

MGT660.01 Research Design & Methodology Fall 2009 W 2:30 - 5:00 BC 343

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Topics will include philosophy of science (briefly), 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. 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, 2nd 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 the list provided. 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 with (both directly and indirectly) statistical issues from time to time. Ideally, you should have already taken both an introductory

statistics and a regression/ANOVA 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 foundation 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. 26	Introduction & Developing a research article; Scientific Method & Philosophy of Science, & Project preview
Sep. 2	Research Methods Overview; Measurement & Construct Validity; Design & Internal Validity (1-7)
9	Analysis & Empirical Relationships; Statistical Validation; Generalization & External Validity (8-14)
16	Other Research Issues (15-21)
23	Theory Building.
30	<i>Project report topics & outline</i>
Oct. 7	Measurement Issues, Scale Development, Survey Design, Validity, and Reliability.
14	Correlational Research. Part I
21	Correlational Research. Part II
28	Multilevel Analysis
Nov. 4	Mediation
11	<i>OPEN</i>
18	Moderation
25	Thanksgiving week
Dec. 2	Myths & Urban Legends
7-11	Research project due on Monday of this week.

GRADING POLICY

Class Participation (25%)

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.
- Your research reports.

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 may be assignments to prepare. These may be collected to check on your grasp of the material. 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.

Exam (25%)

We will have one exam in this class. It will be a realistic preview of your comprehensives. The date will be given later and we will discuss specifics of the exam format later.

Research project/proposal (50%)

This is where you get to tie together everything we've covered in the class by designing your own study. The proposal will begin with testable hypotheses and move to a detailed description of how you would go about testing them. **The proposal must represent an empirical project that is original and that is your own.** It should not cover a study that has already been implemented, whether published or not. It also should not cover a study on which you are collaborating with a faculty member, though you may consult with them and others to help you develop, evaluate and refine your thinking. In the end, the ideas and work must be your own. The proposal will hopefully cover an area in which you are interested. However, it **must** cover a study that is practically feasible, meaning it could be conducted within a reasonable time period and with reasonable resources. 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.

As for the specifics of the proposal, it is not to exceed 35 double-spaced pages in a 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1" margins on all sides. Beyond that, use the predominate format in your field (e.g., Academy of Management Guidelines, American Psychological Association Guidelines, etc.). This page limit is **not** inclusive and only pertains to text (not the references and any tables and/or figures you might choose to include). The proposal will need to consist of the sections described below:

1. An abstract of up to 150 words summarizing the content of the proposal.
2. An introduction clearly stating the research question (i.e. the purpose of the research), telling why answering it is important (So what?), and telling what answering it contributes to theory and praxis.
3. A concise review of the relevant literature. This section should end with a set of clearly stated, testable hypotheses. This section should be substantially shorter than what you would provide in a full-blown journal submission. The focus is on the hypotheses,

however they should be well- grounded and theoretically supported. If at all possible, a figure representing your model would be helpful here.

4. A methods section, which represents the most important section of the proposal given the domain of the course. This section should account for the largest chunk of the proposal and it should be full of detail (more than the typical methods section of a journal submission). In this section you will need to provide detailed information on and justification for the choices you make pertaining to:
 - a) Sample. Provide information on the population, who will comprise the sample and what the characteristics will be, how participants will be recruited and selected, the necessary sample size, and how subjects will be assigned to conditions (if applicable).
 - b) Design
 - i. Research design and methods of data collection. Discuss the design you will use (e.g., field study, field experiment, lab experiment, full experiment or quasi-experiment, etc.), types of data collection methods you will use (e.g., survey, interview, observation, etc.), and how you will address issues of internal and external validity.
 - ii. Conceptual and operational definition of variables. Discuss how you will assess ALL variables in your study (independent, dependent, controls, and both measured and manipulated, if any). All measured variables, whether taken from other sources or developed for this study, must be included in their entirety in an appendix (e.g., questionnaire items/scales, observation or interview forms, etc.). Manipulations, if any, must be fully described. For established measures, provide a reliability and validity information. For measures you develop, describe how you will collect reliability and validity evidence, and describe how you will develop the measure.
 - iii. Procedures. Discuss and provide the instructions that will be given to participants and describe what they will do and when they will do it. Describe any equipment or materials that will be used.
 - c) Analyses. Describe the statistical procedures you will use to test each of your hypotheses and the specific information you will use in the process.
5. A discussion of the implications of your findings, assuming your hypotheses are supported and discuss what it means for theory, future research and practice. Also, discuss how, and to what extent, alternative explanations/hypotheses can be ruled out.
6. A critique of your study, identifying shortcomings and problems with your proposal, focusing mostly on methods. You are acting as your own reviewer here, so don't hold back. And EVERY study has limitations.

7. References.
8. Tables and figures as needed (optional).

ADA STATEMENT:

Disabilities/Employee Relations:

If you have or believe you have a disability and would benefit from any accommodations, you may wish to self-identify by contacting the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office located in Garcia Annex (phone: 646-6840). If you have already registered, please make sure that your instructor receives a copy of the accommodation memorandum from SSD within the first two weeks of classes. It is your responsibility to inform either your instructor or SSD representative in a timely manner if services/accommodations provided are not meeting your needs.

If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or which may cause an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the instructor and/or Michael Armendariz, SSD Coordinator. Feel free to call Mr. Gerard Nevarez, Director of Institutional Equity and EEO/ADA Office at 646-3635 with any questions about 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. 14. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from any class that he or she intends to drop.