



FIELDWORK IN COMPLEX AND HOSTILE PLACES



SUBJECT OVERVIEW

The Fieldwork in Complex and Hostile Places subject (DEVT90042 in the University of Melbourne handbook) is a 25 credit-point subject which aims to prepare students for undertaking detailed fieldwork research with vulnerable participants overseas or in less secure, complex and/or hostile environments.

— Suitable for

This subject is relevant for university Master by Coursework, Master by Research and PhD students as well as non-university researchers from all disciplines who are planning fieldwork in less secure environments. The subject is offered as a Community Access Program (CAP) subject except for students enrolled in the University of Melbourne courses below:

Master of Environment (MC-ENV) development stream, Master of Development Studies (097AB) and Master of Journalism (MC-JOURN).

University of Melbourne students enrolled in the above courses can do this subject as an elective.

Master of International Relations (MC-IR)

University of Melbourne students enrolled in this course can do this subject as an elective with the prior approval of the Course Director.

— Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this subject students will:

- Have an advanced understanding of complex and hostile environments and be able to manage risks whilst undertaking effective research
- Have the capability to efficiently and effectively draft a Research Plan, Ethics Application and Risk Management Plan (with supporting documentation)
- Understand the University's Risk Management, OHS, Security and Travel Guidelines
- Understand the range of ethical issues confronting researchers, participants and universities when undertaking fieldwork research

- Be able to select specific research methods and analytical tools that are appropriate (intellectually, psychologically and practically) for addressing their research question and collected data in a complex and hostile place among vulnerable research populations
- Be confident completing practical scenarios that demonstrate their awareness of the key personal security challenges confronting researchers in the field and how to respond appropriately to mitigate or manage such risks
- Make decisions regarding fieldwork (prior to, during and post- deployment) as part of an overarching research strategy
- Be awarded a 'Stay Safe' personal security qualification from the International Red Cross
- Be awarded a personal security and communications certificate by Red R, which is recognised by the United Nations and Australian Government.

— Benefits

For individuals

- Ensure safety of themselves and their research subjects.
- Enhanced graduate employability on the basis that the training received meets the highest international standard for fieldwork preparation.
- Develop skills relevant for post-university careers in international relations, international development, international NGOs and government agencies.
- Improved research productivity through more effective and efficient fieldwork with capacity to collect primary data in the most challenging research environments.

For institutions

- Enhanced safety for their students or staff.
- Better research preparation by students or staff, which will assist in ethics evaluation.
- Higher quality research output from data collected in challenging sites.

— Structure and curriculum

This subject is an eight-day intensive program (25 credit points) consisting of four days of classroom-based lectures and four days in a scenario/ simulation learning environment. Students who are taking this as a CAP subject will be able to choose from assessed or non-assessed mode.

Academic component

The course will deliver knowledge in the following major areas:

- Fieldwork philosophy
- Scoping the research question/s in preparation for the field
- Research design
- Theory, methods and reality of research 'on the ground' (mixed methods approaches)
- Ethical considerations and applications (University Human Research Ethics)
- Legal issues and obligations (University regulations and guidelines)
- Data collection methods and management
- Fieldwork planning and risk management: approaches and techniques
- Practical field craft - travel and survival skills relevant for fieldwork in complex and hostile environments.



SUBJECT DETAILS

Practical component

The practical training component of the subject includes the following elements:

- Field preparedness and evacuation
- Field communication protocol
- Sexual assault
- Residence assessment exercise
- Basics of negotiation
- Coping with insecure environments: stress awareness
- Weapons awareness
- Fire and movement
- Introduction to GPS and navigation
- Field communication equipment
- First aid: essentials for life support (EAR/CPR, major bleeding control & evacuation/repatriation)
- Image and acceptance
- Vehicle check points/road blocks
- Trip planning
- Crowds and mobs
- Field security
- Hostage survival.

Students also receive preparatory guidance regarding equipment, organisation, physical and mental states, risk management and contingency planning.

— Assessments

Students who choose to undertake this subject in assessed mode or as part of their Master of International Relations and Master of Development Studies course will be asked to complete two assessments.

Assessment 1: Write a reflective report that describes their experiences and lessons learned on the practical scenario-based training (2000 words).

Assessment 2: A 'high-level' Research Plan that incorporates a detailed Fieldwork Plan and Risk Management Plan (6000 words).

— Teaching dates

Students can choose to do the subject in semester 1 or 2.

Semester 1 dates: 1-8 May 2017

Semester 2 dates: 7-14 August 2017

— Subject facilitators



Dr Scott Flower is an Honorary Fellow at the Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education and teaches the academic

component of the Fieldwork in Complex and Hostile Places subject. Scott completed his PhD at the Crawford School of Economics and Government and was awarded his PhD in Public Policy by the Australian National University (ANU). He also holds a M.A. in Strategic Studies from the ANU, and a B.A. from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand.



RedR Australia is a leading humanitarian agency for international emergency relief. They provide skilled people and training to help communities rebuild and recover in times of crisis. Their internationally recognised training courses prepare aspiring aid workers for life in the field and help

experienced humanitarians further hone their skills. Red R trainers, who will conduct the practical component of this subject, are highly experienced humanitarian workers and ex-military personnel.

— Subject fees

2017 fees if taking this as a CAP subject:

Assessed mode A\$ 5,928

Non-assessed mode A\$ 4,448

Fees for MC-ENV, 097AB, MC-JOURN and MC-IR students taking this subject as an elective are available from the respective Schools.

— How to apply

Please refer to website for information on how to apply.

► melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/DEVT90042

— Course coordinator and contact person

The Course Coordinator and contact person for enquiries regarding curriculum is:

Dr Scott Flower

✉ scott.flower@unimelb.edu.au

For administrative matters, including information on how to apply, please contact:

Dina Uzhegova

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