



# Lincoln University

## BA 280 – Special Topics in Business Business Research Methodology

### COURSE SYLLABUS

Fall 2020

**Professor:** Prof. Sergey Aityan, PhD, DSc  
**Lecture Schedule:** Thursday, 3:30 PM – 6:15 PM  
**Credits:** 3 units (45 lecture hours)  
**Level:** Advanced (Adv)  
**Office Hours:** Monday, 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM  
Thursday, 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM  
Additional office hours by appointment.  
e-mail: [aityan@lincolnuca.edu](mailto:aityan@lincolnuca.edu)  
☎: (510) 628-8016

**Textbook:**

- 1. Course lectures notes:**  
Sergey Aityan (2020), *Business Research Methodology*, Lincoln University, <http://elearning.lincolnuca.edu>.
- 2. Supporting Textbook:**  
William G. Zikmund, Barry J. Babin, Jon C. Carr, and Mitch Griffin, (2012), *Business Research Methods*, 9th Edition, South-Western College Pub, 696 p.  
ISBN-10: 1111826927  
ISBN-13: 978-1111826925  
\*\*\* previous editions of this book are okay too \*\*\*

**Last Revision:** August 6, 2020

### 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)

*Prerequisite: Instructor's permission*

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

To introduce students to research, its goal, purpose and methodology. Students will learn how to identify and select a research problem, write a proposal, design and conduct research, write a report, make a presentation, and defend the project. Learning objectives are:

- To understand the nature of a business problem and translate it into a research problem.
- To learn major phases and steps in the research process
- To learn how to do research designs, and use data sources.
- To become familiar with major research methods in business such as sampling experiments, hypothesis testing, comparative analysis, and cyber intelligence
- To learn how to select samples and get familiar with general measurement issues.
- To understand fundamentals of survey research and basic methods of communication with respondents.
- To learn how to write reports, make presentations, and defend research projects.

### **COURSE PROJECT**

Every student must complete and submit a group research proposal as a course project.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend each class session. If you cannot attend a class due to a valid reason, please notify the instructor prior to the class.

### **EXAMS**

Both, midterm and final exams are structured as written essay to answer the given questions. Each exam includes six questions. The essay must be written clearly and easy to read, structurally with clear logical presentation of the answers. Graphs, charts, tables, and other supporting illustrations are required if needed. Examples to illustrate the answers are required.

The exams are neither “open book” nor “open notes.” The final exam is comprehensive, i.e. includes the whole course.

Cheating in exam results in immediate termination of the exam, grade “F” with ZERO points, and report to the dean.

The instructor reserves the right to replace the written exam with a verbal exam if finds appropriate.

### **GRADING**

All activities will be graded according to the points as shown below.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	CR	NC
Points	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	60-72	0-59

“CR” means “Credit”, “NC” means “No Credit”.

In exams, every answer is graded by points from 0 to 100 and the total points for an exam are calculated as the average of the points received for all answers in the exam.

The final grade for the course will be given as the total weighted score for all activities according to the percentage shown in the table below.

Activity	Time	Percent
Quizzes, home tasks, other assignments, and classroom activities	Every week	20%
Course project		20%
Mid-term exam	In the middle of the course	30%
Final exam	In two weeks after the course	30%

If both grades for the midterm and final exams are “F” the term grade for the course is “F” regardless of the grades for the project, home tasks, attendance, and other activities.

### **NO MAKE-UP WORK**

Assignments are to be completed on time during the course. Late assignments will result in a reduced grade. Mid-term and final exams and group presentations cannot be made up if missed unless there is a documented emergency.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>#</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>As in lectures</b>
1	Aug. 27	(a) About the Course (b) Nature of Research	Ch. 1
2	Sep. 3	(a) Methodology of Research (b) Research Process	Ch. 2 Ch. 3
3	Sep. 10	(a) Selecting Research Problem (b) Data Search, Bibliography, and Review of Literature (c) Project Review	Ch. 4 Ch. 5
4	Sep. 17	(a) Hypotheses (b) Developing Research Design	Ch. 6 Ch. 7
5	Sep. 24	(a) Writing Research Proposal (b) Project Review	Ch. 8
6	Oct. 1	(a) Data Collection and Measurements (b) Project Review	Ch. 9
7	Oct. 8	(a) Probability (b) Expectation and Risk	Ch. 10 Ch. 11
8	Oct. 15	(a) Statistics (b) Sampling (c) Project Review	Ch. 12 Ch. 13
9	Oct. 22	Midterm Exam	Ch. 1 - 14
10	Oct. 29	(a) Survey (b) Comparative Analysis (c) Project Review	Ch. 14 Ch. 15
11	Nov. 5	(a) Deriving Conclusions (b) Writing Research Report (c) Project Review	Ch. 16 Ch. 17
12	Nov. 12	(a) Plagiarism (b) Research Ethics	Ch. 18 Ch. 19
13	Nov. 19	(a) Defending Project and Publishing Papers (b) Project Review	Ch. 20
	Nov. 26	Thanksgiving Break – No classes	
14	Dec. 3	Comprehensive Final Exam	Ch. 1 – 20
15	Dec. 10	Course Project Presentations	

### **CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit. Acts of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) plagiarism;
- (b) copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment;
- (c) communicating test information with another person during an examination;
- (d) allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment;
- (e) using a commercial term paper service.

Cheating or plagiarism will result in zero points and letter grade F for an assignment, project, or exam and a report of the incident to the Dean of Students, who may place related documentation in a file. Repeated acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action.

### LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Letters of recommendation will be provided upon request to students, who have completed all course requirements and received grade “A” for the course.

### CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Assignments and projects require students to actively use resources of the library. A detailed guide to business resources of the library as well as the description of Lincoln University approach to information literacy are available at the [Center for Teaching and Learning](http://ctl.lincolnuca.edu) website (ctl.lincolnuca.edu).

### OTHER COMMENTS

- Please participate. What you put into the class will determine what you get out of it – and what others get out of it.
- Please come on time. Late arrivals disturb everyone else.
- If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes/slide printouts on the material covered from a classmate or the instructor.
- To avoid distracting noise in class, cellular phones must be turned off or the ringing mode silenced.
- Questions and comments during the class are welcome. Do not hesitate to ask questions – do not leave anything unclear for you.

### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES<sup>1</sup>

	Course Learning Outcome	Program LO	Institutional LO	Assessment Activities
1	Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method as well as requirements for a high-quality research.	PLO 2	ILO 1a, ILO 2a, ILO 4a	Case studies, home tasks, quizzes, midterm/final exam
2	Be able to clearly communicate research purpose, methods, and results to all relevant stakeholders.	PLO 3	ILO 2a, ILO 7a	Course project

<sup>1</sup> Detailed description of learning outcomes and information about the assessment procedure are available at the [Center for Teaching and Learning](http://ctl.lincolnuca.edu) website (ctl.lincolnuca.edu).

3	Clearly identify a business problem and propose research activities that aid decision-making.	PLO 4	ILO 4a, ILO 5a, ILO 6a	Case studies, home tasks, quizzes, course project
4	Develop and implement a framework for collecting and analyzing data relevant to a business decision; be familiar with major research designs, approaches, and methods.	PLO 5	ILO 1a, ILO 2a, ILO 4a	Home tasks, quizzes, course project
5	Analyze the ethical implications of research process and be able to formulate effective and rigorous research strategy	PLO 6	ILO 3a	Home tasks, quizzes, midterm/final exam, course project

**MODIFICATION OF THE SYLLABUS**

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus at any time during the semester. Announcements of any changes will be made in a classroom.