



## **Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies**

144 Burren Street, Newtown, Sydney

Directions and map: <http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/about/directions>

**Note:** ITLS is not on the main campus

**Please see the ITLS website for other important  
details about units at ITLS:**

[http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/courses/transport\\_and\\_logistics](http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/courses/transport_and_logistics)

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### **ITLS student enquiries office:**

Email: [business.itlsinfo@sydney.edu.au](mailto:business.itlsinfo@sydney.edu.au)

Office: Room 312B, Level 3, ITLS, 144 Burren Street, Newtown

**Assessment collection / viewing:** Monday to Friday 12pm to 1.30pm ONLY

## **TPTM6300**

### **Research Project**

### **Semester Two, 2011**

## **Unit of study outline**

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**Unit Coordinator: Dr Geoffrey Clifton**

**Phone: (02) 9351 0166**

**Email: [geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au](mailto:geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au)**

**Office: ITLS Building, Level 1, Room: 212**

**Consultation times: By appointment.**

**Please use email as your first method of communication.**

## **Classes**

This unit has no class requirements. However, all students will be required to attend a formal meeting at the beginning of the Semester, at a time to be advised. Students will also be expected to remain in regular communication with their supervisor(s) throughout the Semester.

## **1. Unit of study information**

### **1.1. School handbook description**

The purpose of this amendment is to offer students undertaking the Master of Logistics Management and/or the Master of Transport Management under the new 10 unit of study program structure the opportunity for a 12 credit point dissertation route with a word length (12,000 words) in line with Academic Board guidelines, when this unit of study is taken in conjunction with TPTM6330 Research Project II. This will provide graduates with an articulation route to a higher degree by research (MPhil or PhD) or the opportunity for specialised research equipping enter the logistics or transport professions, whether in the public or the private sector, giving them an edge over those who have not had the opportunity to obtain both a broad based exposure to the field as well as an in-depth learning experience in a specialisation of their choosing.

### **1.2. Pre-requisite units and application process**

Students are required to have completed four TPTM units and to have achieved an average of at least 70% in TPTM units. However, enrolment is not automatic and students will need to have demonstrated an ability to work independently, to communicate clearly and to conduct research within their previous units of study in order to enrol in this unit. Research requires original thought which means that simply restating books or journal articles is not acceptable. Students will also be expected to have demonstrated effective communication skills in their previous units of study. Students who have not yet developed the necessary communication skills may be asked to undertake a short course in communication. All students who wish to enrol should follow the application procedure listed below.

**Application:** Candidates must apply at least one month in advance of the closing dates for enrolment in units for Semester 1 or Semester 2 in order to allow sufficient time for their application to be assessed by ITLS. Before applying ALL candidates should discuss their proposed research project with a member of the academic staff of ITLS and have a provisional understanding with that staff member that (s)he is willing to supervise the project subject to the successful outcome of the application. Potential supervisors will be expected to arrange for an independent marker to assess the final report.

Candidates will need to email Dr Geoffrey Clifton ([geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au](mailto:geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au)) with a copy of an individual written assignment submitted in another unit at ITLS so the candidate's written communication may be assessed, the name of their proposed supervisor and topic (see application below). Successful candidates will be sent an email of acceptance which they will need to take to the Business School's Student Information Office in order to enrol in the unit.

### **1.3. Assumed knowledge and/or skills**

Students are assumed to have a good knowledge of transport and/or logistics from having achieved strong results in at least four other TPTM units. Students are also assumed to have developed strong skills in identifying and solving problems in their field of study and an ability to work independently, think logically and communicate clearly. Good data analysis skills may also be required depending on the specific research project undertaken.

### **1.4. Workload requirement**

It is expected that you will spend approximately 150 hours on this unit and produce approximately 9,000 to 12,000 words or equivalent of work (although the exact word length may depend on the topic chosen). This time should be made up of reading research, working on exercises and problems and participating in classes. In periods where you need to complete assignments or prepare for examinations, the required workload may be greater.

## **2. Learning aims and outcomes**

### **2.1. Aims of the unit**

This research unit is available only to candidates with strong academic records who have demonstrated the ability to work independently and who want to pursue research projects of their own design. This unit provides the opportunity for students to investigate a particular topic/area in the transport/logistics field through a one semester long independent research project conducted under the supervision of an academic staff member at ITLS.

Students will be provided with a selection of topics or they will be able to propose their own, reflecting their personal/professional interests but will be expected to design their own hypotheses and research methodology to address their chosen topic. Students will prepare a professional report and final presentation and an ideal candidate is a student that has developed an original idea, question, or problem worth researching.

### **2.2. Learning outcomes**

This unit aims to help students to develop independent research skills. To this end, the learning outcomes are:

1. Identify research problems and design a research program to address the problem,
2. Work independently by planning work and attending meetings with the project supervisor(s),
3. Reflect on own work,
4. Respond to feedback and directions on improvement, and
5. Communicate research findings in a professional manner in written and oral formats.

### 2.3. Links between learning outcomes and learning and teaching methods

Students will achieve these learning outcomes by designing a research program to address a particular topic in transport and/or logistics, conducting independent research and presenting results in the form of a presentation and written report. An orientation seminar will be held in the first week of classes (the time and location will be advised on Blackboard) in order to provide guidance to students about the nature of academic research and the requirements of the unit. Through regular meetings with supervisors, students will develop skills in managing independent research, planning and dealing with feedback. Through the semester, students will be invited to attend research presentations at ITLS and will attend the final presentations of other students in this unit.

### 2.4. Links between learning outcomes and assessment

There are three parts to the assessment, ongoing assessment of the research process itself, a presentation and a final report. The ongoing assessment is designed to help students in the planning and management of their research project. The presentation and written report are included to assess how well students have developed both their written and oral communication skills.

## 3. Assessment

Assessment items	Relevant unit learning outcome/s	Length	Weight	Due Date*
1. Proposal and Research Process	1 to 5		15%	08 August 2011 (Proposal) Continuous (Process)
2. Presentation	All		20%	TBA
3. Final Report	All	9,000 to 12,000 words aprox.	65%	TBA
4. Academic honesty module **		N/A	0%	15 August 2011

\* The due date is also the closing date. This means that assessment items will not be accepted after the due date except by prior agreement.

\*\* Students must complete the academic honesty module in Blackboard with a mark above 80% by the final day of exams, or an Absent Fail (AF) grade will be given for the entire unit. Students can complete the module multiple times until this grade is achieved. Students who completed the module with a score of 80% or above last semester do not need to do it again.

All assignments must be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Assignments submitted electronically via Turnitin do not require cover sheets. Ensure that your student ID number (SID) is in the top right hand corner of each page for individual assignments and the Group name or number plus SID of all members is in the top right hand corner for group assignments. Full information about how to prepare assignments for electronic submission can be found in the Turnitin Student Guide:

[http://blackboard.econ.usyd.edu.au/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id= 20 1](http://blackboard.econ.usyd.edu.au/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id= 20 1)

Should submission problems occur, students should contact Business School eLearning Support first on 9036 6433 or [business.elearning@sydney.edu.au](mailto:business.elearning@sydney.edu.au) or the Unit Coordinator as soon as possible.

### 3.1. Detailed assessment information

#### 1. Proposal and Research Process (15 marks).

This part aims to help students to develop effective research skills and will allow supervisors to monitor the progress of students through the Semester. Effective research skills include the ability to identify a research problem, develop relevant hypotheses, plan a research program, maintain contact with their supervisor, attend meetings as requested, and respond to feedback

A proposal is to be submitted through turn it in by the beginning of the third week of classes. The proposal will be worth 10 marks and should cover the following:

- Proposed title of the research project
- Statement of research problem (maximum 750 words): The statement of the research problem must include a clear question, a suggested hypothesis, and supporting evidence with references. It cannot simply present a description. It should begin by asking a significant question.
- Proposed Methodology and Timeline (maximum 500 words): This section should state how the specific research question will be answered and should propose a timetable for the research. This should include the main stages of the research project such as literature review, data collection, analysis, and writing up etc. The timetable should cover a period of approximately four months and should be discussed with your proposed supervisor.
- Preliminary References: A list of approximately 10 refereed journal articles that appear to be relevant to the research problem.

The proposal will be assessed using the attached criteria sheet by the supervisor and will also be used to check students written communication skills. Students who are thought to require additional assistance will be encouraged to make use of the resources available within the University.

The general research process will be assessed by the supervisor and will be worth 5 marks. Students will be assessed on the basis of the extent to which they have demonstrated effective research skills throughout the Semester. Marks will be advised at the end of the Semester.

In some cases, students may also be required to submit a draft report at a date to be advised. However, this would be at the discretion of the supervisor and would normally replace the proposal.

2. The aim of the **presentation (20 marks)** is for the student to present the research including the results and demonstrate their ability to communicate clearly in a professional manner at the graduate level. A presentation session will be held during the exam period and will include all students in the unit, supervisors, and interested research students and academic staff. Marks will be assessed by the supervisors and unit co-ordinator and will be advised to students via Blackboard. A copy of the presentation should be provided to the supervisor and Dr Geoffrey Clifton no later than 17.00 on the day prior to the presentation. The presentation will be marked in terms of content (10 marks), presentation (5 marks) and ability to ask questions of other presenters and to respond to questions and feedback (5 marks).

3. The final report should present the results of the research process including the aims of the research, literature review, methodology and data, data analysis and results, discussion and conclusions. The final report is to be submitted 1 week after the presentation, and should reflect any comments made at the presentation. The final report will be marked by the project supervisor and an independent academic staff member using the attached feedback form. Marks will be moderated by the unit of study co-ordinator. A word length of 9,000 – 12,000 words is expected, although length may reflect the nature of the topic and appendices. Reports achieving a Distinction grade or above will be made available on the ITLS website in the Research Report series. Students are encouraged to publish the research, with the project supervisor as a co-author. For these reasons, the final report should be formatted using the ITLS Working Paper series template, which will be provided to students at the beginning of Semester.

### 3.2. Referencing style and style guide

For this unit the referencing style is the Harvard Referencing Style. Students should download and adhere to the guidelines for referencing contained in the 'How to write a paper at the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies' report available at [http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/courses/transport\\_and\\_logistics/student\\_resources](http://sydney.edu.au/business/itls/courses/transport_and_logistics/student_resources).

Reports should be formatted according to the ITLS Working Paper series template, which will be supplied to students.

### 3.3 Feedback on assessment

Timely feedback is intended to help you to improve your learning during the unit. Students will receive feedback during the course of the Semester from their results in the assessment of the research proposal, regular communication with their supervisor(s) via meetings, telephone conversations or email as required. Because the unit aims to facilitate the development of independent research skills, students will be responsible for seeking guidance from their supervisors as necessary and will be responsible for responding to this feedback in a timely manner. Feedback will also be provided on the day of the presentations and subsequent to the submission of the final report. It is expected that the feedback provided after the presentations will be incorporated into the final report.

### 3.4. Academic honesty, plagiarism, legitimate cooperation and groupwork

Commencing students should complete the academic honesty module available via Blackboard before their first assessment submission. Students should refer to Business School and University policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism ([sydney.edu.au/business/currentstudents/student\\_information/student\\_administration\\_manual](http://sydney.edu.au/business/currentstudents/student_information/student_administration_manual)), copyright ([sydney.edu.au/senate/policies/Intellectual\\_Property\\_Rule.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/senate/policies/Intellectual_Property_Rule.pdf)) and the 'All your own work website' ([sydney.edu.au/student\\_affairs/plagiarism\\_index.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/student_affairs/plagiarism_index.shtml)) for information about legitimate cooperation, group work, how to reference correctly and how to avoid plagiarism.

Academic honesty is important to protect students' right to receive due credit for work submitted for assessment. It is clearly unfair for students to submit work for assessment that dishonestly represents the work of others as their own and gain marks and degrees, which are not based on their own efforts and abilities. Deliberate breaches of academic honesty constitute academic misconduct. These breaches include: plagiarism, fabrication of data, recycling previously submitted material, engaging someone else to complete an assessment on one's behalf and misconduct during supervised assessments.

The penalties for academic misconduct may include: a mark of zero on the assessment; a fail grade in the unit of study, additional assessment (including an unseen exam), and reference of the matter to the University Registrar.

All assessments will be checked for plagiarism. Where plagiarism is suspected, the assessment will be fully checked and monitored using manual process, Google checks and also electronic plagiarism detectors. In order to do this, the Business School may reproduce the assessment, provide a copy to another member of the Business School, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the assignment on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).

Academic dishonesty involves more than just copying material. Cooperation and helping other students may at times trigger academic dishonesty proceedings if it appears you have worked too closely with another student.

All assessment in this unit is to be completed individually. Individual assignments must be written and prepared alone. You may consult with other students about ideas and possible research sources but the analysis and writing of the assignment must be done alone

## 4. Texts and other resources

There are no specific resources for this unit but students will be expected to read widely in their area of research. Supervisors will provide some guidance on specific resources relevant to the research topic but students will be expected to conduct their own literature review as part of the research program. References to relevant resources on how to conduct research will be provided via Blackboard.

## 5. University and Business School policies and support

### 5.1. Business School policies

Business School policies are contained in the Administration Manual for Students: [sydney.edu.au/business/currentstudents/student\\_information/student\\_administration\\_manual](http://sydney.edu.au/business/currentstudents/student_information/student_administration_manual).

It is crucial that you take the time to consult this manual early in your studies in order to familiarise yourself with policies and procedures relating to critical issues such as the Business School's policy on special consideration (including requirements and timelines. e.g. lodging applications five working days after a missed assessment), appeals (lodge within 15 working days of the decision) and other policies such as enrolment, credit etc. Assistance is available from the Business School's Student Information Office ([sydney.edu.au/business/student\\_information\\_office](http://sydney.edu.au/business/student_information_office)).

### 5.2. University policies

- **University policies:** [sydney.edu.au/policy](http://sydney.edu.au/policy)
- **Assistance** is available from the University's Student Centre: [sydney.edu.au/current\\_students/student\\_administration](http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/student_administration)
- **The code of conduct** is an important policy which outlines the University's expectations about treating all staff employees and students with respect, dignity, impartiality, courtesy and sensitivity and refrain from acts of discrimination, harassment or bullying: [sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student\\_code\\_conduct.pdf](http://sydney.edu.au/ab/policies/Student_code_conduct.pdf)

### 5.3. Student resources and services

Links to other student services and resources are included on Blackboard and on the learning and teaching section of the Business School website: [sydney.edu.au/business/learning](http://sydney.edu.au/business/learning)

## **6. Continual improvement of the Unit**

### **6.1 Past Feedback**

Previous feedback centred on the need to increase the amount of guidance provided to students and their supervisors about the requirements for this unit, the nature of assessment and the way in which marks will be allocated. A need was identified to determine whether students require additional assistance in developing the written and verbal communications skills to the standards required of this unit.

### **6.2 Improvements made**

The requirements for this unit have been formalised and the three stage assessment of proposal, presentation and report introduced. The proposal will be used to help identify students who require additional assistance in developing their communication skills.

### **6.3. How feedback will be collected**

We encourage you to provide feedback to your supervisors and/or to the Unit of Study Coordinator Dr Geoffrey Clifton ([geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au](mailto:geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au)).

<b>TPTM6300 Research Project Application</b> Please email this information to Geoffrey Clifton <a href="mailto:geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au">geoffrey.clifton@sydney.edu.au</a>	
<b>Applicant's details</b>	
Name	
University email address	
Student ID number	
<b>Proposal</b>	
<b>Proposed title:</b>	
<b>Brief Statement of research topic and problem (maximum 200 words):</b>	
<b>Proposed supervisor:</b>	
<p><i>Applicants should discuss the topic, references, and grading system with an ITLS academic before submitting the application.</i></p> <p><b>I have discussed this with my proposed supervisor.</b></p> <p><b>Signed:</b></p>	
<b>Date of application:</b>	

<b>TPTM6300 Research Project Proposal Marking Criteria (10 marks)</b>
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>
<b>1. Clarity of proposed research problem (3 marks):</b>
<b>2. Assessment of proposed methodology and suitability of timeline (5 marks):</b>
<b>3. Suitability of proposed reference list (2 marks):</b>

<b>TPTM6300 Research Project Final Report Marking Criteria (65 marks)</b>
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>
<b>1. Clarity of expression, communication and presentation (10 marks):</b>
<b>2. Clarity in stating aims and objectives/hypothesis (10 marks):</b>
<b>3. Evidence of reading and effective use of literature (10 marks):</b>
<b>4. Development of the methodology (10 marks):</b>
<b>5. Effective collection and analysis of data (10 marks):</b>
<b>6. Appropriateness of conclusions and recommendations (10 marks):</b>
<b>7. Overall assessment of report (5 marks):</b>