

MGA 674 Research Methods (5 ECTS, 135h), Fall 2021 (16 weeks)

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Contact Details: For efficient communication all email communication regarding this course should be sent to alexis@idmaster.eu and sonia.andreou@idmaster.eu. Special online “office hours” will be set up for group and individual mentoring and those will be conducted through google hangout/chat.

Course objectives: To acquire theoretical knowledge about the various research approaches and to provide an overview of research design.

Course content: Understanding the preliminary considerations that go into selecting a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research design, knowing the definition for the different research approaches, considering philosophical worldviews, reviewing the literature, understanding the use of theory, anticipating ethical issues, and developing writing strategies, writing an introduction, specifying a purpose statement, and developing research questions and/or hypotheses, methods and procedures for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to: (a) Design a research proposal for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research study; (b) Compare the three research approaches (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) to inquiry and understand their philosophical assumptions; (c) Review literature in a scholarly manner; (d) Assess the use of theory in research approaches (e) Demonstrate knowledge of ethical concerns in research; (f) Write an introduction for a research study; (g) State the purpose of a research study; (h) Formulate research questions and hypotheses; (i) Advance methods and procedures for data collection and analysis; (j) Demonstrate a broad conceptual understanding of research methods; (k) Demonstrate critical thinking skills.

Workload: In order to successfully conclude this course, students are required to do individual and group activities. Theoretical topics are presented as short modules through google classroom and other forms of synchronous and asynchronous communication. Independent work is divided into four parts: work on individual assignments (approximately 30 hours); work on a group assignment (30

hours); work on literature (approximately 40 hours); work on Reflection assignment (approximately 15 hours); work on Research problem workbook and presentation (approximately 20 hours).

Assessment: The exam grade consists of following components: individual assignments (30%); group assignment (30%); reflection assignment (10%); Research problem workbook and presentation (20%); overall participation (10%). Final mark will be on a 0-10 scale in increments of 0.5 points. Passing grade is 5 out of 10.

Expected individual work activities: Students will work individually on a provided research topic, engaging in the following activities:

- Personal research reflections
- Creating literature maps
- Using theory and addressing ethical considerations
- Writing problem statements, purpose statements, research questions and hypotheses
- Any additional activities to strengthen the quality of your research project work

Expected group work activities: In addition to the individual work, students will be required to engage in group assignments too where they will demonstrate their abilities to plan, collect and analyse data. They will engage in the following activities:

- Designing and executing plans for quantitative data collection and analysis
- Designing and executing plans for qualitative data collection and analysis
- Designing and executing plans for mixed methods data collection and analysis
- Any additional activities to strengthen the quality of your research project work

Individual and group assignment scripts for will be announced before a respective session starts. You will also record your reflections on the bi-weekly activities in your *Assignments workbook* (i.e. Reflection assignment), which will be announced on google classroom during the first few weeks of classes.

Late submissions will be penalised. The highest mark an overdue assignment can achieve is 7/10.

Assessment criteria: Grades will be based on these criteria:

91–100% of the work is done — excellent: outstanding work with only few minor errors.

81–90% of the work is done — very good: above average work but with some minor errors.

71–80% of the work is done — good: generally good work with a number of notable errors.

61–70% of the work is done — satisfactory: reasonable work but with significant shortcomings.
 50–60% of the work is done — sufficient: passable performance meeting the minimum criteria.
 49% or less of the work is done — fail: more work is required before the credit can be awarded.

Technology needed to perform this course: Basic knowledge of computers and use of Google applications.

Synchronous activities: The delivery of the course will be primarily asynchronous with discussions taking place mainly through the google classroom platform. In addition though, there will be set times for Virtual Office Hours (VOHs); short synchronous sessions (either text chat or voice chat through google hangouts). In these sessions we can provide feedback to student questions and/or provide mentoring. The times and days of these sessions will be decided and announced early in the semester.

Required Textbook: Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
 (ISBN-13: 9781452226101)
 (ISBN-10: 1452226105)

The pedagogical script for this course:

Sessions	Topic/Materials	Tasks/assignments	Technology
Session 1: (01/09-14/09)	Induction session: Getting familiar with the course environments and technologies Material: Course pedagogical script	Assignments: 1) Read course Pedagogical script 2) Read the Research Topic description 3) Download/Buy the required textbook 4) Explore the concept of “ <i>research</i> ” from a scientific perspective through your own reading. Share some of the research experience that you may have had and briefly explain the purpose of your research investigations and how you conducted these.	Google applications
Session 2: (15/09-28/09)	The Selection of a Research Approach & Review of the Literature	In Chapter 1 the focus will be on defining quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches and in Chapter 2 the focus will be on conducting literature reviews.	Google Hangout and classroom

	<p>Material: Chapter 1 and 2 of the book</p>	<p>The main aims of this session will be to understand how philosophy, design and methods intersect when choosing an approach that is most suitable for a research study, emphasising the importance of conducting an extensive literature review on a topic of interest and determining the steps that a researcher will need to follow in order to conduct such a literature review.</p> <p>You must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	
	<p>Work on your individual assignment and reflection assignment</p>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the individual assignment script 2) Complete the individual assignment in accordance to the assignment script provided. 3) Update the reflection assignment. 	<p>Google classroom</p>
<p>Session 3: (29/09-12/10)</p>	<p>The Use of Theory & Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations</p> <p>Material: Chapter 3 and 4 of the book</p>	<p>In Chapter 3 the focus will be on incorporating theory into your research study and in Chapter 4 the focus will be on writing strategies and thinking of ethics.</p> <p>The main aims of this session will be to examine the role that theory has in the three approaches to inquiry (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods), to examine outlines for writing proposals for the three approaches and to discuss ethical issues that will need to be considered during the research process.</p> <p>You must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	<p>Google Hangout and classroom</p>

	Work on your individual assignment and reflection assignment	Assignments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the individual assignment script 2) Complete the individual assignment in accordance to the assignment script provided. 3) Update the reflection assignment. 	Google classroom
Session 4: (13/10-26/10)	The Introduction & The Purpose Statement Material: Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 of the book	In Chapter 5 the focus will be on designing a scholarly introduction to a proposal or study. In Chapter 6 the focus will be on writing purpose statements for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies. The main aims of this session will be to properly introduce a research study and to define the central purpose or intend of a study. You must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	Google Hangout and classroom
	Work on your individual assignment and reflection assignment	Assignments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the individual assignment script 2) Complete the individual assignment in accordance to the assignment script provided. 3) Update the reflection assignment. 	Google classroom
(27/10-02/11)	Reading and Reflection Week		
Session 5: (03/11-16/11)	Research Questions and Hypotheses Chapter 7 of the book	In Chapter 7 the focus will be on writing research questions and hypotheses for quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods studies. The main aims of this session will be to formulate questions and hypotheses that serve to narrow and focus the purpose of the study. You must:	Google Hangout and classroom

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	
	Work on your individual assignment and reflection assignment	Assignments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the individual assignment script 2) Complete the individual assignment in accordance to the assignment script provided. 3) Update the reflection assignment. 4) Start developing your workbook (<i>Research problems</i>) 	
Session 6: (17/11-30/11)	Quantitative Methods Material: Chapter 8 of the book	<p>In Chapter 8 the focus will be on learning the specific quantitative procedures for designing survey or experimental methods.</p> <p>The main aims of this session will be to examine quantitative methods for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting the results of a study. Specific methods exist for both survey and experimental research.</p> <p>You must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	Google Hangout and classroom
	Work on your group assignment, reflection assignment and workbook	Assignments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the group assignment script 2) Complete the group assignment in accordance to the assignment script provided. 3) Update the reflection assignment. 4) Continue developing your workbook (<i>Research problems</i>) 	Google classroom
Session 7: (01/12-15/12)	Qualitative Methods & Mixed Methods Procedures	<p>In Chapter 9 the focus will be on learning the specific procedures that will need to be designed into a qualitative research study. Examples are provided from narrative studies, grounded theory, ethnographic studies and case studies. In Chapter 10 the focus will</p>	Google Hangout and classroom

	<p>Material: Chapter 9, and Chapter 10 of the book</p>	<p>be on defining mixed methods research (integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in a study) and the core characteristics that describe it.</p> <p>The main aims of this session will be to examine qualitative approaches for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting the results of a study. Furthermore, the aim is to introduce important developments in mixed methods research, provide an introduction in the use of this design, and presenting three basic and three advanced designs in mixed methods research.</p> <p>You must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and understand the material. 2) Participate in asynchronous and/or synchronous communication. 	
	<p>Work on your group assignment, reflection assignment and workbook</p>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read the individual assignment scripts 2) Watch the video by Dr. Jim Ang 3) Complete the group assignment in accordance to the assignment scripts provided. 4) Update the reflection assignment. 5) Continue developing your workbook (<i>Research problems</i>) 	
<p>Session 8: (16/12-20/12)</p>	<p>Presentation of the Research problem workbook and submission of the Reflection assignment</p>	<p>Assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Reflection assignment is submitted. 2) The Research problem workbook is presented and submitted. 	<p>Google presentation and documents</p>