
**3341F – Research Methods in Human Resources
Fall 2014**

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Stelian Medianu
Office Location: Social Sciences Centre Room 6300
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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Identification

Course Number: MOS 3341F
Course Name: Research Methods in Human Resources
Course Location: Kresge Building Room K 208
Class Time: Tuesdays 9:30AM – 12:30PM
Antirequisites: MOS 2280F/G
Prerequisites: One of the following courses: MOS 2242A/B, Statistical Sciences 2035, Psychology 2820E, Sociology 2205A/B, and enrollment in 3rd or 4th year of BMOS.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours, 0.5 course

Course Overview

The course provides a general introduction to scientific research methods for business. Topics include features of empirical research, theory and hypothesis testing, the general process of research, data collection methods, measurement issues, experimental studies, data analysis, and research reports. Themes in human resource management such as recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, and diversity in the workplace will be included in the format of case studies, in-class exercises and a research proposal as a final paper.

Course Promises

This course makes a set of promises to you (assuming you fulfill the expectations below). By the end of the term, you should be able:

1. To describe descriptive, historical, correlational and experimental research methods.
2. To identify the appropriate research design when confronted with a human resources problem.
3. To critically appraise the methodology used in existing research.
4. To develop a research proposal including a problem statement, hypotheses, related literature and methodology.

Course Expectations

This course will only fulfill these promises if you promise the following in return:

1. **To attend class.** This course will rely largely on discussion. For this format to succeed, you must be present and on time. You will receive points for participation and attendance in this course.
2. **To read the assigned materials.** The background material we read will provide us with the common ground upon which we will base our conversations. Without that common ground, our conversations will lose some of their richness. We will have weekly in-class student presentations to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading, and to help stimulate class discussion.
3. **To be attentive and participate in class.** Participation does not simply mean speaking aloud in class, although that is essential. Students should participate by actively following the discussion, and by contributing to our conversations through the insights they present in their in-class student presentations and projects.

Course Resources

Required Course Text (available at the UWO bookstore)

- Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business Research Methods* (9th edition). Mason, USA: South-Western, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 978-1-111-82692-5.

Course Website(s)

- Blackboard < <https://owl.uwo.ca> >

Grading Scheme

Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following:

Requirement	Percentage of Final Grade	Date
Exam #1	30	Tuesday, Oct 14 (in class)
Exam #2	35	During the final exam period
Research Proposal	25	Tuesday, Dec 02 (due in class, hard copy)
Attendance and Class Contribution	10	
Total	100	

Note: Each of these requirements will be described in greater detail in handouts and/or in class.

Exams (65%): There will be two multiple-choice exams based on content from lecture material and assigned readings. The **first exam** (October 14), worth **30%** of the final grade, will cover material from September 9 through September 30. The final exam (during the final exam period, December 6 – 17), worth 35% of the final grade, will cover material from October 7 through November 18.

Note: You are responsible for material covered in the classes as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the textbook.

Research Proposal (25%): You are required to write a research proposal, which is worth 25% of the final grade. The maximum length of the proposal is 15 typed, double-spaced pages (excluding references). It is **due** at the beginning of the last class (December 2nd, 9:30 am). I recommend the following schedule for completing the research proposal:

September: Find HR topic that interests you

October: Review past research in this area (PsycInfo)
How can past research be extended? (Details will be provided in first class)
Develop outline of research proposal (Details will be provided in first class)
*Discuss ideas with me (**any time**)*

November: Write first draft (October 28 – November 11)
 Write second draft (November 12 – 23): focus on writing style/organization
 Submit draft to Turnitin and check for “matches” (November 23)
 Revise, print, and submit Final Draft by November 25 (one week before deadline)

Attendance and Class Contribution (10%): People learn best when they are active (not passive). Your active participation is essential to this class. Participation is more than just attending class and asking an occasional question. Full participation consists of demonstrating that you are prepared for each class, asking thoughtful questions that help you and your peers learn, responding respectfully to your peers and engaging productively in all class activities.

Class contribution in this course is graded as follows:

0-5	Demonstrates consistently poor attendance and poor preparation; may be disruptive in class and hinder the learning of others; consistently fails to participate in class activities.
6	Demonstrates inconsistent attendance, timeliness, and/or preparation in class activities; may be disruptive in class; is frequently not prepared; sporadic participation in other class activities.
7	Demonstrates consistent attendance and preparation; and occasionally participates in class discussion.
8	Demonstrates consistent attendance, preparation, and participation in all class activities and discussions; occasionally demonstrates insight by asking questions or making statements that add to and facilitate the class discussion.
9-10	Demonstrates consistent attendance, preparation, and participation in all class activities and discussions in class; consistently demonstrates insight by asking questions, making statements that add to and facilitate class discussion, builds upon others’ comments in class.

Grading System

No grade is final until approved by the department. The University of Western Ontario grading guidelines are as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Rating
A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	0-49	Fail

The DAN Program has a grade policy which states that for courses in the 3000-4000 range, the class average must fall between 70% and 75% for all sections of a course taught by the same instructor. In very exceptional circumstances only, class averages outside this range may be approved by the Assistant Director or Director. Class averages are not grounds for appeal.

Submitting Assignments

Students must submit an electronic copy of their **report** using Sakai. In the case of technical difficulties with Sakai (which happens occasionally), students must email a copy of the research proposal to their instructor prior to the deadline in order to receive full credit. The research proposal must still be submitted to Sakai in order to be graded. The research proposal is due at 11:59 p.m. the night before class.

Late Penalties

The late penalty is 3% per day (weekends count as 2 days), up to a maximum of 30%. Assignments more than 10 days late will not be accepted.

Illness

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, **in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities.**

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean's office (the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy [<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/general/privacy.pdf>].

Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty.

Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities. (Note: it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student was seen for a medical reason or was ill.)

A form to be completed by off-campus physicians is available at:

<http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/forms/medicalNote.pdf>

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation **in advance of due dates, examinations**, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, you should contact your instructor and the Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. In general, retroactive requests for grade revisions on medical or compassionate grounds will not be considered.

Procedures for Appealing Academic Evaluations

In the first instance, all appeals of a grade must be made to the course instructor (informal consultation). Please note that after receiving a graded assignment back, you **must wait overnight** before approaching the instructor to discuss any marking questions. You should look at the comments carefully and form a cogent and specific question before asking the instructor about a mark.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal must be sent to the Assistant Program Director or Designate of the BMOS program. If the response of the Assistant Director is considered unsatisfactory to the student, he/she may then appeal to the Dean of the Faculty in which the course of program was taken. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean, may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office.

Plagiarism Rules

Cheating on exams will not be tolerated; students are referred to the university policy on scholastic offenses (see section 9.0 below). Looking at the test of another student, allowing another student to view your exam, or obtaining information about a test in advance are all examples of cheating. Students found cheating will receive a zero (0%) on that exam. A number of safeguards will be employed to discourage cheating. For example, examination supervisors (proctors) of the tests may ask students to move to another seat during the exam, cover their paper, avert their eyes from other students' papers, remove baseball caps, etc. This is not meant as a personal affront nor as an accusation of cheating, rather as vigilant attempts at proctoring. A copy of guidelines about how to avoid cheating can be obtained from the office of the Ombudsperson, Room 251 University Community Centre, (519) 661-3573.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offenses. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offenses in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offenses include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate, consult your instructor. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" will not be accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offense include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Electronic Analysis of Assignments for Plagiarism

Recall that students must submit electronic copies of their assignments via Sakai. These electronic copies will be analyzed using the Turnitin.com service to check for plagiarism. Besides making it easier to catch plagiarism, this service is intended to help students identify and correct any unintentional plagiarism before it becomes official (as part of a submitted assignment). Students will have the opportunity to view the plagiarism report that their TAs will see, and to resubmit the assignment before the due date if corrections are necessary. **While the plagiarism reports are produced instantly after submission, only 1 can be produced every 24 hours. It is absolutely necessary that students view the plagiarism report generated for each assignment and make any corrections necessary before submitting a final copy for grading purposes.**

Email Policies

The following policies apply to all emails between students and the Professor. Please respect the fact that the Professor receives many emails from students and must deal with those emails in a fair and organized manner. Non-acceptable emails will receive a reply saying only "Please see Email Policies on the course outline".

UWO.CA Email Addresses Only

For privacy reasons, students must use their Western email accounts to contact the Professor. The Professor will not respond to emails from non-uwo.ca addresses (e.g. hotmail.com, gmail.com, etc.).

Subject Line Must Include Course and Section Number

The subject line of emails must contain the name or number of the course, and the section number in which the student is enrolled. The Professor teaches different courses and sections and cannot properly respond to questions if he does not know which course or section you are enrolled in.

Acceptable Emails

- questions about the course content or materials
- asking to set up an appointment to ask questions or review an exam
- notification of illness or other special circumstances
- providing constructive comments or feedback about the course

Non-Acceptable Emails

- questions that may be answered on Sakai or on this course outline
- asking when grades will be posted
- asking what grade a student received
- asking where or when an exam is scheduled or the material covered on an exam
- requests for grade increases, extra assignments, or reweighting of course components

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings
Introduction to Research Methods		
Sep 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Role of Research ▪ Theory Building 	Chapters 1 & 3
Sep 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Human Side of Research: Organizational and Ethical Issues 	Chapter 5
The Research Process		
Sep 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Research Process: An Overview ▪ Problem Definition: The Foundation of Research 	Chapters 4 and 6
Sep 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualitative Research Tools ▪ Secondary Data Research in a Digital Age 	Chapters 7 and 8
Collecting Primary Data		
Oct 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey Research: An Overview ▪ Survey Research: Communicating with Respondents 	Chapters 9 and 10
Oct 14	Exam 1 (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8)	
Oct 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observation Methods ▪ Experimental Research 	Chapters 11 and 12
Measurement Concepts and Sampling		
Oct 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement and Scaling Concepts ▪ Attitude Measurement 	Chapters 13 and 14
Nov 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questionnaire Design 	Chapter 15
Nov 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sampling Designs and Sampling Procedures 	Chapters 16
Research Presentation		
Nov 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicating Research Results 	Chapter 25
Nov 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Course Wrap-Up 	
Dec 2	Research proposal hard copy (due in class)	
Dec 6-17	Exam 2 (Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 & 25) Date TBA	