THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Faculty of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Coursework Masters Handbook

2012

Information & Arrangements for

Master of Agriculture

with particular emphasis on the AFNR5901, AFNR5904, AFNR5905 and AFNR5906

Coordinator

Damien Field
2012

Important dates for 2012

Submission dates for research project components forming the requirements of AFNR5901, AFNR5904, AFNR5905, AFNR5906

Component	Lecture	Due Date	Unit of Study
	Semester 1		
Introductory Lecture	Monday, 5th March (Week 1) 10 am-11 am, ATP 422		
Research Proposal (written)	Monday, 5th March (Week 1) 11 am-12 noon, ATP 422	Friday, 20th April (end week 6)	AFNR5904
Research Proposal (oral)	Monday, 16th April (Week 6) 9 am-12 noon, ATP 422	25th & 27th April (end week 7)	AFNR5904
Literature Review (final draft)	Monday, 30th April (Week 8) 10 am-12 noon, ATP 422	Friday, 18th May (end week 10)	AFNR5901
Literature Review		Friday, 8th June (end week 13)	AFNR5901
	Semester 2		
	Students should aim to have their experimental work completed by Tuesday 4th October (week 10)		
Research Paper (Overview)	Monday, 30th July (Week 1) 10 am-12 noon, ATP 422		
Popular Article	Monday, 3rd Sept (Week 6) 10 am-12 noon, ATP 422	Friday, 21st Sept (end week 8)	AFNR5906
Poster	Monday, 17th Sept (Week 8) 10 am-12 noon, ATP 422	Friday, 12th Oct (end week 10)	AFNR5906
Research Paper	Monday, 8th Oct (Week 10) 10 am-12 noon, ATP 422	Friday 26th Oct (end week 12)	AFNR5905
Presentations	9 am to 12 noon, ATP 422	1st-2nd Nov (week 13)	AFNR5906

Keeping in touch in 2012

Any important information related to your postgraduate coursework studies will be sent to you by email.

All email addresses will be collected during the postgraduate coursework induction session at 10 am on Monday, 5th of March in Rm 422 ATP.

If you happen to miss this induction session, please contact Ms Pamela Stern (pamela.stern@sydney.edu.au) to add your email address to the list so you get this essential information.

Contents

1. Introduction

This handbook is for postgraduate coursework undergraduate students studying for the following degree at the Camperdown campus and the Plant Breeding Institute at Cobbitty:

Master of Agriculture (MAgr)

The handbook describes the arrangements for postgraduate coursework studies and provides essential, useful and helpful information about various aspects of the year. A general outline of the year's work is given, together with details of important dates and breakdown of marks for assessment tasks. Guidelines on how to do carry out the various tasks are also provided with references that provide more detailed help. Information on resources available to you, such as EndNote training and inter-library loans, is outlined. Finally, a number of important policies and housekeeping matters are mentioned (e.g. plagiarism and occupational health and safety).

The aim of this handbook is to provide a concise reference for essential information you need to successfully complete fourth year. It will pay dividends if you take the time to read it and keep it in a safe place for future reference.

Please feel free to offer any comments that you think would improve the usefulness of the handbook.

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the *Postgraduate Course Requirements* and *Postgraduate Units of Study* in the Faculty of Agriculture Handbook. For governance of this degree see *The University of Sydney Coursework Rule 2000 (as amended)* and *Postgraduate degree Resolution and Policies* in the Faculty Handbook.

1.1 Enrolment and administration

Postgraduate coursework students enrol in four 6 CP units of study and AFNR5901, AFNR59-04, AFRN5905, and AFNR5906.

See the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Handbook at
http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks/agriculture/

or

consult with Ms Pamela Stern pamela.stern@sydney.edu.au

or

Dr Damien Field (Associate Dean, Postgraduate Studies) damien.field@sydney.edu.au .

1.2 Overview of postgraduate coursework program

For all students, your postgraduate coursework load can be summarised as the following:

(i) Coursework (as outlined in the Faculty Handbook) 24 credit points

(ii) Research project 24 credit points

The research project includes a number of components:
research proposal **AFNR5904**
literature review **AFNR5901**
thesis (research paper) **AFNR5906**
poster, popular article student conference – Stepping Out, Fresh Ideas (SOFI) **AFNR5905**

(iv) Optional attendance at seminars

How much work is involved in the MAgr?

The MAgr degree in the Faculty is seen as equivalent to a full-time job. As a rule, approximately two hours input per week is expected per credit point. A full-time student taking a normal load of 24 credit points per semester is expected to do 40 to 50 hours of study per week in order to gain a satisfactory understanding of the material being covered and to achieve reasonable results.

2. Details of postgraduate coursework program

The Faculty has designed a postgraduate program giving candidates the opportunity to engage with coursework and research studies. The coursework program allows candidates to undertake specialisations in the following areas:

- **Agribusiness**
- **Agricultural Economics**
- **Agricultural Technologies**
- **Forest Systems**
- **Natural Resource Management**
- **Resource Economics**
- **Sustainable Agriculture**
- **Sustainable Horticuture**

These programs provide learning opportunities to students from varied educational backgrounds who wish to extend their knowledge and upgrade skills in a particular area, apply training in one discipline to the development of skills and expertise in another discipline, or prepare for postgraduate research degrees. For the Masters degree the research component of your degree will be used to determine your specialisation.

2.1 Formal coursework

Postgraduate coursework unit of study descriptions

The descriptions of the postgraduate coursework units of study can be found in the 2011 Faculty Handbook http://sydney.edu.au/handbooks/agriculture/

2.2 Research project

The unit coordinator for AFNR5901, AFNR5904, AFNR5905 and AFNR5906 is currently the Associate Dean (Postgraduate Studies). If you have any questions about your project, talk to your supervisor first.

It is recommended that all data and experimental work be completed by the 4th of October 2011 under normal circumstances. Delays beyond this date usually leave students with insufficient time to produce a top quality thesis.

Supervisors

Each student will have a Supervisor who is a member of the academic staff (teaching and research-only academics) of the Faculty of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources. Associate Supervisors may be appointed. These may be people outside the University who are involved in the management of the project or members of the Faculty or other academic staff who can assist in particular aspects of a project (both practical and theoretical). Associate Supervisors may be appointed at the commencement of the project or after the research proposal which may indicate the need for additional supervisory input.

It is the responsibility of students to organise regular formal consultations with their supervisor(s). Fortnightly consultations will usually be adequate and a list of consultation dates should be set up at the beginning of each semester. However, students should interact with their supervisor more regularly during critical periods of experimental work.

Penalty for late work

Late submission of any component of the thesis will incur a penalty for each working day late by reducing the student's mark.

Each assessment task will have a late penalty of **5% per working day** (Monday-Friday) **late** of the value of the task. For example, the proposal is worth 10% and if a student receives a mark of 80/100 but hands it in 5 working days late he/she will have his/her mark reduced to 55/100 (5 days @ 5% each). Therefore, the contribution of the task to his/her research project mark will be reduced from 8/10 to 5.5/10.

Details of components of research project

Purpose

A research proposal is a means to describe the research project. The research project consists of four units of study as described earlier. Students will find that they are working on these units simultaneously and therefore should not treat these units as sequential components. For example while preparing your research proposal you will be reading material that is useful for your literature review. It would be expected that you would be working on these two units at the same time (AFNR5901 and AFNR5904). Your research might also involve some form of experimentation and/or data collecting. These activities take time and may even depend on other variables, such as seasonality, availability of equipment etc. Even though you may start to write your research paper in semester 2 (AFNR5905) your experimentation may star early in semester one, so be prepared for this.

Units of Study

2.2.1 AFNR5904 Research Proposal and Approach

This unit of study aims to develop a student's ability to write a detailed research proposal and develop a strategy combined with the appropriate methodology to execute their research. Working with their academic advisor students will prepare a proposal describing; the background and aims, its significance and innovation, the justification of the methodology, the national benefit, and considerations of the required budget and project timeline. This unit will enable students to develop their ability to define a research project to be managed within a suitable research framework. Students will develop their skills in solving research problems and enhance their intellectual and personal autonomy through managing a research program.

Lectures

Introductory Lecture: Monday, 5th Mar, 10 am – 11 am, ATP, Rm 422.
Research Proposal (written): Monday, 5th Mar, 11 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.
Research Proposal (oral): Monday, 16th April, 9 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.

Assessment

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Research Proposal (Written)	60 %	20th April
Research Proposal (Oral)	40 %	25th & 27rd April

Written Research Proposal

The written research proposal is to follow the format given on page 11 'Major Research Project Proposal'.

Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
The University of Sydney

Please email attachment to pamela.stern@sydney.edu.au and cc to your supervisor by 4pm on Friday 8th April 2011 with the subject heading- 'Major Research Project Proposal'

Major Research Project Proposal

Project Title:

Project date:	**Commencement**	**Project Date:**	**Completion**

Part 1a – Project Contact Details

Principal Researcher	(student)		
Faculty			
Address			
Ph:	**Fax:**	**E-mail**	
FAFNR Supervisor			
Address			
Ph:	**Fax:**	**E-mail:**	
Co-supervisor			
Faculty/Organisation			
Address			
Ph:	**Fax:**	**E-mail:**	

Part 1b – Other Participants Contact Details

Name	**Organisation**	**Ph:**	**E-mail**

Part 2 – Detailed Research Proposal

(*N.B. this section should not exceed 4 pages.)*

1. **Introduction** ***(up to 1 page)***
   (*The introduction should include a concise literature review giving the background for the project, a clear statement of the research/problem, why the research is important, and what your research will contribute*)

2. **Aims of the project (hypothesis and 2-3 aims)**
   (*Clearly list your aims and hypothesis to be tested here*)

3. **Research Plan** ***(up to 2 pages)***
   (*Describe your research methodology including your experimental design, methods to be used and how data is to be analysed. Relate the research methodology to the research aims/hypothesis*)

4. **Expected Outcomes**
   (*List the expected outcomes from the research*)

Part 3 – Detailed Timeline indicating the various stages of the EXPERIMENTAL WORK and ANALYSIS of the resulting data

This can be presented as a table or a chart

Task in detail	Date start	Date complete	Indicator of completion

Part 4 – References

(*Format in the style of the journal* Crop and Pasture Science)

Oral Research Proposal

Time allocated – strictly 20 minutes (15 minutes presentation; 5 minutes question)

Method of presentation – Powerpoint

Maximum number of slides – discuss with supervisor

The schedule allocating your talk will be provided 2 weeks prior.

Examiners

All academic staff.

Assessment criteria for conference presentation

1. Clear and succinct definition of the problem
2. Setting of aims of the work (Hypothesis)
3. (a) Clear and succinct description of methods and expected outcomes
4. Presentation style - speaking clearly, engaging audience, answering questions
5. Quality of slides - clear and relevant - not too many

Content	50%
Answering questions	25%
Organisation	10%
Style	10%
Timing	5%

Research Proposal Presentation Assessment

Name_____ **Assessor**_____

	Fail	Pass	Credit	Distinction	High Distinction
Content	No clear definition of the problem or presentation of aims (hypothesis) of the work, methods not described, no clear expected outcomes ☐	Attempts to define the problem, set aims (hypothesis) and describe the method. Expected outcomes listed ☐	Clear definition of problem, setting aims (hypothesis), description of method and some discussion of expected outcomes ☐	As for a credit with clear and relevant discussion of the background including the implications of expected outcomes that reflect the aims of the work. ☐	As for a distinction with a background that comprehensively integrates findings with other work and their implications for this research coherently and succinctly explained, limitations indentified all of which are linked to the expected outcomes ☐
Ability to answer questions	Did not demonstrate the ability to interpret questions or provide appropriate answers ☐	Interpreted most of the questions and made an attempt at relevant answers providing answers ☐	Interpreted all questions and provided relevant answers ☐	As for a credit with succinct answers being provided that integrate other relevant ideas that are outside the core concepts that underpin the proposal ☐	As for a distinction plus the answers incorporate new thinking about, or future directions of, the work not articulated in the presentation ☐

Material & Organisation	Presentation is disjointed and does not flow, no apparent logical order to the presentation. ineffective use of multimedia, too many slides, too much text on slides, choice of colours made slides unreadable ☐	Some flow is developed and but lacks clear transitions between sections, familiarity with multimedia, appropriate amount of slides but not always relevant, occasionally design of slides made them difficult to read, poor use of pointer devices when appropriate/available ☐	The work is presented in a logical sequence and is generally organised, transitions between sections has developed, good use of multimedia, with appropriate amount of relevant well designed slides, some use of pointer devices when appropriate/available ☐	As for a credit with all material presented in a logical sequence and clearly organised, clear transitions between sections evident, good use of pointer devices when appropriate or available ☐	As for a distinction with excellent use of multimedia, a succinct and well balanced presentation of sections that flow seamlessly. ☐
Presentation style	Inaudible or too loud; no eye contact, speaking too fast or too slow, poor articulation, seems uninterested, incoherent, no audience engagement ☐	Proper volume, occasionally uneven speaking rate and loss of eye contact, gesticulations distracting, attempts to engage the audience, little originality ☐	Good steady rate, clear articulation, good eye contact, appropriate gesticulation, engages the audience most of the time, attempted to develop an original presentation ☐	As for a credit with good poise and material presented with confidence, constantly engaging the audience. ☐	As for a distinction with excellent articulation, demonstrated much enthusiasm for the work. ☐

2.2.2 AFNR5901 Research Review

This unit aims to develop a student's ability to review the literature with the view of developing a major research project in an area of specialization. The student will work with an academic advisor on a mutually agreed topic for research to be undertaken and the subsequent writing of a literature review. The literature review will advance the students ability to identify existing knowledge, define research problems, demonstrate a sound grasp for presenting a research question, and begin to define a research strategy. Students will develop their research and inquiry skills through sourcing a wide range of literature and improve their written communication skills.

Lectures

Introductory Lecture:	Monday, 5th Mar, 10 am – 11 am, ATP, Rm 422.
Literature Review (final draft):	Monday, 30th Apr, 10 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.
Submit draft to Supervisor:	Friday, 18th May

Assessment

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Research Review	100 %	8th June

Students should consult their supervisors about the content and structure of the review.

Students completing science based research projects must follow the style guidelines used by the journal Crop and Pasture Science (formerly known as the Australian Journal of Agricultural Research). You should download a copy of a recent paper (published in 2009/10) from the journal and follow its formatting style (http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/40.htm)

Some of the main style guidelines excerpted from the *Crop and Pasture Science* are:

* Main headings (Introduction, Materials and methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments, References) are set in bold roman (not italic) type. Minor headings are set in light italic type.
* Check that all references mentioned in the text are in the References, and vice versa.
* List references in the text in chronological order, separated by semi-colons. List references in the References list in alphabetical order. In the text, do not use a comma between the author´s name and the date.
* Give full journal and book titles in the References list.
* Use arabic numerals in the text, except at the start of a sentence. Type a space between a numeral and its unit (e.g. 3 mm).
* Use Helvetica or another sans-serif font in figures.
* Check that stippling and/or symbols in figures are legible.
* Tables should be self-explanatory. Use headings, headnotes and footnotes.

Students completing economics based research projects are to consult their supervisor and nominate the journal style to be followed.

Guidelines for literature review

Number of words (excluding references and contents pages)	About 9,000 (indicative range 8,500-9,500)
References cited	60-100
Figures and/or tables	7-15
To be submitted	Three securely bound copies of a document comprising: the literature review, inside the front page a statement of: word number, number of references (with proportion published from 2000 to 2012), table and figure numbers.

Plagiarism

It is University policy that cheating by students in any form is not permitted, and that work submitted for assessment must be the independent work of the student concerned (or in group projects, of the students concerned). The University policy can be found at http://www.usyd.edu.au/senate/policies/Plagiarism.pdf

Plagiarism, or copying of somebody else's work without acknowledgement, is not permitted. Allowing someone else to copy your work for assessment under their name is also illegal. Plagiarism may take several forms:

- direct duplication by copying another's work from a book, article, web site or assignment
- close paraphrasing of another's work, with only minor changes to the wording
- piecing together of parts of another's work into a new whole
- submitting one's own work that has been previously submitted for assessment in another subject
- producing work in conjunction with other people (for example peers, former students or tutors) which is submitted as your own independent work.

Examiners

Three academic staff from the Faculty of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources will assess each literature review. In some cases, academic staff from the Faculty of Science or Faculty of Veterinary Science may be asked to assess a small number of literature reviews.

An examiners' meeting to finalise the marks will be held and the marked literature reviews will be returned to students with feedback.

Assessment criteria for literature review

Abstract and Introduction	10%
Body of work (content and logical flow)	60%
Conclusions	10%
Clarity of writing/references/formatting	20%

Assessment Criteria for Literature review

Section		Fail *0% - 49%*	Pass *50% - 64%*	Credit *65% - 74%*	Distinction *75% - 84%*	High Distinction *85% - 100%*
Abstract		Did not present a concise summary of the work (~250 words). No explicit statement of the review, the major studies investigated, or conclusions drawn. No integration of relevant literature. ☐	An attempt has been made to sum up the research topic, the major studies investigated, or conclusions drawn. ☐	Presented as a summary explicitly stating the research topic, the major studies investigated, and conclusions drawn. ☐	A succinct summary of the research topic, the major studies investigated, and conclusions drawn. ☐	As for a distinction and it contains enough information for other readers to understand and evaluate the usefulness of the work ☐
Introduction	Review topic	The review topic is not clearly defined. The scope of the review is not identified The order of discussion is not outlined nor is the background information introduced ☐	The review is defined and the scope of the review is briefly outlined. The order of discussion and background information is not fully covered. ☐	The review is clearly defined and the scope of the review is outlined. The order of discussion and background information is adequately covered. ☐	The review is clearly defined. Te scope and how the literature is to be evaluated are clearly defined. The order of discussion and background information is fully covered. ☐	The review is comprehensively defined and a persuasive rationale for the review is presented. How the literature is to be discussed and evaluated is also comprehensively covered. ☐
Body	Coverage of content	No convincing evidence of understanding the literature, not enabling critical comment ☐	Evidence of a satisfactory knowledge and no critical review of the literature and the presence of obvious gaps and omissions ☐	Evidence of a satisfactory knowledge and limited critical review of the relevant literature. Identifies contradictions, gaps and inconsistencies ☐	Evidence of a sound knowledge and critical review of the relevant literature. Clearly evaluates gaps, inconsistencies and controversies. ☐	Evidence of a comprehensive knowledge and full critical review of the literature. Uses the gaps, inconsistencies and controversies identified to develop further questions for research ☐
	Flow of the work	Appears to have no direction , with subtopics appearing disjointed ☐	Develops a basic framework presenting the literature as a mere summary ☐	Develops an appropriate framework creating a logical flow between most paragraphs/sections. ☐	Develops a clear and appropriate framework creating a logical flow between all paragraphs/sections ☐	Presents a coherent and fully developed framework to underpin a review of the literature. ☐

Conclusions		No indication of how the literature is synthesized or no conclusions based on the literature presented. ☐	Limited or no synthesis of the literature but some disjointed conclusions offered. ☐	Synthesis of the literature used to develop clear conclusions ☐	Synthesis of the literature enabling succinct and precise conclusions to be drawn. Implications of the literature review summarised and possible future directions identified ☐	Synthesis of the literature enabling succinct and precise conclusions to be drawn. Clear statement of future research directions and/or testable hypothesis to move research forward ☐
Clarity of writing, Referencing and Formatting		Does not conform to the required specifications, references not cited correctly, unacceptable structure and illogical argument. Poor grammar, numerous errors. ☐	Conforms to some of the required specifications, most references cited/formatted correctly, and little development of a logical argument. Some grammatical and other errors. ☐	Conforms to all specifications. References cited/formatted correctly, and development of a logical argument. Some grammatical and other errors. ☐	As for a Credit but with a coherent logical argument presented. Few grammatical and other errors. ☐	As for a Distinction but with negligible grammatical and referencing errors ☐
Other comments						
TOTAL MARK						

2.2.3 AFNR5905 Research Paper

This unit of study builds on the major research project proposed in AFNR5904. Working with their academic advisor students will execute their research strategy that provides data and subsequent data analysis towards solving the research question. The results and analysis will be presented in a format suitable for submission as a research paper to a relevant journal. Students will build their research skills, develop a strong analytical capacity, demonstrate a sound grasp of the topic, and ability to interpret results in a broad framework. Students will demonstrate their ability to draw reliable conclusions and identify future areas of research. Students will continue to develop their skills in solving research problems and enhance their intellectual and personal autonomy by means of managing a research program. Students will improve their communication skills through presentation of the research paper.

Lectures

Overview Lecture: Monday, 30th July, 10 am – 11 am, ATP, Rm 422.
Research Paper (2nd lec): Monday, 8th Oct, 11 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.

Assessment

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Research Paper	100 %	26th October

N.B. The research paper is to be submitted along with your literature review (that you submitted in first semester and the research paper. They are bound together and should have a title and table of contents at the beginning. This will help any examiners to locate any material in the literature review when they are reading your research paper is required.

Research paper

The research paper should describe the work carried out during the year in sufficient detail for it to be repeated.

Students completing science based research projects must follow the style guidelines used by the journal Crop and Pasture Science, while students completing economics based research projects are to consult their supervisor and nominate the journal style to be followed.

Guidelines for research paper

Number of words	6,000 to 10,000 (excludes references, contents pages and appendices)
References cited	25 to 40
Figures and/or tables	12 to 20 Legends/captions should be in sufficient detail that the figures and tables stand alone.

Other	Statistical analysis should be properly documented. Large data sets (where appropriate) should be included in appendices or on disc and are not included in the 6,000 to 10,000 word count.
To be submitted	Three securely bound copies of a document, which we call the thesis, comprising: the literature review, edited in accordance with advice from the markers, the research paper, a statement of: word number, number of references (with proportion published from 2000 to 2008), table and figure numbers.

Examiners

Academic staff from the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources will assess each thesis.

Assessment Guidelines for the Research Paper

The following guidelines will be used in the assessment of your research paper. They represent the requirements for the grade and range of marks indicated. The style guidelines to be followed are those of the journal *Crop and Pasture Science*.

Research Paper

Abstract, Introduction	10%
Material and Methods, Results & Analyses	35%
Discussion & Conclusions	35%
Clarity, Referencing, Formatting	20%

Assessment Criteria for Research paper

Section		Fail *0% - 49%*	Pass *50% - 64%*	Credit *65% - 74%*	Distinction *75% - 84%*	High Distinction *85% - 100%*
Abstract		Did not present a concise summary of the work (approx. 250 words). No explicit statement of the research investigation, methods, or results. No summing up of the interpretations or implications of the work. ☐	An attempt has been made to sum up the research investigations, methods, and important results. The major interpretations have been summarised, but not the implications of the work. ☐	Presented as a summary explicitly stating the purpose of the paper, the methods used and main interpretations and implications ☐	A succinct summary of the purpose of the paper, the methods used and main interpretations and implications, including an attempt to identify how this investigation relates to other investigations. ☐	As for a Distinction and it contains enough information for other readers to understand and evaluate the usefulness of the work ☐
Introduction	Research Project. Investigation and Context	The research topic is not clearly defined. Associated objectives/aims not articulated. No hypothesis developed. Literature introduced is largely invalid and of no relevance. ☐	The research investigation reasonably defined, but some shortcomings in the clarity of the aims/objectives developed. A hypothesis is presented and the literature discussed is valid and relevant. ☐	The rationale for the research investigation is clearly presented accompanied with clearly defined aims and objectives. A testable hypothesis is presented. The literature used relates the investigation to a wider context. ☐	The rationale for the research investigation is clearly defined and is integrated into the relevant literature and other research. Concisely written with clearly defined aims/objectives and testable hypothesis ☐	A comprehensive and persuasive rationale for the research investigation is clearly presented and integrated into the literature and other research. Coherently and concisely written with clearly defined aims/testable hypothesis ☐
Materials and Methods		Inappropriate selection of methods with no appreciation of their usefulness. No experimental design presented. ☐	Appropriate selection of methods. Presented merely as a list of equipment and 'recipes'. Method/experimental design briefly outlined. ☐	Appropriate selection and implementation of method/experimental design presented. ☐	As for a Credit but described in a way that the methods/experiments could be repeated. ☐	As for a Distinction but coherently and concisely explained. ☐
Results and Analyses	Tables and Graphs	Tables, graphs and figures are not relevant and are poorly labelled and constructed ☐	Tables, graphs and figures are well constructed and clearly labelled and have some relevance to the research investigation. ☐	As for a Pass but the tables, graphs and figures are clearly relevant to the research investigation ☐	As for a Credit but also full analysis to include discussion of errors, distributions and other rudimentary statistics ☐	As for a Distinction but also coherently and concisely explained using high level statistical analysis ☐
	Description	No, little or inaccurate description of the results.	Some description of the major results.	Important trends in the results indicated with	As for a Credit but results comprehensively described	As for a Distinction but coherently and concisely

		☐	☐	some relationship with the research investigation described. ☐	and clearly related to research investigation. ☐	explained and related to the research investigation. Limitations also identified. ☐
Discussion and Conclusions	Experiment	No comment about the experimental method or implementation. ☐	Comment on the experimental method or implementation. ☐	Some justification of the methods and experimental design. ☐	As for a Credit but the method and experimental design fully justified. ☐	As for a Distinction but limitations and improvements presented. ☐
	Context	Only restates the results and does not link this discussion to the research investigation. ☐	Discussion and conclusions linked to research investigation. Little evidence of the ability to critically evaluate the work. ☐	Discussion and conclusions linked to research investigation. Some evidence of critical evaluation of the work. ☐	As for a Credit but clear evidence of critical evaluation of the work and integration with other literature. ☐	As for a Distinction but shows a degree of originality, comprehensively integrates with other literature and identifies future directions. ☐
Clarity of writing, Referencing and Formatting		Does not conform to the required specifications, references not cited correctly, unacceptable structure and illogical argument. Poor grammar, numerous errors. ☐	Conforms to some of the required specifications, most references cited/formatted correctly, and little development of a logical argument. Some grammatical and other errors. ☐	Conforms to all specifications, references cited/formatted correctly, and development of a logical argument. Some grammatical and other errors. ☐	As for a Credit but with a coherent logical argument presented. Few grammatical and other errors. ☐	As for a Distinction but with negligible grammatical and referencing errors. ☐
Other comments						
Total mark						

2.2.4 AFNR5906 Research Communication

This unit of study provides the students with the opportunity to present the research findings of their major research project using several communication media appropriate for different audiences, for example, external stakeholders and /or popular media. Using poster and oral presentations students will communicate their research to the academic community in a professional conference environment. Students will also be required to attend the Faculty's seminar program that is relevant to their research topic. Students will build on their skills to use several modes of communication to demonstrate their ability to produce high quality results, draw reliable conclusions and identify future areas of research.

Lectures

Popular Article:	Monday, 3rd Sept, 10 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.
Poster:	Monday, 17th Sept, 11 am – 12 noon, ATP, Rm 422.
Presentations:	Thursday & Friday, 1st-2nd Nov.

Assessment

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Popular Article	20 %	21st Sept.
Poster	40 %	12th October
Research Findings (Oral)	40 %	1st-2nd Nov

Popular Article

Purpose

To prepare a piece of writing from your research that would be used in the popular media communicating your findings to stakeholders (e.g. farmer groups) and/or the general public. The media to which you would submit your popular article too (e.g. *GroundCover*, opinion Editorial to *Sydney Morning Herald*, or *The Land*) needs to be articulated on a coversheet that you will submit with your work. This will determine the content and structure of the popular article, which you will negotiate with your supervisor. Futher guidelines will be distributed in week one of semester 2.

Poster

Purpose

To prepare a report of your research succinctly in easily and quickly readable form.

Production of a poster early in October is aimed at helping students focus on completing their research project. It should aid in the final synthesising of the results and outcomes of the project. A useful poster can still be constructed even if results are not finalised by talking about preliminary results and conclusions.

Posters are to be emailed to Ms Fortunée Cantrell by 5 pm on Friday, 8th October, 2009 for the Faculty to print. They will be printed as an A0 document.

Guidelines for poster

Size	A0 Printed by Faculty
Shape	Landscape
Author	The student is the sole author of the poster. Please put your affiliation as Faculty of Agriculture Food & Natural Resources The university of Sydney. Put on the new 2011 University logo
Acknowledgment(s)	Usually at the bottom of the poster. This is where you acknowledge your Supervisor(s) and other people and/or organisations who/which have helped with the work
Tables and figures	3 or 4
Balance between text and figures	Text should be no more than 50% of the area of the poster
Font	A sans serif font, e.g., Arial. Ensure font size can be easily read

Poster Presentation Weighting

Content 50%
Presentation 50% (if badly presented the poster will not be read in an open forum and therefore the content becomes irrelevant)

Assessment Criteria for Popular Article

Section		Fail *0% - 49%*	Pass *50% - 64%*	Credit *65% - 74%*	Distinction *75% - 84%*	High Distinction *85% - 100%*
Headline & opening paragraph	20%	Headline not relevant and the main focus of the article not outlined	Relevant headline but the main focus is a little unclear. Introduces a message or finding	Relevant headline and one or more main focuses of the article stated. Introduces more than one clear message or finding	Relevant headline and the main focus of the article is stated. Introduces one clear message or finding	Relevant and creative headline and main focus of the article explicitly stated. Introduces one clear message or finding
Body of article	40%	Too much emphasis on experimental and analytical techniques. Assumes reader understands specialised terminology. Concentrates on uncertainties and the plausibility of numerous alternative hypothesis	Some reliance on emphasising experimental methods and analytical techniques. Assumes reader understands specialised terminology. Concentrates on uncertainties and the plausibility of numerous alternative hypotheses	Explains science so non-experts can understand. Very little discussion of uncertainties with some discussion of secondary or overly complex interactions, which confuses the message	Explains science so non-experts can understand. Few references to secondary or overly complex interactions of the research findings. Avoids plausibility of alternative hypothesis. Engages reader	Explains science so non-experts can understand. De-emphasises secondary or overly complex interactions of the research findings. Avoids plausibility of alternative hypothesis. Keeps on message. Engages reader to keep on reading
Concluding paragraph	20%	No clear conclusions or main message delivered	Some general conclusions presented but main message not obvious	Some general conclusions presented and leaves the reader with clear messages	Some general conclusions leaving the reader with clear messages and comments on broader impacts of the science	Clearly stated general conclusions leaving the reader with one clear message and explicitly comments on the broader impacts of the science.
Clarity of writing and grammar	20%	Does not conform to required specifications, assumes a high level of technical jargon. Poor grammar, numerous errors, non-engaging.	Conforms to some of the required specifications, some use of technical. Some grammatical errors, some parts engaging	Conforms to specifications. Minimal use of technical jargon. Some grammatical and other errors, mostly engaging	As for a Credit but avoids use of technical jargon or it is simply defined. Few grammatical and other errors, engaging	As for a Distinction but with no grammatical and referencing errors. Very engaging and interesting
Other comments						
Total Mark						

Assessment Criteria for Poster presentation

Section		Fail *0% - 49%*	Pass *50% - 64%*	Credit *65% - 74%*	Distinction *75% - 84%*	High Distinction *85% - 100%*
Content	**Title, Background Results, Discussion Conclusions**	Title and background not appropriate. Methods are vague. Technically inaccurate or misinterpreted results. Little discussion of results and conclusions unclear. ☐	Clear title, background adequately covered. Methods outlined. Some discussion of data and graphics and conclusions presented. ☐	As for a pass but the discussion and conclusions clearly linked with background and aims. ☐	As for a credit but evidence of critical evaluation of the work undertaken ☐	As for a distinction but the central message shows a degree of original thinking and indentifies future directions ☐
Presentation	**Layout, Communication**	Overall a poor presentation with little attention given to appearance. No flow through the content evident. Long or disjointed sentences language not appropriate. No clear message was presented ☐	Worthwhile information is displayed with some effort being put into the presentation. Attempts to balance the use of images, graphics and text. Some sentences long or disjointed and technical terms not always clear. One or two messages are implied but not obvious ☐	As for a pass but clearly effort has been made to balance the use of images, graphics and text. Considered use of language and technical terms, with some minor errors. Evidence of a clear message, but somewhat disjointed. ☐	As for a credit but the poster is pleasing to look at. Very good use of images, graphics and appropriate amount of text. Appropriate use of technical terms which are fully explained. Separate sections clearly linked Occasional minor errors. The key message is clear. ☐	Excellent presentation evident by overall signs of creative ability and initiative. Striking appearance, excellent use of images, and integration of text and graphics. Excellent choice of language and technical terms. The key message is clear and is evident after first reading ☐

Research Findings (Oral, Conference Presentation)

Purpose

The conference presentation is an opportunity to present the results of the research project.

Time allocated – strictly 15 minutes (10 minutes presentation; 5 minutes question)

Method of presentation – Powerpoint

Maximum number of slides – discuss with supervisor

Examiners

All academic staff.

Assessment criteria for conference presentation

1. Clear and succinct definition of the problem and setting of aims of the work
2. (a) Clear and succinct description of methods and (b) presentation of results (data)
3. (a) Clear discussion of the implications of the results, (b) clear conclusions in relation to aims and further work
4. Presentation style - speaking clearly, engaging audience, answering questions
5. Quality of slides - clear and relevant - not too many

Content	50%
Answering questions	25%
Organisation	10%
Style	10%
Timing	5%

Conference Presentation Assessment

Name_____ **Assessor**_____

	Fail	Pass	Credit	Distinction	High Distinction
Content	No clear definition of the problem or presentation of aims of the work, methods not described, lacking results, mostly irrelevant discussion of results, no clear conclusions ☐	Attempts to define the problem, set aims and describe the method. Results presented with little interpretation or discussion ☐	Clear definition of problem, setting aims, description of method and presentation of results. Some discussion of results and attempt to relate conclusions to the aims ☐	As for a credit with clear and relevant discussion including the implications of results, and conclusions reflect the aims and findings of the work. Future work identified. ☐	As for a distinction with results and their implications coherently and succinctly explained, limitations indentified and comprehensively integrates findings with other work and identifies creative future directions ☐
Ability to answer questions	Did not demonstrate the ability to interpret questions or provide appropriate answers ☐	Interpreted most of the questions and made an attempt at relevant answers providing answers ☐	Interpreted all questions and provided relevant answers ☐	As for a credit with succinct answers being provided that integrate other relevant ideas that are outside the core concepts that underpin the work ☐	As for a distinction plus the answers incorporate new thinking about, or future directions of, the work not articulated in the presentation ☐

Material & Organisation	Presentation is disjointed and does not flow, no apparent logical order to the presentation. ineffective use of multimedia, too many slides, too much text on slides, choice of colours made slides unreadable ☐	Some flow is developed and but lacks clear transitions between sections, familiarity with multimedia, appropriate amount of slides but not always relevant, occasionally design of slides made them difficult to read, poor use of pointer devices when appropriate/available ☐	The work is presented in a logical sequence and is generally organised, transitions between sections has developed, good use of multimedia, with appropriate amount of relevant well designed slides, some use of pointer devices when appropriate/available ☐	As for a credit with all material presented in a logical sequence and clearly organised, clear transitions between sections evident, good use of pointer devices when appropriate or available ☐	As for a distinction with excellent use of multimedia, a succinct and well balanced presentation of sections that flow seamlessly. ☐
Presentation style	Inaudible or too loud; no eye contact, speaking too fast or too slow, poor articulation, seems uninterested, incoherent, no audience engagement ☐	Proper volume, occasionally uneven speaking rate and loss of eye contact, gesticulations distracting, attempts to engage the audience, little originality ☐	Good steady rate, clear articulation, good eye contact, appropriate gesticulation, engages the audience most of the time, attempted to develop an original presentation ☐	As for a credit with good poise and material presented with confidence, constantly engaging the audience. ☐	As for a distinction with excellent articulation, demonstrated much enthusiasm for the work. ☐

Timing	Too long by more then 1 minute and/or too short by more than five minutes of allotted time ☐	Under five minutes of allotted time ☐	Under four minutes of allotted time ☐	Under three minutes of allotted time ☐	Under two minute of allotted time ☐
Comments					

2.3 Seminar Series

Within the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, there are three departments that teaching and research academics belong to. Each of these research groups will be organising regular seminars, with speakers including academics, researchers and postgraduate students of the Faculty, as well as invited guests from Australia and overseas.

Although this is not an assessable component of your postgraduate coursework load, you are invited and encouraged to attend relevant seminars so as to expand your awareness of the research carried out in the Faculty, and current research in the discipline areas covered by the Faculty. Consult your supervisor for advice on which seminars may be of particular interest and benefit to you.

3. Helpful hints

Back up your documents

One of the most important hints is to back up your documents. Choose your backup method (e.g. Faculty network, thumb drive) and make sure it works - all of the time!

4. Occupational Health and Safety

It is everyone's responsibility to make sure that the University and its properties are safe places to work in. All members of the University community are legally required to follow occupational health and safety procedures on University property and while on University business (e.g. in laboratories, on University farms, on field work and on excursions).

All staff and students must play an active role by following safe working procedures and raising any concerns about workplace hazards with their supervisor.

Info at http://sydney.edu.au/agriculture/current_students/lab_safety_tutorial.shtml

Hazardous chemicals risk assessment

If you are handling hazardous chemicals, you need to do a risk assessment with your supervisor. When these chemicals are first ordered, the supervisor will carry out a risk assessment with the student and sign a 'Financial Transaction and Requisition Form' (called a 'green form') verifying that this risk assessment has been done.

The University Risk Management Office requests that each student doing a risk assessment also signs a statement that they have done it. These are then filed by the Faculty for future safety audits. A sample format of this document is shown below. Ask your supervisor for one to sign.

Safety tutorials

All students must do a safety tutorial by early in fourth year. Most students will have done this half-hour on-line tutorial in second or third year. If you have not, you must arrange to do it now! It is your responsibility to see the Technical Manager, Ivan Desailly, to arrange this. You can find him here:

Room N223, Woolley Building; Tel.: 9351 2525; email: **ivan.desailly@sydney.edu.au**

Field work

You should fill in green forms and appropriate field-work forms for all field-work. These should be signed by the supervisor prior to departure. They should include an estimate of vehicle use.

The field-work form is called a 'Special Duties Overseas/Australia Fieldwork' form (SDO/A form). A sample is included in this handbook. You can get one from the University web at: http://www.sydney.edu.au/personnel/forms/. Then click on 'Study and Special Duties'.

Vehicles and materials for projects

If you need a vehicle is needed to do project work, your supervisor will arrange it and do the paperwork. If you use a car, you must fill in an SDO/A form.

Materials for your project (e.g. chemicals) will be ordered by your supervisor. A modest amount for materials has been allocated to each project.

You must do a risk assessment with your supervisor for any chemical or equipment you use and fill in a copy of the form on the next page and leave it with your supervisor to verify that you have done the risk assessment.

Statement of completion of risk assessment by student

A copy of this form is on the next page.

University of Sydney

Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources

Statement of completion of risk assessment by student

I, ……., have carried out a risk assessment
(Print name)

with my supervisor, ……., for the
(Print name)

following (please specify):

Signed: …….……. Date: …….

5. Other information

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting the work, idea or creation of another person as though it is your own, without making an appropriate reference to that person. Plagiarism is not acceptable. The use of another person's work or ideas, in written, oral or visual form, must be acknowledged. Failure to do so may result in charges of academic misconduct, which carry a range of penalties including cancellation of results and exclusion from your course.

http://fmweb01.ucc.usyd.edu.au/FMPro?-db=POL_Main.fp5&-lay=www&-format=/pol/pol_summary.html&-RecID=35242&-find

Being able to use referencing software competently may reduce the temptation to plagiarise. Don't miss the EndNote training.

When submitting work you must include the Faculty Plagiarism form as a cover sheet which can be found at;

http://sydney.edu.au/agriculture/documents/Faculty_Plagiarism_form.pdf

Complaints

If a student has a dispute or complaint over an assessment or other issue they should take it up with the assessor or lecturer in the first instance and in the event of lack of agreement the Unit Co-ordinator in the second instance. If this does not give satisfaction, the matter can be taken up with your Degree Coordinator.

It is important to keep a written record of what originally caused your dissatisfaction and what happens at each step in the grievance resolution process.

If the issue involves discrimination, you can also contact the Harassment and Discrimination Resolution section on 9351 8713.

Security

Students should help to maintain security of laboratories and offices as personal belongings, computers and laboratory equipment are at risk of being stolen. Keys will be issued. These should not be copied and returned at the end of the candidature.

If it all gets too much …

If the ground looks like it's coming up at you too fast, don't crash and burn! Talk to someone first! Your friends, supervisor, ….

Don't forget the Counselling Unit at the Jane Foss Russell Building

Special consideration

In cases of 'illness or misadventure', special consideration is an option. Don't leave it till the last minute! Special consideration procedure is in the Faculty Handbook and is also given below. To apply for special consideration, you must fill in a Special Consideration form. These are available on the Faculty web page at;

http://sydney.edu.au/agriculture/documents/Special_Consideration_form_2010.pdf

If you believe that your performance has been adversely affected by illness or other misadventure, you should submit a special consideration form to the Faculty Office. Only well-attested serious illness or misadventure during a semester or occurring at the time of an examination will warrant special consideration for academic performance. Occasional brief or trivial illness would not normally be regarded as sufficient to explain an absence or a poor performance and students are discouraged from submitting certificates for absences totaling less than one week, although frequent recurrent short absences would need documentation.

To apply for special consideration:
(a) Obtain a special consideration form from the Faculty Office, University or Faculty Web site or the Student Centre.
(b)Complete the special consideration form:
i) For consideration due to serious illness have a registered medical practitioner or counsellor complete the Professional Practitioner's Certificate
ii) For consideration due to misadventure attach the appropriate documentation.
(c) Lodge the form with the Faculty Office
(d)Applications must be received within one week from the end of the period (ie, assignment due date or date of examination) for which consideration is being sought.
(e) Retain the receipt that will be given on lodgement of the form
Any application must be accompanied by appropriate medical certificates or other relevant documents. The Professional
Practitioner Certificate must include:
(a) dates of consultation
(b)an evaluation by the practitioner, psychologist etc, as to the severity, duration and effect on the student's ability to attend classes, learn or complete assessment requirements.
(c) a description of the nature and seriousness of the student's problems, within the limits of confidentiality, so that an academic assessment can be made of the possible effects of the illness or accident on the student's performance
(d)any other relevant information relating to the student's illness, trauma etc
(e) any other documentation that may be relevant; and
(f) the Practitioner authorises the University to contact them to confirm the authenticity of the certificate.