



III Makedonska brigada b.b., Skopje, 1000, Republic of Macedonia
Phone/Fax: +389 2 2463156, +389 2 2463159, info@uacs.edu.mk, www.uacs.edu.mk

Course Number: Research methodology
Semester: Autumn, 2011/2012
Instructors: Nikica Mojsoska-Blazevski, Marjan Petreski
Credits: 4 credit hours/ 8 ECTS
Contact hours: 24 hours
Learning hours: 96 hours
Class Hours: Thu, Fri, 18-21; Sat, 09-13
Meeting hours: Mon, 12.00-13.00
Prerequisite: -

Required Text:

1. Saunders, M. et al. (2009) *Research methods for business students*. 5th edition. Essex, Prentice Hall.
2. Blaxter, L. et al. (2001) *How to research*. 2nd edition. Buckingham, Open University Press.

Additional reading:

1. Bell, J. (1993) *Doing your Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education and Social Science*. Buckingham, Open University Press.
2. Brace, N. et al. (2000) *SPSS for psychologists: a guide to data analysis using SPSS for windows*. London, Palgrave.
3. Crème, P. and Lea, M. R. (1997) *Writing at university: a guide for students*. Buckingham, Open University Press.
4. Coombes, H. (2001) *Research using IT*. London, Palgrave.
5. Cooper, D. R. and Schindler, P. S. (1998) *Business research methods*. 6th edition. Singapore, McGraw-Hill.
6. Fink, A. (1998) *Conducting research literature reviews: from paper to the internet*. London, Sage.
7. Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (1997) *Research methods for managers*. 2nd edition. London, Paul Chapman Publishing.
8. Leshin, C. B. (1997) *Management on the world wide web*. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall.
9. Robson, C. (1993) *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Oxford, Blackwell.
10. Swift, L. (2001) *Quantitative methods for business management*. London, Palgrave.
11. Travers, M. (2001) *Qualitative research through case studies*. London, Sage.
12. Veal, A. J. (1997) *Research methods for leisure and tourism: a practical guide*. London, Pearson Education.
13. Yin, R. K. (1989) *Case study research: design and methods*. 2nd edition. London, Sage. Documents and exercises (to be provided by the instructor)

Course description:

This module provides essential information on academic presentation, referencing, research and writing skills, different approaches to research and proposal preparation. Then, the module examines the application of the qualitative research methods, by their application on particular case studies.

Learning objectives:

This unit aims to:

- enhance students presentational and writing skills
- introduce students to research design and execution
- enable students to critically evaluate published research
- introduce students to a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods
- enable students to understand the appropriate application of specific methodologies
- enable students to produce a well thought out dissertation proposal and research project

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the whole unit, a student will be able to:

LO1 Search academic resources and data bases

LO2 Present fully referenced assignments

LO3 Synthesise, evaluate and critically assess academic research

LO4 Conduct and write an academic literature review

LO5 Formulate a clear research question and achievable purpose/aims and objectives

LO6 Design a research project

LO7 Write a research proposal

LO8 Understand and apply qualitative and quantitative approaches to research

LO9 Understand, design and apply data collection methods

Course delivery:

Class lecture will review key themes within the suggested textbook and the required case-studies mainly in a form of ppt and exercises at the end of each chapter. Notes or outlines will be given to students for each lecture which should guide them in using the textbook. Real-life examples and case-studies will be examined often to help students understand the material taught better.

Instructor's expectations from students:

- Attend class regularly and take instructors notes which can be used as a guideline.
- Contribute to the interactive classes.
- Prepare and follow your own program for home reading.
- Think critically on the issues presented in the classroom.
- Avoid anti-social behavior in College and anti-academic behavior in the classroom (i.e. plagiarism, cheating, etc.)
- Try to interconnect the material taught on related subjects, i.e. Social and Economic Development, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, etc.
- Impose a self – discipline regarding Colleges rules and procedures.

Examinations structure:

- *Exams:* There is no standard examination. There are two assignments, as follows:
 1. *Literature review* (CW handout to be delivered separately), 85%;
 2. *Analysis of assigned case studies*, 15%.

OUTLINE – PART I

L #1

Introduction to research

- What is research?
- Everyday research skills

Academic Writing

- Maintaining academic standards.
- Assignment requirements.
- Constructing an argument and writing analytically.
- Synthesis and paraphrasing.
- Critical Thinking.
- Plagiarism.

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- Quotation and referencing.

Reading:

Chapter 1 of Saunders, et al.
Crème and Lea (2001)

Further Reading:

Chapter 8 of Coombes

L #2

Conducting a Literature Review or Internet Search

- A Literature Review or Internet Search is more than simply referencing every book we have in the Library; how does one conduct a good and a *useful* search?
- What is the purpose of the literature review? Brainstorming ideas for a project.
- What do you then do with the information you have found?
- How does the literature review relate to the rest of your dissertation?

Reading:

Chapter 3 of Saunders, et al.
Chapter 4 of Blaxter, et al.

Further Reading:

Chapter 2 of Coombes

Case study on Lit-review

W #1

Referencing

- Harvard referencing guide
- Referencing articles, books, theses, conference proceedings
- Quoting
- Referencing from internet
- Unpublished work

Reading:

Harvard referencing guide

Exercise on writing references

W #2

How to write a literature review?

- Reading the literature
- Searching a database
- Reviewing an article
- Critical assessment

Reading:

Petreski, M. (2006) The Relationship Between the Choice of Exchange Rate Regime and some Macroeconomic Variables

Further Reading:

Petreski, M. (2008) To fix or to float from perspective of output volatility and vulnerability to crisis. *CEA Journal of economics*

L #3

Thinking and designing of a Research Project

- How does one think of a research project? Generating a research project from an idea.
 - What makes a good research topic and a poor one? What is the motivation for choosing a specific research topic?
 - The need for self-motivation.
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- Time management: is the project realizable within the time scale and word limitation of an MA dissertation?
- Selection of Topic
- Reviewing and Re-reviewing the Literature – A cyclical process
- Methodological Choices: Research Problem, Research Purpose, Theoretical Framework, Research Questions/Hypothesis, Operationalization of key terms
- Limitations, Criticism and Evaluation of Research Design

Reading:

Chapters 2, 4 of Saunders, et al.

Chapter 2 of Blaxter, et al.

Further Reading:

Chapter 2 of Gill, and Johnson

Chapter 2 of Bell

Case study on RP

Looking at UACS F1 form for RP submission

W #3

How to write a Research Proposal?

- The academic requirements of the proposal.
- Its purpose.
- How to write it.
- The necessity of a clearly defined research question.

Reading:

Petreski, M. (2006) Macroeconomic Implications of Exchange Rate Regime: The Case of Macedonia

L #4

Methodology/Methods. Families, Approaches, Techniques

- Methodology vs. method
- Families, approaches and techniques
- Qualitative research
- Qualitative vs. quantitative research

Reading:

Chapters 5, 6 of Saunders, et al

Further Reading:

Chapter 3 of Coombes

L #5

Qualitative instruments

- Questionnaire
- Focus groups
- Interview
- Observation

Reading:

Chapters 9, 10, 11 of Saunders, et al

Further Reading:

Chapter 3 of Gill, & Johnson

Case study on qualitative instruments

L #6

Types of Research and Collecting Data

- Consideration of the different types of research you can conduct.
- What constitutes data?
- The difference between primary and secondary data.
- How does one go about collecting and collating it?
- What are the ethical considerations that need to be considered?

- How does one choose a particular method of analysis and why choose one method over another?
- Different methods give different results because they answer different questions.

Reading:

Chapter 8 of Saunders, et al

Further Reading:

Chapter 3 of Gill, & Johnson

Case study on problems with data collection

L #7

Analysing Data: Evaluation, Interpretation and Critique

- Handling information.
- Analysis.
- Interpretation.
- Evaluation.
- Critique.

Reading:

Chapter 13 of Saunders, et al

Further Reading:

Part IV, Chapters 15, 16, 17, 18 of Cooper and Schindler

Case study on data analysis

W #4

How to choose a topic?

- Difficulties
- Cautions
- What if I choose the wrong topic?

Reading:

Chapters 2 and 14 of Saunders, et al

Classroom discussion

CPC Coverage in terms of hours

- 1) Functional area
 - A Marketing – 0 hour
 - B Business finance – 0 hours
 - C Accounting – 0 hours
 - D Management – 12 hours
- 2) The Business environment
 - A) Legal environment of Business – 0 hours
 - B) Economics – 9 hours
 - C) Business ethics – 1 hour
 - D) Global dimensions of Business – 1 hours
- 3) Technical skills
 - A) MIS/IT computing – 0 hour
 - B) Statistics/Quantitative techniques – 0 hours
- 4) Integrative areas
 - A) Business policy – 1 hours
 - B) Internship – 0 hours

Assessment:

Mobile phones are strictly not tolerated in the class for any use (including computations). Active participation is meant as the effort and the interest that a student shows in the class, including homework.

After each session students are expected to study all the relevant material, read all the associated exercises, prepare assignment for the next class (if given), identify the difficult points and pose their questions in the next session either directly to me or in the class.

Class Conduct: You are responsible for everything that is announced, presented or discussed in class. The way to avoid any misunderstanding associated with this course is to attend class. You are expected to attend class and I do keep attendance records. **The class starts promptly at the scheduled time.** I find late arrivals distracting, which cause a decline in the quality of my lecture.

<u>Grading Criteria</u>		
Grading points	%	Quality
A	96-100	4.00
A-	90-95	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.00
D-	60-62	0.67

Importantly, it is also disruptive to your colleagues. I accept students **only up to five minutes late for the first class in a day.** Please, refrain from talking during class, it is disruptive to your colleagues and the lecture. I expect the best behavior from all of you. This is what education is all about. If you have a question about the material, please don't hesitate to ask me; answering questions is part of my job. If you are lost or confused, your question may help clarify the topic. Please, consider that **the language of instruction is English, so all our conversation into the class must be in this language.**

Class participation and an active intellectual engagement are not only expected but required. Students will deliver their class presentations on the discussion topics. As a final examination students will complete a comprehensive written test. The written test will discuss the material covered in the course readings, reading questions and case studies.

Keep in mind the following:

C- or better is required to use a course either as a prerequisite or as a major requirement.

G.P.A. (Grade Point Average): is computed for each student using the quality points earned for each course taken. A G.P.A of at least 2.0 is required for transfer and to graduate from ACS.

I wish you an interesting and creative academic semester.

Academic Honesty

The American College Skopje has its personal integrity which is presumed to be sufficient assurance in academic matters one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honour System.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences and may be punished by failure on the exam, paper or project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion from the faculty. Individuals are prohibited from selling or being paid for taking notes in any form (written, electronic, or otherwise) during this course to or by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course.

Late Work:

Many reasons are given for late work (e.g., flat tires, printer problems, illness, oversleeping, etc.). No matter what the reason, the bottom line is that either (a) the work was completed and turned in when required or (b) the assignment was not completed and turned in when required.

As specified earlier, assignments are due in class at the beginning of class on the specified due date. There is NO PROVISION for late work on any assignment (i.e., late work is not accepted). I also strongly recommend having backup systems in place so that you can have all work completed on schedule. Having your work completed on schedule is a key to early success in your business career.

NOTE: Late submissions are not accepted. Partial credit will NOT be given for late work.

**Approved by: Nikica Mojsoska
Marjan Petreski**

Date: 09/2011