Georgetown University  
School of Continuing Studies  
Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources Management  
Course Syllabus  
Summer 2014

Course: MPHR 502-40 - Research Process and Methodology

Class Time: Fridays 6:00p.m. – 9:35 p.m.

Location: 640 Massachusetts Avenue  
Washington, DC  
C124

Instructor: Edgar Noumair, Ph.D.

Office: Georgetown University  
640 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20057

Office Hours: By Appointment

Email: ehn7@georgetown.edu

Contact Telephone: 240-767-4777
Course Overview

This course instructs students in the importance of research design and methods in producing reliable and verifiable data for use in making evidence based analysis and conclusion in applied "real world" research that will have a direct relation to the student's career. Students will learn to define scientific knowledge and how worldviews and philosophical underpinnings inform research methodologies, cite and reference in APA style, and write an argument in an academic voice. Topics covered in this course include developing a research topic, identify, analyze, and synthesize literature in the field of study, writing the literature review, developing the research question, a review of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research methodologies and designs, units of analysis, ethical issues and the role of an institutional review board in conducting research, data collection, describe and analyze the data, test hypotheses, form a reasoned argument and conclusions based on a synthesis and evaluation of the evidence provided by the research design.

Course Description:

The Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) identifies empirical research methods as essential tools for HR professionals. Research Process and Methodology teaches students the analytical tools for conducting the required research for their future coursework and prepare them for their Capstone project. Because of the increasingly complex subject matters in human resources and organizations, as well as the problems and issues students deal with in research, students need to learn—early in their graduate careers—how to situate themselves in relationship to the sites that they study, as well as how to select methods, how to apply them, and how to analyze the data they gather.

Through familiarity with traditional research methods, as well as critiquing or conducting research, students are challenged to look critically at their research, problematizing the methods they've learned, and articulating the complexities of the specific, rhetorical situation. This type of identifying and communicating doesn't come easily to everyone, and must be practiced.

Therefore this is an interactive course, where students will share their intellectual passions and collaboratively create ideas. This approach allows students to learn to answer the foundational question of all research papers: “Why should the audience care?”

There are three (3) major sets of skills taught in this course: (1) becoming a researcher, (2) identifying researchable topics, and (3) learning to write a Literature Review.

Qualitative methods (data collection, analysis and synthesis) are a critical part of any Literature Review. Students learn the basics of research methods in order to support the development of a methodology for research papers.

Students learn to conduct research based on problems they identify. The final outcome is demonstrating an understanding of the components of a Literature Review and a Research Proposal.

Students develop the skills and competencies to:

• Become a researcher;
• Design, conduct, and report on academic research;
• Read and assess existing research critically;
• Develop a literature review that informs the chosen field of research; and
• Construct a research proposal for intellectually attacking a problem.

Required Texts:
   http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3

Recommended Readings:

Course Objectives:

Professor will:
1. Provide an in-depth overview of how to become a researcher by teaching research methods and procedures.
2. Exemplify the significance of identifying a researchable topic and a Thesis by applying research principles and asking pertinent questions about the topic.
3. Guide students in developing a Thesis Statement that will effectively answer questions posed and lead to crafting a paper where the Thesis is evident throughout.
4. Illustrate how the Literature Review is a significant part of the research project; identify its core components, outcomes and the proper manner in which to analyze and critique scholarly materials.
5. Instruct students in the basic methodology of qualitative and quantitative analysis for the social
6. Guide students as they develop competencies for writing research papers that adequately make the linkages between theory, method, research design, practical skills, the knowledge base of the subject and methodological foundations.

**Students will:**

1. Learn to become researchers through teaching research methods and procedures.
2. Identify a researchable topic and a Thesis by applying research principles and asking pertinent questions about the topic.
3. Develop a Thesis Statement that will effectively answer the central research questions (and other questions as appropriate).
4. Learn the components of the Literature Review and its significance as part of the research project; identify its core components, outcomes and the proper manner in which to analyze and critique scholarly materials.
5. Learn to employ the methodology of qualitative and quantitative analysis for the social sciences to ensure adequate collection, synthesis and analysis of data for their projects.
6. Develop the competencies for writing research papers that adequately make the linkages between theory, method, research design, practical skills, the knowledge base of the subject and methodological foundations.
7. Explain, summarize, distinguish between and question different approaches to social research.
8. Retrieve, use and critique existing articles from scholarly journals and databases in order to solve research problems.
9. Explain, compare and contrast different research designs/methodologies and to choose appropriate design for own research with which to collect and analyze data.
10. Design a theoretical framework, with testable hypotheses, on which research would be founded.
11. Create measures based on the theoretical framework and existing literature with which to test hypotheses and arrive at conclusions.
12. Solve research problems by careful and ethical analysis of data.
13. Recommend a course of action, to scholars and practitioners, which could create change.
14. Explain the ethics of research.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Week/Area of Focus</th>
<th>Readings before class time</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td><strong>Week 1 – Introductions, review of Syllabus, class process, learning outcomes, learning methods and assessment methods.</strong>&lt;br&gt;• The research process&lt;br&gt;• Becoming a Researcher; learning the fundamentals of research&lt;br&gt;• Preparing to join the research community</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Online History Workbook – Covers the entire Research Process:&lt;br&gt;Read: Effective Reading &amp; Note-taking:&lt;br&gt;• <a href="http://www.trentu.ca/history/workbook/reshtoolhttp://research.berkeley.edu/ucday/abstract.html">http://www.trentu.ca/history/workbook/reshtoolhttp://research.berkeley.edu/ucday/abstract.html</a>&lt;br&gt;• Bhattacherjee, Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practice: Chapters 1-2, pgs. 1-15&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=oa_textbooks">http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=oa_textbooks</a>&lt;br&gt;• Booth, Colomb &amp; Williams, Chapters 1&amp; 2, pgs. 1-26</td>
<td>• Be prepared to discuss required reading in class.&lt;br&gt;• Becoming a Researcher&lt;br&gt;• Begin reading about developing the Research Question and the Literature Review.&lt;br&gt;• Short paper assignment</td>
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<td>May 30</td>
<td><strong>Week 2 – Library Tutorial</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Library Tutorial &amp; Introduction to identifying viable sources to shape the topic (GU Librarian).</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Bhattacherjee, Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practice: Chapters 3-4, pgs.17-34</td>
<td>• Prepare questions for the Librarian.</td>
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<td>June 6</td>
<td><strong>Week 3 – Focusing on the Research Process &amp; Research Question &amp; Answer</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Steps in the research process</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Booth, Colomb &amp; Williams, Chapters 3&amp; 4, pgs. 35-66&lt;br&gt;&lt;strong&gt;Steps in the Research Process:&lt;/strong&gt;&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www2.suffolk.edu/sawl">http://www2.suffolk.edu/sawl</a> lib/research-process.html&lt;br&gt;• <a href="http://library.centralia.edu/learnhow/12steps.pdf">http://library.centralia.edu/learnhow/12steps.pdf</a>&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.slideshare.net/hisl">http://www.slideshare.net/hisl</a> ed/the-research-process</td>
<td>• <strong>Due:</strong> Short paper assignment.</td>
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<td>June 13</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td><strong>From Research Question to Thesis Statement</strong></td>
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<td>Review of the Research Question &amp; Response</td>
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<td>Developing the Thesis Statement</td>
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<td><strong>The Research Question</strong></td>
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<td><a href="http://www8.esc.edu/esconline/across_esc/writerscomplex.nsf/0/f87fd7182f0ff21c852569e2005a47b7">Link</a></td>
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<td><strong>Developing a Thesis Statement</strong></td>
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<td><a href="http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Thesis_or_Purpose.html">Link</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtm">Link</a></td>
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<td>June 20</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td><strong>Preparing for The Literature Review – Learning the Components.</strong></td>
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<td>Read: Applicable sections of <em>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</em> – for the remainder of the course – as related to the requirements of writing research papers</td>
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<td><strong>Developing the Literature Review</strong></td>
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<td>Components and guidelines for developing the Literature Review</td>
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<td>Description of Literature Review:</td>
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<td><a href="http://web.pdx.edu/~bertini/pdf/literature_review.pdf">Link</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/">Link</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://libguides.usc.edu/content.php?pid=83009&amp;sid=615851">Link</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/ReviewofLiterature.html#what">Link</a></td>
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<td>June 27</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td><strong>Literature Review Cont’d</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Methodology – Social Sciences Qualitative Analysis</strong></td>
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<td>Qualitative Analysis</td>
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<td>Quantitative Analysis</td>
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<td>Mixed Methods</td>
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<td>Data Collection methods and processes</td>
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|            |            | **Read:** Go to section on Planning the Methodology – the Qualitative Pathway:
|            |            | Crafting a Research Proposal: III. The Methodology (Qualitative Path) (Word Doc):
|            |            | [Link](http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/researchcourse/develop_writing_method_qualitative.html) |
|            |            | Qualitative Research Guide (Word Doc:
|            |            | [Link](http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/researchcourse/images/overview1.pdf) |
| July 4     | Week 7     | **No Class**                                                            |

July 4 – Week 7

**Due:** Literature Search and Literature Review Outline

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May 2014
The Professor reserves the right to make modifications to the Syllabus as deemed necessary. If that happens, students will be given advance notice.

**Grading Determination**

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<th>Grading Distribution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Paper/Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam/Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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The final grade will be based on a combination of weekly assignments, written reports, quizzes, and the Literature Review). Collaboration is valued in classroom activities, along with evidence of having completed reading assignments in preparation for class activities and assignments.

**Georgetown Grade Distribution Guidelines:**

Listed below are grades and academic standards for each grade awarded.

**A = 95-100%**

Clearly stands out as excellent work. An “A” grade work could be used as a model for other students to emulate. Shows excellent grasp of subject matter and conceptual integration. The presentation shows excellent in-depth analytical thinking and an elegantly innovative application. It is very well written and organized. Additional input is provided, relevant to the subject, from outside sources or personal experience.
A- = 90-94%
Represents high quality performance. Shows excellent grasp of subject matter and conceptual integration. Shows a high level of thinking, analysis and application. It is very well written and organized. Additional input is provided, relevant to the subject, from outside sources or personal experience.

B+ = 87-89%
Represents very good work. Shows thorough grasp of subject matter and effective application. Shows good thinking and analysis. It is well written and organized. Additional input is provided, relevant to the subject, from outside sources or personal experience.

B = 83-86 %
Represents satisfactory work. Shows adequate level of thinking and analysis. Standard of presentation, organization and appropriateness of application is adequate. Some level of additional input is provided.

B- = 80-82 %
Work is below graduate level expectations, marginally passing. Presentation is rather general, superficial, or incomplete and not very well written. Indicates minimal level of individual thought or effort with inadequate attempts at application.

C = 70-79%
Work is clearly unsatisfactory. It is poorly written and presented, shows poor analysis, misses important elements and lacks any noticeable attempts at application.

F = 69% and below
Fails to meet minimum acceptable standards.

Policies and Procedures:

Attendance: Students are expected at all meetings of the course. The SCS attendance policy is strictly adhered to. We do understand that from time to time, family, personal and or work emergencies may arise. In those circumstances, please contact the professor immediately, and before class begins. A student who misses more than two classes is subject to withdrawal from the class by Dean Metzler and a final grade of "F" in the course. Late arrivals of more than ten minutes after the start of class will count as one absence. Two late arrivals will count as two missed classes, and, will result in withdrawal from the class by Dean Metzler and a final grade of "F" in the course.

Use of Skype in the classroom is not permissible. Electronic devises (laptops, cell phones, iPads, etc.) in the classroom are to be used on a limited basis. At times in some classes, laptops may be required as part of classroom activities. Professors will notify students of this requirement in advance. No such requirement occurred in the prior term for this class.

Late Papers: Except in rare circumstances, late papers are not accepted. In case of an emergency, this rule can be waived with appropriate documentation and cause. Requests for extensions must reach us no later than a week before the paper is due. If the emergency is late-breaking, students must request a brief extension, with documentation and cause, before the assignment deadline or be subject to a grade reduction. The Professor will decide on whether to accept the request.
**Incompletes**
Incompletes are given in only the most extraordinary circumstances and with appropriate documentation. Where an incomplete is granted, a grade of “N” shall be granted until the work is handed in and, then, the grade shall be changed accordingly. In no case shall work submitted after the announced date (date will be announced in class) be granted an incomplete. The work shall be delivered no later than 4 p.m. on that day. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in an F.

**Citation System**
Students must use APA style in all papers submitted in the course.

[www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for Textual Similarity Review to TurnItIn.com or similar programs for detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be added as source documents in the www.turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers in the future. [http://www.turnitin.com/](http://www.turnitin.com/)

Since late papers will not be accepted, it is wise to submit the paper before the deadline, to allow for any technical problems encountered.

**Students with Disabilities Policy**
- Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Some accommodations might include note takers, books on tape, extended time on assignments, and interpreter services among others. Students must obtain an official letter from the Academic Resource Center listing the exact accommodations needed.

- Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) (Leavey Center, Suite 335; 202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu; [http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm](http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm)) before the start of classes to allow their office time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

**Honor System**
All students are expected to follow Georgetown’s honor code unconditionally. If you have not done so, please read the honor code material located online at: [http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/](http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/)

It is your responsibility to read and understand the university’s honor code (see website above). If you have any questions, please contact the professor or the appropriate university official.