

Course Outline

**Departments of Management; Accounting and Finance;
Marketing; International Business, Entrepreneurship;
Economics
School of Business and Economics**

**BUSN 3980-3
Business Research Methodology (0,3,0)**

Calendar Description

Students learn to identify and formulate a research question, select and apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative research methods, and present research findings. A strong focus is placed on ethical issues relevant for research in the business and economics disciplines. Topics include an introduction to research methodology; defining the problem statement; critical literature review; theoretical framework and hypothesis development; elements of research design; data collection methods; experimental designs; measurement of variables; sampling; research reports; research ethics; and a review of quantitative data analysis.

Educational Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the hallmarks of scientific research.
2. Describe research problems clearly and precisely.
3. Conduct critical analysis of research in the various fields of business.
4. Develop a theoretical framework for a research project.
5. Design a study to address a research question.
6. Demonstrate familiarity with various data collection methods.
7. Distinguish between different types of experimental designs.
8. Operationally define variables.
9. Identify appropriate sampling design for different research questions.
10. Write a research report.
11. Demonstrate an appreciation for research ethics.
12. Choose appropriate statistical technique for data analysis.

Prerequisites

CMNS 1290; ECON 2330 or equivalent

Co-requisites

None

Texts/Materials

Uma Sekaran and Roger Bougie, Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach, 6th Edition, Wiley, 2012.

Student Evaluation

Assignment 1: statement of research problem	10%
Assignment 2: literature review	10%
Assignment 3: methodology	10%
Assignments 4: research proposal	20 %
Midterm(s)	30%
Research ethics board submission	10%
Presentation	10%

Course Topics

1. Introduction to Research Methodology
 - What is research?
 - Types of business research: applied and basic
 - Hallmarks of scientific research
 - Hypothetico-deductive method
 - Seven-step process in the hypothetico-deductive method
 - Alternative approaches to what makes good research
2. Research Process: Defining the Problem Statement
 - Broad problem area
 - Preliminary information gathering
 - Nature of information to be gathered
 - Conducting the literature review
 - Defining the problem statement
 - What makes a good problem statement?
 - The research proposal
 - Managerial implications
 - Ethical issues in the preliminary stages of investigation
3. Critical Literature Review
 - Critical literature review
 - Functions literature review
 - Data sources
 - Searching for literature
 - Evaluating the literature
 - Documenting the literature review

4. Research Process: Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development
 - Components of the theoretical framework
 - Hypothesis development
 - Statement of hypotheses: formats
 - Hypothesis testing with qualitative research: negative case analysis
 - Managerial implications
5. Research Process: Elements of Research Design
 - Research design
 - Purpose of the study: exploratory, descriptive, hypothesis testing (analytical and predictive), case study analysis
 - Extent of researcher interference
 - Research strategies
 - Unit of analysis: individuals, dyads, groups, organizations, cultures
 - Time horizon: cross-sectional versus longitudinal studies
 - Managerial implications
6. Data Collection Methods
 - Sources of data
 - Interviews
 - Observation
 - Questionnaire Design
 - Questionnaire content
 - Cover Letter
7. Experimental Designs
 - Lab experiment
 - Controlling the contaminating exogenous or "nuisance" variables
 - Field experiment
 - Trade-off between internal and external validity
 - Factors affecting the validity of experiments
 - Identifying threats to validity
 - Internal validity in case studies
 - Types of experimental design and validity
 - Ethical issues in experimental design research
 - Managerial implications
 - Further experimental designs
8. Measurement of Variables
 - Measurement
 - Types of Variables
 - Operationalizing Concepts
 - Scale
 - Goodness of Measure

9. Sampling

- Population, element, sample, sampling unit, and subject
- Sampling process
- Sampling Techniques: Probability Sampling and Nonprobability Sampling
- Examples of when certain sampling designs would be appropriate
- Issues of precision and confidence in determining sample size
- Sample size guidelines
- Sampling as related to qualitative studies
- Managerial implications

10. Research Reports

- Written report
- Purpose of the written report
- Characteristics of a well-written report
- Contents of the research report
- Oral presentation
- Deciding on the content
- Visual aids
- Presenter, the presentation, and handling questions

11. Research Ethics

- Voluntary participation
- Anonymity and confidentiality
- Deceiving subjects
- TRU-REB requirement
- Preparing submission for ethics approval

12. Review of Quantitative Data Analysis

- Getting the data ready for analysis
- Editing data, transforming data, getting a feel for the data, and frequencies
- Descriptive statistics: central tendencies and dispersions
- Reliability analysis
- Type I errors, type II errors, and statistical power
- Choosing the appropriate statistical technique
- Hypothesis testing
- Regression analysis
- Testing moderation using regression analysis: interaction effects
- Data warehousing, data mining, and operations research
- Some software packages useful for data analysis

Methods for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

PLAR is not allowed

Attendance Requirements – Include if different from TRU Policy

As per TRU policy

Special Course Activities – Optional

Use of Technology – Optional