MGT660.M01
Research Design & Methodology
Fall 2010
Thursday 1:10 – 3:40 BC 247

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Topics will include hypothesis generation, 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. (Note: almost every paper published these days has a “limitations” section.) 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). This is extremely important because sooner than you think, you will be called upon (or invited) to serve as a reviewer of papers for either a conference or a journal.

TEXTBOOK (REQUIRED):

Various other readings (journal articles and/or book chapters) will be assigned for each class meeting. These articles will be posted for you on Blackboard. Other articles will be added throughout the semester. I will let you know when a new article has been added.

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.
- Discussions regarding your research.
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 exam will be given during finals week and we will discuss specifics of the exam format later.

Research project/proposal (40%)
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 the faculty 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 inclusive as a large number of journals have a 35 page limit on submissions. 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 limitations section for 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).
**Research presentation (10%)**

During your PhD studies, a situation will arise where you will need to make a research presentation (e.g., conference presentation). When you complete your degree and enter the job market, you will certainly be giving research presentations and colloquia. As such, you will gain experience in this regard by presenting your research paper to the class. This presentation will be formatted as if it were being given at a conference. Typically, a conference presentation is 20 minutes, where 15 minutes is provided for your talk and 5 minutes is provided for a Q&A session. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation should be prepared. Attire will be business casual.

**TENTATIVE CALENDAR:**

Aug. 19 - Introduction & Developing a research article/Project preview

Aug. 26 - Research Methods Overview; Measurement & Construct Validity; Design & Internal Validity (Schwab sections I, II, and III: chapters 1-7)

Sept. 2 - Analysis & Empirical Relationships; Statistical Validation; Generalization & External Validity (Schwab sections IV, V, and VI: chapters 8-14)

Sept. 9 - Other Research Issues (Schwab sections VII and VIII: 15-21)

Sept. 16 - Theory Building.

Sept. 23 - *Project report topics & outline* (Topics to be informally presented to the class with Q&A session)


Oct. 7 - Correlational Research. Part I

Oct. 14 - Correlational Research. Part II

Oct. 21 - Multilevel Analysis

Oct. 28 - Mediation

Nov. - 4 Moderation

Nov. 11 - Myths & Urban Legends

Nov. 18 - Professional Presentations

Nov. 25 - Thanksgiving week
Dec. 2 - Research paper due on Monday of this week – Research presentations made during this class session

Dec. 7 @ 1:00 - Final Meeting

**ADA STATEMENT:**  
**Disabilities/Employee Relations:**  
If you have (or believe you have) a disability and would benefit from classroom accommodation(s), contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at Corbett Center, Room 244 (Phone 646-6840; TTY 646-1918). All medical info is treated confidentially. Do not wait until you fall behind or receive a failing grade. Retroactive accommodations cannot be considered. Information, instructions & forms from the Services for Students with Disabilities Office are online at [http://www.nmsu.edu/~ssd/index.html](http://www.nmsu.edu/~ssd/index.html).

**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. 12. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from any class that he or she intends to drop.