

MGT660.01 Research Design & Methodology Fall 2007 W 3:45 - 6:15, BC 247

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Topics will include philosophy of science, theory building and research methods applicable to the study of organizational behavior, other business disciplines, and other social sciences.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

A Ph.D. is, first and foremost, a research degree. This course is an integral part of your Ph.D. training. Regardless of different substantive areas of interest, we each share the need to be able to design and conduct solid research. This course is a step in that direction. In no way will we cover all aspects of the research process, but I do hope to expose you to the basics, provide you with resources, and make you critical thinkers in the research process. It is my intention that by the end of this course, you should be able to design and conduct a study through its various stages of forming hypotheses, choosing a design and sample, identifying or developing appropriate measures, collecting data, analyzing data, and interpreting findings. In doing so, another thing I hope to make clear is that there are advantages and disadvantages to each choice made along the way. Finally, in addition to being able to design and conduct your own research, by the end of this course you should be able to critically evaluate others' research (at least on methodological grounds).

If there are any problems along the way, let me know ASAP. And while there are topics I absolutely think we need to get through and a tentative schedule below, I believe this should not be an overly structured process (after all, this is Ph.D. work). So if anyone has questions, wants to spend more time on a given topic, etc., by all means speak up.

**TEXTBOOKS (REQUIRED):**

Schwab, D. P. (2005). Research methods for organizational studies, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. (ISBN 0-8058-4727-8). I'll refer to this as Schwab throughout the rest of the syllabus/semester.

Various other readings (journal articles and/or book chapters) will be assigned for each section. Some of them are already identified on this syllabus. Others will be identified as we move through the course. We will make arrangements for the distribution of this material.

**PREREQUISITES:**

While this is not a course in statistics, we will be dealing, both directly and indirectly,

with statistical issues from time to time. In many ways, this course fits into a sequence with statistics as *a priori* and, subsequently, you really need some statistical background for this course to fit into place. Ideally, you should have already taken both an introductory statistics and a regression course (or the equivalent). Finally, this course deals with designing and conducting research and picks up where other topics (largely questions of philosophy of science and “what is theory”) leave off. While it is not necessary to have had a course dealing with these issues, it would provide a nice base for understanding how the research process fits into the scientific model and the accumulation of knowledge. If anyone has questions or concerns about taking this class or about the prerequisites, please talk with me immediately.

#### TENTATIVE CALENDAR:

Aug. 22	<b><i>Introduction &amp; Developing a research article</i></b>
29	<b>Scientific Method &amp; Philosophy of Science</b>
Sep. 5	<b>Theory Building &amp; Project preview</b>
12	<b>Correlational Research. Part I</b>
19	<b>Correlational Research. Part II</b>
26	<b>Measurement Issues, Scale Development, Survey Design &amp; Reliability. Part I</b>
Oct. 3	<b>Measurement Issues, Scale Development, Survey Design &amp; Reliability. Part II</b>
10	<b>Measurement Issues, Scale Development, Survey Design &amp; Reliability. Part III</b>
17	<b>Scale Development Exercise</b>
24	OPEN
31	Project report topics & outline
Nov. 7	<b>Other Issues</b>
14	<b>Myths &amp; Urban Legends</b>
21	Thanksgiving
28	<b>Other Issues</b>
Dec. 5	Project reports
10-14	Research project due on Wednesday of this week.

## **GRADING POLICY**

### Class Participation (50%)

Class participation cannot be over emphasized. It is absolutely essential that ALL students take part. Class participation will consist of

- Student participation in class discussion.
- Occasional quizzes on class discussion and readings.
- Your research reports.

### Research project/proposal (50%)

This is where you get to tie together everything we've covered in the class by designing your own study. Your proposal will need to consist of five sections. The first section is an introduction in which a research area is outlined and a relevant literature is CONCISELY reviewed. The end result of this section should be a set of testable hypotheses. The second section pertains to methods. Given this is a methods course, this section is of the utmost importance and should contain a good amount of detail (more so than the typical methods section of a published article). In this section you will need to describe a sample and setting. You will also need to describe the research design and procedures. Lastly, you will need to describe a mode for data collection including the operationalization of your study's variables and any measures which will be used (for established measures please provide evidence on psychometric properties and for measures you are creating please provide information on how their adequacy will be assessed). Be sure to offer logical justification for each of your decisions in this section. In the third section, which covers analyses, you need to describe what statistical procedures (and what specific information from each procedure) you will use to test each hypothesis. The fourth section needs to discuss the implications of your study's findings assuming your hypotheses are supported. Finally, the fifth section is a critique in which you will need to identify the shortcomings and problems in your research (with special attention given to methods). In this last section, you are basically acting as your own reviewer, so don't hesitate to be critical.

As for the specifics of the proposal, it is not to exceed 35 double-spaced pages in a 12-point font with 1" margins on all sides. Beyond that, use the predominate format in your field (e.g., Academy of Management Journal Guidelines, APA Guidelines, etc.). This limit only pertains to text and does not include the references (which you must provide in the paper) or any tables and/or figures you might choose to include. As a check along the way, please turn in a short summary (no more than two pages) of the content area you wish to pursue for your proposal and rough research questions and hypotheses you have in mind by the 6<sup>th</sup> week of class. This way we can head off any potential concerns/problems early on. The paper itself is due by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday of finals week. Also, we will hold in-class presentations of your projects during the last two classes. We'll work out who goes when at a later time.

Ideally, this proposal should represent 1) a substantive area you are interested in, and 2) a doable study. While it is not a requirement for this course, as long as you are going to the trouble of developing the proposal, you might want to try and get some mileage out of it. Consider the possibility of conducting the study and submitting it for a

conference or journal publication.

**TEACHING METHODS:**

This is a seminar format class. This means that you will have a set of readings assigned each week pertaining to the topic we will be covering. You should come to class having read through and having thought about the materials. You should also come with questions, opinions, frustrations, etc. From time to time, there will be assignments to prepare. These may be collected to check on your grasp of the material, though they will not be graded. These assignments will also be the basis for class discussions. In short, we will not be able to discuss every aspect of every reading. Rather, the discussions will evolve based on questions, assignments, and your interests. Being a Ph.D. level course, it should go without saying that attendance and participation (including the preparation of discussion questions and assignments) are assumed. If they are missing, your grade will be adjusted accordingly.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

See **TEACHING METHODS** above.

**LATE/INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:**

There is no provision for late assignments.

**Incomplete:** See the graduate catalog for Incomplete policy details. The major change is that the "I" grade can only be assigned for circumstances beyond the student's control that occur after the last day to withdraw from a course. The instructor will not participate in the "beyond the student's control" determination.

**MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENT POLICY:**

There is no make-up provision.

**ORAL/WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:**

Course evaluation will be based on both a written paper and the student's oral presentations in class.

**LIBRARY USAGE:**

The assignments will require extensive library and data base usage.

**COMPUTER USAGE:**

The assignments will require extensive computer usage.

**GLOBAL/INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONTENT:**

There will be readings and discussion concerning research in other countries.

**ETHICS CONTENT:**

Research ethics will included in the course.

**POLITICAL, SOCIAL, LEGAL, REGULATORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL CONTENT:**

Legal issues concerning research will be mentioned.

**DIVERSITY CONTENT:**

None.

**ADA STATEMENT:**

**Disabilities/Employee Relations:** Feel free to call the Director of Institutional Equity at 505-646-3635 with any questions you may have about NMSU's Non-Discrimination Policy & complaints of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Call the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities at 505-646-6840 regarding student issues related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All medical information will be treated confidentially.

**WITHDRAWALS:** It is the responsibility of the student to know important dates such as University drop dates; last day to withdraw with a W is Oct. 17. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from any class that he or she intends to drop.