Business Research Methods

Academic Year: 2016/2017
Semester: 2nd

Instructor(s): Sérgio Moreira

Course Description:
This course starts by discussing what is a research question and why a research questions are so important. After, it depicts five steps of a research project. First, finding out what is know about a research question (i.e., literature review). Second, define the potential of a research question (i.e., research design). Third, collect information relevant to a research question (i.e., data collection). Forth, use the collected information to answer a research question (i.e., data analysis). And, fifth, communicate the results (i.e., dissemination). Along the study of these five steps of a research project, students will contact with data analysis software (e.g., SPSS), reference management tools (e.g., Mendeley), and data collection platforms (e.g., Qualtrics). Assignments will include a group research project and an individual research essay based on a case study.

Course Content:
Introduction
A. Research questions and research design: The relevance of research questions, Types of research questions, and Research strategies
B. Literature Review: Aim and scope, Sources, Strategy, Reference management
C. Data collection: Sampling, Qualitative data, Quantitative data
D. Qualitative data analysis: Deductive and inductive procedures for qualitative data
F. Quantitative data analysis: Descriptive statistics, Inferential statistics and the Model comparison approach
F. Dissemination: Formats and types of data communication

Course Objectives:
By the end of the course students will know:
What is a research question, why a research question is important, and how a research question follows into a research project;
The importance and the procedures for conducting a literature review, namely, defining the aim and scope, identifying and prioritizing the sources, selecting the most suitable strategy, and recording the results;
The types of research questions, from exploratory to explanatory, and the respective research strategies, namely, experiments, case studies, and action research;
The importance of defining the population and the difference between probability and non-probability sampling techniques;
The most popular qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures, namely, interviews, focus groups, and surveys;
Deductive and inductive procedures for qualitative data analysis;
Descriptive and inferential data analysis with quantitative data using the model comparison approach, namely multivariate and data reduction techniques;
The basics about data analysis software (e.g., SPSS), reference management tools (e.g., Mendeley), and data collection platforms (e.g., Google Forms).

Grading:
A. Research Project Assignment (RPA) – submission may 13th:
i) 50% of the final grade;
ii) groups with 4/5 students;
iii) define a simple research question, perform a literature review, draw 1 or 2 hypothesis to be tested, collect quantitative data, analyze the data and report the conclusion;
iv) report on a maximum 10 pages (bibliography excluded) APA Style (template provided).
B. Individual Assignment (IA) – submission may 27th:
i) 50% of the final grade;
ii) essay on a maximum one page formatted with APA Style (template provided) based on one of two question provided.
Both RPA and IA are mandatory to all students.

Bibliography:

Other manuals:

Complementary:

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**Biography:**

I am a Social Psychologist with interests in both fundamental and applied research. During my PhD I have studied knowledge structures malleably and what that tells about memory structure and usage. More recently, I turned to applied research and to the use of Social Psychology to solve real world problems, for instance, the promotion of public participation and communication, the assessment and prediction of social impacts, and the acceptance and usage of new technologies. Allied with this, I have been using quantitative thinking as a statistics teacher and as a consultant in Social, Environmental, and Mental Health fields. Currently, I divide my time between private consultancy projects, teaching statistics, and as a staff member in research projects.

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**Contact(s) and Office hours:**

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Office hours will be defined on the first day of classes.