

| <b>Applied (Business) Research</b>  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Who should take this course?</b> | Any student who wants to develop a better understanding of the role of inquiry and research to increase understanding, explain complex phenomenon, and to improve managerial decision-making. This is especially important in working with persons having different views perspectives and modes of inquiry.                   |
| <b>Instructor</b>                   | Dr. Emeric Solymossy, Ph.D. <a href="http://faculty.wiu.edu/E-Solymossy">http://faculty.wiu.edu/E-Solymossy</a><br>2009 Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Entrepreneurship for Central Europe<br>2010 Fulbright Senior Specialist: Technology Transfer in Argentina<br>2017 Fulbright Specialist: Research Methods (KUL) Poland |
| <b>Availability:</b>                | Office Location: To Be Determined<br>Phone number: If apartment has a phone, number will be provided.<br>Email address: E-Solymossy@wiu.edu (Most reliable contact mechanism)  |
| <b>Instructional supplements:</b>   | Based upon the number of students participating, between two and six research projects will be explored to provide “living” examples of the concepts. Some supplemental readings will be made available in PDF files, and the Power Point slides used will be available to students.   |
| <b>College: Department:</b>         | John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin [KUL], Department of Negotiations and Mediation   |
| <b>Course type:</b>                 | Combination lecture & interactive learning<br>Critical-Thinking foundation, emphasizing qualitative and quantitative methods<br>Student selected & designed research project (applied learning)  |
| <b>Credits:</b>                     | Designed to conform to ECTS, 3 credits (Please verify with Father W. Broński)  |
| <b>Time of class:</b>               | Days and time of day to be confirmed   |
| <b>Class Hours</b>                  | Two - 2 ½ hour session per week, ten sessions total  |
| <b>Personal Time</b>                | Students should <b>anticipate spending 5 – 7 hours per week outside of class time</b> (concept and material research, reading, performing personal research & analyzing)   |
| <b>Assessment</b>                   | Application project / engagement: 50%, Quizzes: 10%, Test 1: 15%, Test 2: 25%,<br>Not all students are required to have recorded grades  |

### **Aims, objectives and description of the course:**

We will explore a general outline of methods for conducting research; including research design, data collection and analysis, and presentation of results. The emphasis is on the methodology of conducting applied business research.

Many organizational mistakes can be directly traced to inaccurate information, inappropriate data, or invalid interpretation. All of these are due to inappropriate research. Our increasingly diversified global economy requires managers to be functional in both qualitative and quantitative methods, and to develop sensitivity to the target market or subjects of interest. This course will help you understand how good research enables professionals to make informed decisions. It will also give you an appreciation for the costs of poor research. This course involves discussions regarding research philosophy, design and research methodologies. You will develop understanding about and practical skills in performing qualitative and quantitative research by planning and conducting a systematic, thorough, critical, interpretative, and analytical search in such a way that it doesn't interfere with your God-given common sense.

### **Learning outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the course, you will:

- Be familiar with quantitative and qualitative tools and techniques for conducting research on issues impacting organizations.
- Be familiar with the fundamentals and dynamics of the research process as it is commonly applied and practiced.
- Be familiar with the professional journals, periodicals, newspapers, government documents, electronic data bases, the Internet, and other research materials available to business research.
- Be able to analyze, model and explain problems and issues in organizations in a practical manner, using mathematics, logic and spreadsheets (without relying on obfuscation and without violating common sense)
- Be able to take research information (data, models and results) and present it with graphs, charts and numerical assessments using Excel spreadsheets.
- Be able to interpret results and make recommendations using good English grammar and graduate-level communication skills
- Develop a more comprehensive set of skills for promoting professional effectiveness

- Become a more effective professional through enhanced critical analysis and decision making skills
- Be able to identify relevant information and to improve your oral and written presentation and articulation skills.
- Understand the nature of scientific inquiry. (while “truth” may be explored through faith and intuition, we will focus on the scientific method)

### **Methodology to be used:**

There will be a mixture of delivery methods. I will seek to minimize “lecture,” relying instead upon interactive, participative discussion. This does not minimize your responsibility for knowing the material. I expect that the material will have been thoroughly read by each student before class, so that we can have meaningful and enlightening discussions. We will apply the concepts through a combination of exercises, case studies and practice data sets. Every day use of business research will be a major feature of this course discussed later). Frequently, we will highlight major errors that have resulted from “mistakes” or errors in performing inquiry or using available data. We will explore different venues and uses of research (I would encourage you to read

[http://natcouncilofpsychotherapists.org.uk/Newsletter/Ed006/A\\_Classic\\_Illustration\\_of\\_How\\_the\\_Min\\_d\\_can\\_Affect\\_the\\_Body.html](http://natcouncilofpsychotherapists.org.uk/Newsletter/Ed006/A_Classic_Illustration_of_How_the_Min_d_can_Affect_the_Body.html)) as one example of common mistakes based on analysis and interpretation of information.

### **Applied Learning:**

#### **Articles / Topics demonstrating research application (every session):**

I will be distributing (or posting) articles to stimulate discussions and to help solidify the concepts and theories from this class. Students are required to read (and critically analyze) the articles, seeking implications (evidence) of the application (or absence) of elements of research (e.g., the gathering of data, use of conclusions, etc.). **No written work is required.** You may be called on (at any given time, or in any frequency) to present your analysis of how the concepts are being applied or ignored. I strongly encourage students to also research and bring in articles (especially within their professional domain). We will focus on applying the concept of using research to improve information and thereby improve management decisions.

#### **Applied project:**

Learning is facilitated by application. To reinforce students ability to apply the concepts learned in class to their personal and professional environment. Since this is a time-compressed course, our ability to delve into multiple projects becomes dependant on the size of the class. Our Applied project will have four distinct components, each of which will be considered separately, along with an overall evaluation at the completion of the project. We will discuss my expectations for the research projects and the requirements for productive and beneficial collaboration. The projects will have four separate areas with deliverables for evaluation (critique, not correction). I will critique by pointing out any areas of difficulties, and it will be up to the students to determine and implement appropriate corrective action.

1. **Phase I:** (Due end of week #1) Problem definition (research question) and research intentions, which includes the literature review (discussed separately below).
2. **Phase II:** (Due end of week #3) Research design articulated, data collection methodology, which includes the forms and sampling plan (e.g., questionnaire), but does not require data collection.
3. **Phase III:** (Due beginning of week #5) Confirmation of data acquisition, summary analysis and interpretation of the findings. This should include an integrated summary of findings – not a fragmented presentation of data.
4. **Phase IV:** (Due end of week #5) Outline / discussion of how research findings are to be presented and plausible to differing ontologies.

Some possible research topics will be discussed during the first session. We will be using two flow-charts to guide the research process, along with various forms of monitoring the various steps of the research process.

#### **Literature Review / Summarizing Extant Knowledge**

Research is made more effective and efficient when it is constructed on a foundation of extant knowledge. The process of gathering, digesting and compiling the existing state of knowledge on any research topic is crucial to its eventual success. Prior research and writings help identify the known variables and relationships of interest.

To gain insight into this process and to demonstrate functional ability to perform basic background search on research topics, each student (even if working on a team) will be responsible for personally gathering and summarizing a literature review on their assigned research topic. *Do not overlook books, and do not rely on Internet searches!* We will discuss annotated bibliographies, and I

will provide examples. They are generally a one or two paragraph summary of the principle issues, points of interest and conclusions of the referenced article. Abstracts are generally not suitable for the annotation.

### Quizzes, Final Examination:

Quizzes may be given on assigned reading PRIOR to class discussions. The purpose of the quizzes is to ensure that you are familiar with the text material before supplemental lectures are given. Regardless of the number of quizzes or number of questions, points will be prorated to 20.

Examination involves a two-test format. Each test will be comprehensive, and may include any combination of true / false, multiple choice, short-answer essay questions, and analysis of a research-based article. If short essay questions are used, full credit will be given for answers that are completely correct and use appropriate and valid examples. Half credit is given for answers that are *at least* half correct, or have half of the appropriate elements.

### Assessment and Grading:

Grades are based on the outcomes of your active engagement in the learning process and your ability to demonstrate competency. The grading is designed to assess your academic knowledge of the topic and concepts (testing), as well as your ability to recognize and apply these same concepts in "real-world" circumstances (applied projects). Grades are based on the outcome of quizzes, exercises, case studies, the applied projects, and the three tests. The final (recorded) grade is calculated on the basis of points awarded.

### Preliminary class schedule: (subject to change)

| Section 1 (Management Research - by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe) |                               |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| #1   | Day and time to be determined | Introduction; objectives   |
|  |                               | Ontology / Epistemology  |
|  |                               | Searching extant knowledge   |
|  |                               | Primary / Secondary Data   |
|  |                               | Types of Research  |
|  |                               | Characteristics of good research   |
|  |                               | Philosophical and Political Issues unique to management research               |
| #2   |                               | Settling on THE research topic & question and research domain                  |
|  |                               | Applied Project: Research Question & extant knowledge                          |
| #3   |                               | Research philosophy and research design  |
|  |                               | Introduction to Qualitative Methods  |
|  |                               | Brief introduction to Quantitative Methods                                     |
| #4   |                               | Research philosophy and research design (Continued)                            |
|  |                               | Application to "The" research question   |
| #5   |                               | Questions / Clarifications   |
|  | <b>Test #1</b>                |  |
| Section 2 (Research Methods for Business - by Uma Sekaran)           |                               |  |
| #6   |                               | Contrast classic and Hypothetico-Deductive methods with qualitative research   |
|  |                               | Research Process; definitions and framework                                    |
|  |                               | Research "process" flow chart (p56 of Sekaran eBook)                           |
| #7   |                               | Research Design & experimental designs (Table 6.2 on G-Drive)                  |
|  |                               | Research Issues; Variables and measurement                                     |
| #8   |                               | Data Collection Methods  |
|  |                               | Data Collection issues - application to applied projects                       |
|  |                               | Sampling   |
| #9   |                               | Data Analysis and Interpretation   |
|  |                               | Review Process and design flow charts  |
| #10  |                               | Finishing & Following up research (MR-Chapter 7, Sekaran Chptr 13 + addnl mtl) |
|  |                               | <b>Test #2</b>   |

## Grading elements and grade determination

| <b>Activities / Grading Components</b>        | <b>Points</b> | <b>% of Total</b> | <b>Grade determination</b> |          |
|---|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| Participation (active, informed engagement)   | 10            | 10%               | 91 or More Points          | <b>A</b> |
| Applied Project phase 1 (Design & Lit review) | 10            | 10%               | 81 thru 90 Points          | <b>B</b> |
| Applied Project phase 2 (Methodology & Data)  | 15            | 15%               | 71 thru 80 Points          | <b>C</b> |
| Applied Project phase 3 (Data Analysis)       | 15            | 15%               | 61 thru 70 Points          | <b>D</b> |
| Quizzes                                       | 10            | 10%               | 60 or Less Points          | <b>F</b> |
| Test #1                                       | 15            | 15%               |                            |          |
| Test #2                                       | 25            | 25%               |                            |          |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>100</b>    | <b>100%</b>       |                            |          |

Excepting for extreme circumstances (documented to the professor's satisfaction), Any student who misses 35% or more of the scheduled sessions will automatically fail the course (This means you must be present for 7 of the scheduled 10 sessions), Work requirements (unless with military duty orders) are not considered extreme circumstances.

### Readings:

A significant portion of the materials for this course are drawn from two different text books. Students are NOT required to purchase either for this course: This listing is to provide sufficient information for those students that seek to locate and purchase the books for their personal use. Both are frequently available on the used-book market. The first presents a qualitative perspective, the second, a quantitative perspective.

- Book #1: Mark Easterby-Smith, Richard Thorpe, & Andy Lowe: Management Research: An Introduction, 2nd Ed., Sage Publications ISBN: 0-7619-7285-4 (2nd Ed. Paperback) This volume is no longer available from the publisher. I personally do not like the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition; there are many copies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition available on the used market. A digital "proof" of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition is posted on the GDrive
- Book #2: Uma Sekaran: Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach 4th Ed., 2003 John Wiley & Sons, ISBN 0-471-20366-1
- I will distribute

### Policies:

We will adhere to all of the policies in effect at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.