are formatted correctly throughout the thesis.	Bibliography cites all the sources used in the project; Most sources cited can be considered reliable and/or trustworthy; A few formatting errors in the citations	Bibliography cites most sources used in the project; Some sources cited can be considered reliable and/or trustworthy; Some formatting errors in the citations.	Some sources used in the project missing from the Bibliography; Few sources cited can be considered reliable and/or trustworthy; Inconsistent formatting and styles in the citations throughout the thesis.	Bibliography missing; or fails to cite a majority of sources in the project; No reliable and/or trustworthy sources used or cited; No adherence to any standard or consistent citation format and style.

Assessment Rubric for Continuous Assessment (20%)

Assessment Categories	Excellent A (90-100%)	Good B (80-90%)	Fair C (70-80%)	Pass D (60-70%)	Failure F (0-60%)
(1) Level of engagement	Pose good questions in meeting, show strong ability to stimulate discussion, and demonstrate careful observation, in-depth analysis and deep reflection during meetings.	Pose good questions in meeting frequently, show ability to stimulate discussion, and demonstrate good observation, analytical evaluation and constructive reflection during meetings.	Pose questions in meeting occasionally, show adequate ability to stimulate discussion, demonstrate basic observation and general evaluation during meetings.	Rarely questions in meeting, show no ability to stimulate discussion, demonstrate little observation and general evaluation during Meetings.	Never post questions in meeting, show no ability to stimulate discussion, demonstrate no signs of evaluation during meetings.
(2) Preparation for meetings	Prepared well for meeting, showcase in-depth familiarity and understanding of the subject matter.	Prepared for meeting, showcase adequate familiarity and understanding of subject matter.	Prepared for meeting occasionally, showcase fair familiarity with or understanding of subject matter.	Almost always unprepared for meeting, little sign of familiarity with or understanding of subject matter.	Unprepared for meeting, no sign of familiarity with or understanding of the subject matter.
(3) Meetings Attendance	High meeting attendance.	Regular meeting attendance.	Occasional meeting attendance	Low meeting attendance	Frequent absences from meetings.

Assessment Rubric for Project Proposal (20%)

	Excellent A (90-100%)	Good B (80-90%)	Fair C (70-80%)	Pass D (60-70%)	Failure F (0-60%)
	Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and a systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative. Visual expression embodies a strong and uniquely individual conceptual and contextual artistic development presented in original forms and design. Artistic expression represents thoroughly examined cultural contexts, personal knowledge and available resources to inform creative intent, the creative process and individual choices. Project development embodies an exceptional unity of original thought, imagery, form, media and techniques in support of creative content. Excellent level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a very high level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.	Reasonable organization, balanced structure, and composition. Artistic expression exhibits an individual approach in the development of concept and context. Artistic project element is mostly original in source and form. Project development exhibits a conscious and thoughtful reflection on cultural contexts and an intentional use of personal knowledge and available resources to inform the creative process. Good level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a high level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.	Fair organization, weak structure and composition. Project development demonstrates a personal interpretation of an idea characterized by conventional visual representations using traditional forms and design. It demonstrates a relevance of context personal knowledge and available resources in forming and communicating ideas. On-going project materials demonstrates a successful combination of imagery, media, technique, and design to express a personal perspective. Satisfactory level of use of language and diction, demonstrates an adequate level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.	Poor organization, structure, and composition. Works shows a basic understanding of conventional concepts, imagery, and forms. Work shows basic awareness of how context, personal knowledge and experience, and available resources inform the creative process. Attempts in the use of language and diction, demonstrates a limited and only rudimentary level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, style or expression.	No organization, structure, or composition. Work reflects an indiscriminate understanding and representation of an idea. Work portrays a minimal use of formal and personal knowledge in expressing an idea. It displays minimal purposeful relationships between idea, imagery, media and skills. Poor level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a markedly inadequate and substandard level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.