Lincoln University
SPRING 2017

COURSE: **BA 306: Business Research Methodology**
(Fridays 9:00 - 11:45 AM); 3 units (45 hours of lectures)

INSTRUCTOR: Igor Himelfarb, Ph.D. ihimelfarb@lincolnuca.edu;

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

TEXT (mandatory): Crano, W.D., Brewer, M.B., and Lac, A. (2014). Principles and methods of social research. 3rd Ed. Taylor & Francis. IBSN: 978-0-415-63856-2.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
The course objective 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) Prerequisites: BA 45 or BA 241, BA 301, BA 304.

EDICATIONAL OBJECTIVES:
In this course, students will be presented a broad general introduction to contemporary research methods used in business and social sciences. After a brief introduction to issues in the philosophy of science, the major emphasis in the early portion of the course will be concentrated on research conceptualization, design, and measurement, with a particular focus on the logic of minimizing rival alternative explanations of findings. Later in course we will concentrate on non-experimental/quasi-experimental methods, their design, implementation and interpretation. My goal is that by the end of the course students will be able:

1. To think and understand the nature of a business problem/research question.
2. To design an optimal study for defined research question, and choose sampling and statistical methodology for the preferred design.
3. To become familiar with the issues of validity and reliability.
4. To discuss/communicate the fundamentals of research findings and basic methods to stake holders.
5. To become familiar with scientific databases/literature used in business.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

The emphasis will be on learning by solving problems. Every student is welcome to participate in intensive classroom activities. Lecture method is combined with in-class discussions, reading of scientific articles, and various homework assignments. Core concepts identified from the textbook will be augmented with supplementary sources made available to students, 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 ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Attendance is crucial to performing well in this course, as some of the material presented may not be found in the textbook. Further, the lecture and classroom demonstrations will emphasize and expand upon important topics found in the textbook. Thus, it is vital that you take thorough notes in class.

ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be a weekly homework assignment. These assignments will typically consist of some theoretical exercises, reading of published articles and short write-ups. The purpose of the assignments will be to provide a medium through which you really learn the material. Students are welcome to work with other classmates on the homework, but it is expected that each student turns in his/her own, independently written, homework. Any indication that work was directly shared will not be tolerated and will result in a non-passing grade.
Please bring a ***hard copy*** of your ***typed and stapled*** homework assignment that has your name on it to class the day it is due. ***Please no e-mailed assignments***. ***No late homework will be accepted!***

There will be a number of readings (mostly journal articles) assigned periodically in addition to the reading in the textbook.

In accordance with the university policy on cheating and plagiarism, any student who does not do his/her own write-up completely independently on any assignment will fail the assignment.

EXAMS:

There will be three exams — two midterms and a final. To assess your learning in this course, exam questions will be derived from the lecture, read articles, and the textbook. Topics covered in lecture will be of major emphasis on the exams, and should be the focus of your textbook readings, though there will be some test questions found in the assigned readings but not covered in the lecture Exams may include conceptual or theoretical questions, problems based on real-life scenarios and interpretation of results. ***All exams are open books and open notes.***

QUIZZES:

To encourage attendance and to help students with assessment of their knowledge, there will be a set of unannounced quizzes given at the start of class. They will be based on lecture and any assigned reading. They will not be computational in nature, but rather conceptual questions intended to help students gauge how well they understand the material.

GROUP PROJECT:

Every student must work in a group to prepare a research proposal. Each group will present their research proposal, and the presentation will be evaluated by the instructor. Collaboration is very important; however, while this is a group work, each member of the group is expected to have a thorough understanding of all parts of the project. Specific guidance for the group project will be given in the first weeks of class.

GRADING:

Percentage	Grade
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
below 60%	F

Weights	
Homework	10%
Quizzes and class participation	10%
Group project	10%
Midterm 1	20%
Midtem 2	20%
Final	30%

CLASSROOM POLICY:

Please do not use personal computers, iPads or smart phones during the lecture. Please use pen and paper to take your notes. If you do need to text message or receive a call, please take it outside the classroom.

I am available and will do my best to help you learn and succeed. Questions and points of discussion are encouraged. I am also highly accessible for discussions if you wish to receive additional information or learn more about a certain topic or need help with understanding of research methodology. Please visit me during my office hours, or talk to me immediately after class, if you need study tips or additional help. No appointment is required for my office hours.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week	Content
Week 1: January 20	Overview. Scientific method. Ways of knowing. Ethics in research.
Week 2: January 27	Measurement: Reliability and validity.
Week 3: February 3	Reliability and validity. Research ideas.
Week 4: February 10	Experimental design.
Week 5: February 17	ANOVA.
Week 6: February 24	Non-experimental design.
Week 7: March 3	More design: Between-subject design; within-subject design.
Week 8: March 10	Midterm 1
Week 9: March 17	Spring break.
Week 10: March 24	Factorial design. Interactions.
Week 11: March 31	Mediation and moderation in regression.
Week 12: April 7	Research strategies: Internal and external validity.
Week 13: April 14	Correlation design. Causality.
Week 14: April 21	Survey design. Sampling.
Week 15: April 28	Observational research. Secondary data analysis.
Week 16: May 5	Final exam.

Note: Instructor reserves the right to modify any part of this syllabus.

GOOD LUCK!

Syllabus Reviewed: 1/14/2017