



Lincoln University

BA 298 I – Special Topics in Business: Business Research Methodology

COURSE SYLLABUS
Department of Business and Economics
Spring, 2015

Credit: 3 units (45 lecture hours)
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Office Hours: By arrangement

Revised: February 10, 2015

Supplementary Textbook

Bryman, A.; Bell, E. (2011) *Business Research Methods*. Oxford: OUP. 3rd edition.
ISBN-10: 0199583404; ISBN-13: 978-0199583409.

Catalog Description

This course offers topics of specialized interest in the major fields of study. Case studies and independent research may be included. Topics vary each term; so students should not include this in a concentration unless they know it will be available. (1-4 units)

In Spring Semester 2015, the course objective of BA 298 I is to prepare the student for business research. Emphasis is on practical work and not on memorizing or deriving formulas. Ethical aspects of research are featured. Students are expected to develop understanding and practice in research techniques, writing of short reports, use of statistical tools and presentation techniques, preparation of effective tables and diagrams, as well as footnotes and bibliographical references. (3 units) Prerequisite: BA 45 or BA 241

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the scientific method as well as requirements for a high quality research.
2. Clearly identify relevant business problem and design business research activities.
3. Conduct business research and collect various types of data.
4. Employ major business research methods.
5. Acquire improved analytical, communicative, and research skills.
6. Apply acquired knowledge in working on the Research Project (BA 399).

Procedures and Methodology

Lecture method is combined with in-class discussions, case studies and home assignments of various kinds. Core concepts identified from the textbook will be augmented with supplementary sources (made available to students on the class website) and applied to the real life situations during class activities. This course contains a lot of theoretical and abstract ideas that can only be made practical through class activities and discussion. Therefore class participation is essential to the success of the course.

Class Rules

This list of rules is the product of experience (rather than arbitrary ideas of “how classes should be run”) and is designed to keep the course effective and convenient for everyone. Therefore the rules that are outlined here will be followed with **no exceptions** (in order to preserve fairness all exceptions would have to be offered to everyone, and this is neither feasible nor possible).

1. Class attendance is required. Attendance will be taken each class at a time chosen by the instructor.
2. Students are required to arrive to class on time. Showing up late disturbs the natural flow of the lecture and affects everyone’s experience. Usually, up to 10 minutes of “grace period” is allowed. However, if students choose to show up 10 minutes into class on a regular basis, this rule will be reviewed and no one will be allowed in after the start of the class.
3. Once you receive an invitation to the course website (or obtain the registration code), make sure to set up your profile in such a way that it would be possible for the instructor to identify you – use your name (as it is in the Lincoln University records) as your primary ID and your Lincoln University email as your secondary ID as well as a profile photo.
4. Submissions of home assignments will be conducted via the course website only (Canvas Instructure). **Absolutely no hard copy or email submissions will be accepted!** The acceptable format for assignment submission is .txt, .doc, .docx, and .pdf.
5. All quizzes, exams, assignments and projects must be completed and handed in on time. Late submissions will result in lower grade (each day of delay costs 2% points). This rule will be strictly enforced. Since all assignments are available on the website, the fact that you have not been in class when the assignment was given cannot be used as an excuse to submit it later.
*For those joining the class later: all assignments have to be submitted within the first week of registering for the class. After that, not submitted assignments will result in F.
6. Midterm exams and in-class assignments cannot be made up.
7. No cheating and no plagiarism, please! Detected cheating/plagiarism will result in “F” for the assignment. (This rule is very strictly enforced, no exceptions!).
8. All grades will be made available to students through the course website.

Exams

The exams (midterm and final) will consist of questions based on lectures, assigned chapters and supplementary reading as well as case studies / practical assignments.

The final exam (last day of classes) will be comprehensive, with a special emphasis given to several key topics of the course (this will be further explained in class).

Group Project

Every student must work in a group to prepare a research proposal. Students are given time before the first in-class assignment to form a group of their choosing and sign the group up on the course website. If a student is not a part of the group one week ahead of the first in-class activity, the group assignment will be completed by the instructor. After this point, no changes are allowed.

While this is a group work, each member of the group is expected to have a thorough understanding of all parts of the project.

The topic of the research proposal, possible data collection tools will be selected during a number of in-class assignments. The project will culminate in an in-class presentation during the penultimate class of the course.

Groups are expected to present their research proposals during the class (using visual aids) as well as submit a brief outline of the proposed research (not more than 2 pages).

Group Project Grading Criteria:

- Content
- Use of time
- Style

Research projects must comply with the Lincoln University guidelines.

Assessment Criteria

All assignments, quizzes, projects and exams are evaluated using the indicated system:

94-100	A	73-76	C
90-93	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	60-66	D
80-82	B-	0-59	F
77-79	C+		

Tentative Weights

Attendance	5%
Homework and in-class activities	20%
Group Project	20%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

Course Outline

Topic	Chapter
Introduction. What is research? Ontology and epistemology of business research. Quantitative v. Qualitative	Ch. 1
Research Problem Definition. Value of research questions.	Ch. 3
Research Designs: Cross-sectional, Longitudinal, Experimental, Comparative, Case Study. Which one to choose?	Ch. 2
Research Methods: Structured Interview / Self-Completion Questionnaire.	Ch. 8-10
Research Methods: Experimental Method.	Ppt, handout
Midterm Exam	Ch. 1-3, 8-10, handouts
Research Methods: Content Analysis	Ch. 12
Research Methods: Structured Observation v. Ethnography	Ch. 11, 17
Qualitative research. Focus group.	Ch. 16, 19
Sampling	Ch. 7, ppt, handout
Data analysis.	Ch. 14, 22
Mixed Methods Research. Writing Up Business Research	Ch. 24-25, 27
Course Project Presentation	
Final Exam	Comprehensive