RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course code | *GRAL010* |
| Level of studies | *Graduate* |
| Number of credits | *6 ECTS*; *36 class hours, 124 hours of self-study, 2 hours for consultation* |
| Course coordinator (title and name) | *Prof. dr. Bill Lee, e-mail: billee@faculty.ism.lt* |
| Prerequisites | *Undergraduate diploma* |
| Language of instruction | *English* |

**THE AIM OF THE COURSE**

The course provides an introduction to research methods used in business and management. It covers qualitative and quantitative methods, using primary and secondary data. The course is designed to provide students with a solid foundation for conducting their own research and understanding and critically evaluating prior academic research. The course presents the fundamentals of the research process. The knowledge and competencies acquired in a study process will empower students to make methodological decisions in designing and planning research. The overall goal of the course is to equip students with the skills necessary to perform research.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Course learning outcomes (CLO)** | **Study methods** | **Assessment methods** |
| CLO1. Understand the relevance of research in managerial decision-making. | Lectures, class discussion | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO2. Have a critical awareness of research issues, methodologies, and methods used in business and management as well as understanding of potential ethical problems of the research | Lectures, discussion, individual study, home assignments | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO3. Obtain skills to identify a business problem/ need, translate it into a research question, and design an appropriate way to answer it. | Lectures, individual study, home assignments, presentation | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO4. Develop skills to identify and understand the main qualitative and quantitative strategies of research, their advantages and disadvantages and appropriate application areas. | Lectures, individual study, home assignments | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO5. Develop skills to design a research project and collect data. | Lectures, team work, individual study, home assignments | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO6. Obtain skills to analyse data and draw reasonable interpretations as well as communicate research findings in a clear and well-organized way | Lectures, individual study, team work, home assignments | Participation, research project assessment |
| CLO7. Develop skills to critically evaluate the quality of other researchers’ findings and the process used to obtain them. | Lectures, individual study, home assignments | Participation, research project assessment |

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. With regard to remote learning, ISM remind students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **In-class hours** | **Readings** |
| **Introduction to research.** Introduction and definition of research. Generating research questions and hypotheses. Broad types of research design. Ethical considerations.  *Assignment at class: generating and discussing ideas for research and considering the ethical implications* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods*, 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapters 1 and 3.  Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson education, chapters 1 and 2. |
| **Philosophical positions**. Considerations of epistemology, ontology and axiology and understandings of reality, knowledge and what is important.  *Assignment at class: Justification of a research question that you consider to being important and explaining how your ontological and epistemological stance will enable you to answer that question.* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods*, 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 2.  Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson education, chapter 4. |
| **Reviewing the literature**: Understanding different types and sources of literature and approaches to literature reviews including narrative literature reviews, systematic literature reviews, meta-analysis and meta-synthesis.  *Assignment at class: Formulating a strategy for reviewing the literature to address a research question or hypothesis.* | 4 | Adams, R.J., Smart, P. and Huff, A.S. (2017). ‘Shades of Grey: Guidelines for Working with the Grey Literature in Systematic Reviews for Management and Organizational Studies’, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(4), pp. 432–454.  Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods*, 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 5.  Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson education, chapter 3.  Tranfield, D.R., Denyer, D. and Smart, P.K. (2003). ‘Towards a Methodology for Developing Evidence-Informed Management Knowledge by Means of Systematic Review’, *British Journal of Management*, 14(3), pp. 207-222. |
| **Collecting quantitative evidence:** Databases, questionnaires and surveys, experiments.  *Assignment at class: Designing a questionnaire* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods,* 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 11.  Ekinci, Y. (2015). *Designing Research Questionnaires*, Sage: London.  Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 8th edition, Harlow: Pearson Education, chapter 11. |
| **Analyzing and reporting quantitative data**. Factor analysis. Correlation and regression analysis.  *Assignment at class: Consideration of the relationship between different types of questionnaire data and different forms of analysis.* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods,* 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapters 15 and 16.  Dawson, J. (2017). *Analysing Quantitative Survey Data*, London: Sage.  Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson education, chapter 12.  Scherbaum, C.A. and Shockley, K.M. (2015). *Analysing Quantitative Data*, London: Sage. |
| **Collecting qualitative evidence**: Ethnography, autoethnography, individual interviews, group interviews, focus groups and documents of different types.  *Assignment at class: Preparing an interview schedule.* | 4 | Alvesson, M. and Ashcraft, K.L. (2012). ‘Interviews’ in Symon, G. and Cassell, C. (eds.) *The Practice of Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*, London, Sage, pp. 239–57.  Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods*, 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapters 17-23 inclusive.  Cassell, C. (2015). *Conducting Research Interviews*, London: Sage.  Lee, B. (2021). *How do I collect documentary evidence?* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.  Lee, B. and Aslam, U. (2018). ‘Towards the wholesome interview: Technical, social and political dimensions’ in Cassell, C., Cunliffe, A. and Grandy, G. (eds.): *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods: Methods and Challenges*, London: Sage.  Oates, C.J. and Alevizou, P.J. (2017). *Conducting Focus Groups*, London: Sage.  Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson education, chapters 9 and 10.  Whiting, R. and Pritchard, K. (2020). *Collecting Qualitative Data Using Digital Methods*, London: Sage. |
| **Analyzing qualitative data**. Template analysis, stories and metaphor analysis.  *Assignment at class: Applying a method of qualitative data analysis to a news item of your choice.* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods,* 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 24.  Gabriel, Y. (2018). ‘Stories and Narratives’ in Cassell, C., Cunliffe, A. and Grandy, G. (eds.): *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods: Methods and Challenges*, pp. 63-81, London: Sage.  Greatbatch, D. and Clark, T. (2017). *Using Conversation Analysis*, London: Sage.  King, N. and Brookes, J.M. (2017). *Template Analysis*, London: Sage.  Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 8th edition, Harlow: Pearson Education, chapter 13  Walsh, I., Holton, J.A. and Mourmant, G. (2020): *Conducting Classic Grounded Theory*, London: Sage. |
| **Conducting mixed methods research**. Strategies for mixed methods research and multi-methods research including case studies.  *Assignment at class: Propose a design of a mixed methods study to address a research question of your choice.* | 4 | Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods,* 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapters 26 & 27.  Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 2nd Edition, Sage: London.  Lee, B. and Saunders, M.N.K. (2017). *Conducting Case Studies*, London: Sage.  Lee, B. and Saunders, M.N.K. (2019). “Case Study Research in Business and Management” in Atkinson, P.A., Cernat, A., Delamont, S., Sakshaug, J.W. and Williams, R.A. (Eds.), *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. Sage Publications, available at: <http://methods.sagepub.com/foundations/case-study-research-in-business-and-management>  Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 8th edition, Harlow: Pearson Education, pp. 176-212. |
| Final research proposals presentation and discussion | 4 | N/A |
|  | **Total: 36 hours** |  |

**FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of assignment** | **Self-study hours** | **% of the total grade** |
| Research proposal (individual component) | 50 | 55% |
| Examination (individual component) | 74 | 45% |
| **Total:** | **124** | **100** |

**DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT**

**Assessment 1. Research Proposal (Expanded)**: The project for this course will involve you beginning to develop your thesis. More information regarding the specific requirements of the proposal will be available in class. The basic structure of the Proposal should include the following sections:

1. Thesis topic
2. Thesis problem definition
3. Thesis goal and objectives
4. Research design (including justification of selected method(s) of research)
5. Methods of data collection and analysis
6. Sequence in which the intended research will be carried out.
7. Bibliography

Students have to present the proposals in class and deliver complete proposals via e-learning system.

**Assessment 2. Examination**

**Exam** will cover the conceptual material from the lectures, readings and questions relating to lecture/discussion material from class. Exam questions will be multiple choice. Exam will count 45% of the final grade.

**RETAKE POLICY**

**Retake of the research proposal.** Research proposals cannot be retaken.

**Exam re-take:** Exam can be retaken as per standard ISM procedures.

**ADDITIONAL REMARKS**

**Class Participation:** Class discussions and questions make the subject more interesting and relevant, for both students and the instructor.

**Assistance:** Do not ever hesitate to request assistance with anything you do not understand.

**Electronic Devices: NO electronic devices may be used in the classroom** without prior instructor approval. Please turn off ALL cell phones and communication devices during class. Computers will be exempt only with prior instructor approval.

**Class Conduct/Professional Behavior:** Students are expected to behave in a manner conducive to an educational setting in the classroom. Inappropriate behavior will result in the student being asked to leave the class. In addition, students contacting the public (including, but not limited to, research for your project) are expected to act in a professional manner – keeping appointments, dressing appropriately if personal interview, being respectful of the publics’ time, etc.

**Deadlines and Details:** Meeting deadlines and taking care of details are of extreme importance. Therefore, for all assignments that are not turned in on time a grade of “0” will be given. If for any reason you require an extension, please inform your lecturer in advance.

**Communication:** The students must use their official ISM e-mail to contact the lecturer and clearly indicate the **course name and the subject matter of the question** in the subject line of the e-mail. Whenever the students have to submit their work, their names must be clearly indicated on the document and the document must be properly formatted according to ISM requirements. The file names of e-mailed documents, such as the research project, must include the **students’ last names**. It is very important that you follow these rules so your e-mails and submissions do not get lost.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Adams, R.J., Smart, P. and Huff, A.S. (2017). ‘Shades of Grey: Guidelines for Working with the Grey Literature in Systematic Reviews for Management and Organizational Studies’, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(4), pp. 432–454.

Alvesson, M. and Ashcraft, K.L. (2012). ‘Interviews’ in Symon, G. and Cassell, C. (eds.) *The Practice of Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*, London, Sage, pp. 239–57.

Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2019). *Business Research Methods*, 5th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cassell, C. (2015). *Conducting Research Interviews*, London: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 2nd Edition, Sage: London.

Dawson, J. (2017). *Analysing Quantitative Survey Data*, London: Sage.

Ekinci, Y. (2015). *Designing Research Questionnaires*, London: Sage.

Gabriel, Y. (2018). ‘Stories and Narratives’ in Cassell, C., Cunliffe, A. and Grandy, G. (eds.). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods: Methods and Challenges*, pp. 63-81, London: Sage.

Greatbatch, D. and Clark, T. (2017). *Using Conversation Analysis*, London: Sage.

King, N. and Brookes, J.M. (2017). *Template Analysis*, London: Sage.

Lee, B. (2021). *How do I collect documentary evidence?* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Lee, B. and Aslam, U. (2018). ‘Towards the wholesome interview: Technical, social and political dimensions’ in Cassell, C., Cunliffe, A. and Grandy, G. (eds.): *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods: Methods and Challenges*, London: Sage.

Lee, B. and Saunders, M.N.K. (2017). *Conducting Case Studies*, London: Sage.

Lee, B. and Saunders, M.N.K. (2019). “Case Study Research in Business and Management” in Atkinson, P.A., Cernat, A., Delamont, S., Sakshaug, J.W. and Williams, R.A. (Eds.), *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. Sage Publications, available at: <http://methods.sagepub.com/foundations/case-study-research-in-business-and-management>

Oates, C.J. and Alevizou, P.J. (2017). *Conducting Focus Groups*, London: Sage.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 8th edition. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Scherbaum, C.A. and Shockley, K.M. (2015). *Analysing Quantitative Data*, London: Sage.

Tranfield, D.R., Denyer, D. and Smart, P.K. (2003). ‘Towards a Methodology for Developing Evidence-Informed Management Knowledge by Means of Systematic Review’, *British Journal of Management*, 14(3), pp. 207-222.

Walsh, I., Holton, J.A. and Mourmant, G. (2020). *Conducting Classic Grounded Theory*, London: Sage.

Whiting, R. and Pritchard, K. (2020). *Collecting Qualitative Data Using Digital Methods*, London: Sage.