RESEARCH METHODS (研究方法)

SPRING 2005

Instructor: 耿念豫
Class meeting: Fridays 9:10 am-12:00 pm; schedule subject to change upon advanced notice
Email: nienyu@dragon.nchu.edu.tw
Class website: http://web.nchu.edu.tw/~nienyu
Office phone: (04)2287-6909, leave messages if not answered

Required Text:

Optional:

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to introduce students to empirical thinking, empirical methods, and empirical writing in graduate school. Its curriculum is built around the skills necessary to successfully write a thesis proposal and complete a thesis. However, the course is general enough to benefit any student requiring a graduate level course in research methodology or seeking to brush up his or her empirical writing skills (e.g., students in Applied Economics or Veterinary Medicine, etc.)

Finding appropriate primary source material and learning to read this material critically, choosing a research topic, and turning a topic into a specific question and a testable hypothesis will be discussed early in the semester. Next, we will examine sampling procedures and tests and measurements used in the social sciences, with attention to reliability and validity of observations regardless of specific methods of data collection. From there, we will turn our focus toward the major research designs used in the social sciences, including correlational and descriptive methods and experimental methods. The emphasis will be on quantitative methods, and students who intend to pursue more qualitative projects in the future will need further specialized training although qualitative research will be discussed in class. Finally, presenting the results of research will be addressed, including how to write a results section in a journal article or thesis, how to use tables and figures appropriately, and how to discriminate between the results section and the discussion section in a manuscript.
**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Attendance is required, and students are encouraged to read as much as possible early in the semester, as papers and projects will be due quickly. The syllabus suggests reading to emphasize for each class meeting. However, this course presumes you will take an active approach to learning. Pragmatically speaking, this means reading the textbook in its entirety.

Each student is expected to write one article length paper for the midterm exam and one research proposal during the course. The first paper will be based on empirical data collected by the class, and will be written in sections of 6-8 pages (e.g., Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion) and the second one will be limited in length (no more than 15 pages) and be done in the format of an APA thesis proposal.

The final paper, taking the form of a proposal, is more substantial and requires a proposal that contains a problem statement, research objectives, literature review, research design, expected nature and form of results, support and facilities, bibliography, and appendices (if necessary). The Research Problem contains a brief overview or abstract answering four specific questions. Because the proposal does not include writing about results, students are encouraged to begin this paper as soon as possible rather than waiting until the last few weeks of the semester. Individual meetings to discuss proposal ideas and potential methods are available to all students.

**GRADING**

Grades will be based on a combination of written work and your class participation. The midterm class project will be 30%. The final paper will be 40%. The class presentation of journal article evaluation combined with overall participation will be the remaining 30%, with both effort and performance considered.

**Midterm Class Project 30%**

All students will participate in collecting data to complete the midterm exam. You, individually, will identify and administer a brief questionnaire to a population consists of business professionals, academics, and graduate students. Class data will be pooled by all students, and you will use the pooled data to generate t-test and correlational “results” to be used in the results and discussion sections of the exam. You, as a team, will need to develop a hypothesis about the subject matter (mindful of the data available), and will need to use the library to find articles on the relevant variables in order to write the introduction and conclusion. Thus, the focus of the midterm is flexible but limited by the data the class collects.

**Journal Article Evaluation (a team effort) 30%**

Please investigate one of the listed journals for an article of interest to you. Choose one (published later than 1999) that has sufficient content that you can write a report to me in memorandum style (not to exceed 2 to 3 double- spaced
pages). In addition, be prepared to give a 5 to 8 minute briefing of the article to a group of your peers on the date assigned. This oral report should follow the suggestions that have been given to you in class plus the advice in Chapter 20 of the text. You are requested to submit your visuals along with the written memorandum report at the end of the class period. The journals from which you may secure the research about which you are to report are the following:

1. Academy of Management Review
2. Administrative Science quarterly
3. American Journal of Small Business
4. Business and Society Review
5. Business Economics
6. Business Horizons
7. California Management Review
8. Columbia Journal of World Business
9. Decision Sciences
10. Financial Management
11. Harvard Business Review
12. Industrial and Labor Relations Review
13. Industrial Marketing Management
14. Journal of Accountancy
15. Journal of Advertising Research
16. Journal of Applied Behavior Science
17. Journal of Applied Psychology
18. Journal of Bank Research
19. Journal of Banking and finance
20. Journal of Business Research
22. Journal of Industrial Economics
23. Journal of Marketing
24. Journal of Marketing Research
25. Journal of Retailing
26. Management Review
27. Personnel Journal
28. Production and Inventory Management
29. Quirk's Marketing Research Review
30. Sloan Management Review
31. Training and Development Journal

Final Paper: Proposal (a team effort) 40%

Each group must choose a topic (preferably your own future research interest), and write a proposal for a research project. Follow the format in the American Psychology Association (APA) guidelines. This final paper is more substantial and requires a proposal that contains a problem statement, research objectives, literature review, research design, expected nature and form of results, support and facilities, bibliography, and appendices (if necessary). Papers are to be no more than 15 pages (prefer 10-12). You will present this paper in class, presenting the background, your hypothesis, and your proposed method of testing your hypothesis.

Each group will be expected to present its proposal during the one of the last two class meetings. You are expected to use visual aids (or AV aids) in your presentation; this may take the form of handouts, overheads, slides, PowerPoint, etc. It should be a skillfully executed briefing with a generous use of visual aids. Normally, all team members should have a communication responsibility in the briefing. The purpose of the presentation is twofold: 1) to help you clarify your own understanding of your topic and give you experience discussing your research ideas (necessary for meeting with a thesis director) and 2) to get critical but constructive feedback from your peers regarding the logic of your argument, the appropriateness of you method, and the feasibility of your project.
### Class Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Introduction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Organize Your Research Step by Step</td>
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| 3/11   | Introduction to Library Resources and On-line resources  
         —Guest Speaker: 圖書館陳天民先生  
         地點：計算機及資訊網路中心 PC 第三教室     |
| 3/18   | Research in Business ; Applying Scientific Thinking to Management Problems  
         **Due: The first research proposal. This report will contain a tentative problem statement, research objectives, and bibliography. (Ref. Exhibit 4-3)** |
| 3/25   | The Research Proposal; Data Preparation and Description  
         **Due: Journal articles to the instructor by groups** |
| 4/1    | Ethics in Business Research; Exploring, Displaying and Examining Data                               |
| 4/8    | Spring Break                                                                                      |
| 4/15   | Qualitative Research                                                                               |
| 4/22   | Design Strategies; Hypothesis Testing  
         **Due: Journal article memos**                                                               |
| 4/29   | **Due: Midterm Class Project (by noon, no late submission will be accepted)**                     |
| 5/6    | Student Presentations: Journal Article Evaluation                                                  |
| 5/13   | Sampling Design;                                                                                   |
| 5/20   | Measurement and Measurement Scales                                                                 |
| 5/27   | Survey Methods: Communicating with Respondents                                                     |
| 6/3    | Presenting Results: Written and Oral Reports  
         **Mandatory attendance to 2005 企業管理學術論壇研討會；地點另訂**                                |
| 6/10   | Student Presentations of Proposals  
         **Due: Final research proposal**                                                              |
| 6/17   | Student Presentations of Proposals                                                                 |
| 6/24   | Student Presentations of Proposals                                                                 |