

American College Dublin

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IB309 BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

Credits:	3 US credits / 6 ECTS credits
Credit level:	Stage two
Prerequisites:	None
Mandatory:	Yes
Contact hours:	30
Academic Year:	2016/17
Semester:	2
Lecturer:	Mr. Marc Gallagher

MODULE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to enable students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to successfully complete a significant research project in a business environment. Students will be introduced to the complexities and differences in research methods currently being utilised in business-related research. Students will learn how to frame their research question, how to undertake the answering of that question, and how to present their work.

MODULE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will identify and explore the major needs for research in business.
2. Students will be aware of the ethical issues involved in business research.
3. Students will understand the major approaches to business research and the methodological choices that need to be made.
4. Students will evaluate research topics, develop formal research questions and identify the variables to be measured.
5. Students will learn skills for accessing relevant sources for information.
6. Students will understand the different methods of data collection.
7. Students will comprehend the principles of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
8. Students will develop the skills to carry out a research project and present the results.

TEACHING METHODS

Lectures, exercises, assignments, readings and group discussions, based on various aspects of business research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES MAP

Learning Outcomes	Content	Delivery	Assessment
1	Section 1	Lectures, readings, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises, assignments and participation.
2	Section 6	Lectures, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises and individual assignment.
3	Section 4	Lectures, readings, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises, group assignment and participation.
4	Sections 2 & 5	Lectures, readings, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises, group assignments, and participation.
5	Sections 3 & 6	Lectures and class exercises.	Class exercises and group assignments.
6	Sections 7-11	Lectures, readings, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises, discussions and group assignments.
7	Sections 12 & 13	Lectures and computer lab demonstrations.	Class exercises and group assignments.
8	All sections	Lectures, readings, class exercises and discussions.	Class exercises and group presentations.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Introduction to business research methods
2. Ethical issues in business research
3. Designing business research
4. Literature reviews
5. Introduction to data generation
6. Causation and Correlation, Validity and Reliability
7. Interviewing and focus groups
8. Surveys and sampling issues
9. Qualitative and quantitative research methods and data analysis
10. Writing a thesis

REQUIRED TEXT

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A., *Research Methods for Business Students*, 4th Edition, Prentice Hall, 2007.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

Miller, R. L., Acton, C., Fullerton, D. A. and Maltby, J., *SPSS for Social Scientists*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

T W Pavkov and K A Pierce, *Ready, Set, Go! A Student Guide to SPSS 11.0 for Windows*, McGraw Hill, 2003.

Pallant J. *SPSS Survival Manual*. Second Edition, Open University Press, 2005.

Mark L. Berenson and David M. Levine, *Basic Business Statistics: Concepts and Applications*, 7th Edition, Prentice-Hall, 1999.
 D R Cooper and P S Schindler, *Business Research Methods*, 9th Edition McGraw Hill 2006.
 Richard I. Levin and David S. Rubin *Statistics for Management*, 7th edition, Prentice-Hall International, Inc, 1998.
 Terry Sincich, *Business Statistics by example*, Prentice-Hall International, Inc, 5th Edition, 1996.

ASSESSMENT/GRADING

Student's progress will be assessed by preparation and participation, and by two assignments, one individual and one group-based. Hence, group-work, preparatory reading and self-directed learning will be key features of the teaching methodology for this module.

Assessment will take the form of:

Individual Assignment: Developing the Research Proposal	45%
Group Assignment: Collecting, Analysing and Presenting Data	40%
Class Preparation and Participation:	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

Grading

Each component of the course will be assessed separately. Students will be graded according to the attached grading system as outlined in the HETAC Marks and Standards 2009, available at: http://www.hetac.ie/docs/Assessment_and_Standards_2009.pdf (page 23).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is compulsory. In the case of illness / non-attendance, it is the student's responsibility to contact the College office *prior* to the lecture in order to notify the lecturer. A minimum of 80% attendance is required for final Assignments to be marked. See Academic Policies and Procedures in the ACD Catalogue.

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

Refer to the subsection on Academic Discipline in the current ACD Catalogue:

American College Dublin, Irish American University Plagiarism Statement

1. Academic Integrity

American College Dublin, Irish American University, seeks to develop a culture of integrity among faculty, staff and students. Honesty, fairness and trust are essential characteristics of integrity. Thus, in an academic community, academic honesty is a key principle. Acknowledging original sources of information and having respect for the rights of intellectual property are, therefore, fundamental.

Plagiarism is an act of academic dishonesty. To plagiarise and fail to appropriately acknowledge the sources that have been used is the antithesis of academic integrity.

A form of intellectual theft, plagiarism is viewed as a serious offence committed against academic staff, fellow-students, the college and the wider academic community. It involves reproducing another person's or group of persons' ideas or work, either in whole or in part, and deliberately misrepresenting this material as one's own.

2. Forms of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can take many forms, including, but not limited to:

- (a) Presenting work authored by a third party (e.g. other students, friends, family members, individuals paid to complete work on one's behalf) as one's own.
- (b) Presenting work that is copied directly or copied with only minor textual modifications from another source (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, websites, internet blogs, transcribed interviews, TV or radio programmes etc.).
- (c) Paraphrasing a third party's work in whole or in part without acknowledging the source material. (The above is adapted from the UCD Plagiarism Statement, 2009).

Please note that referring to common knowledge or established facts (*e.g. Barack Obama is the current President of the U.S.A.*) does not constitute plagiarism.

Any submitted work which is an assessed component within a programme of study must include proper acknowledgement of all original sources through citation and referencing. *Plagiarism is defined by the act and the end product.* Therefore, to claim that the act was unintended cannot be accepted as a justification or defence in cases of alleged plagiarism. ACD/IAU's plagiarism statement will be disseminated as widely as possible to all staff and students. All students are expected to familiarise themselves with this. ACD/IAU regards plagiarism as a serious offence.

Accordingly, if plagiarism is established, the student will be subject to the college's disciplinary procedures (see section 3.2 below).

3. Procedures

3.1 Procedures – General

All assessed coursework must be submitted with a completed and signed plagiarism declaration form, which reads as follows:

I/We certify that:

- (1) I/We have read and understood the ACD/IAU statement on plagiarism.*
- (2) I/We understand that the college reserves the right to use detection technology to uncover cases of plagiarism.*
- (3) I/We understand that submitting plagiarised work will result in disciplinary procedures being invoked, up to and including, dismissal from college.*
- (4) I/We certify that this work is my/our own, and all sources have been acknowledged appropriately.*

Signed:

3.2 Procedures - Disciplinary

1. In instances where a first offence has been established, the student's work will be downgraded. The scale of downgrading will be at the discretion of the member of academic staff to whom the work has been submitted, in consultation with the Head of Department, but will be proportional to the scale of the offence. In instances of appeal requests, the submitted work will be reviewed by the Head of Department. As

part of the appeal process, the student may also be required to attend an interview with the academic staff member and the Head of Department.

2. If a further instance of plagiarism has been established, the student will be issued with a letter from the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) informing the student that s/he will be called before a hearing of the ASC to examine the instance of plagiarism. The student will be entitled to nominate one other person to accompany him or her at the hearing. However, the Registrar should be notified of such a nomination in advance of the hearing. If an offence has been clearly established, the outcome will be the award of grade F for the entire module for which the plagiarised work was submitted. The student will be issued with a formal written warning, a copy of which will be placed in the student's file. In the case of multiple instances of plagiarism being committed in the same semester, the student may be subject to the following penalties: dismissal from a module or number of modules, dismissal from the college for a specified time.

3. Following the issue of a first formal written warning from the ASC, in the event of a further instance of plagiarism being established, the student will be issued with a letter calling the student to a hearing of the ASC (following the same procedures as outlined in 2. above). The student will face further penalties such as, dismissal from a module or number of modules, dismissal for a semester, dismissal from the college. If dismissal from the college does not ensue, the student will be issued with a final written warning, a copy of which will be placed in the student's file advising him/her that any further offences will lead to dismissal from the college.

Appeals procedure

The College allows for appeals for students who have been sanctioned for academic dishonesty or have not been satisfied by the outcome of the grade review process. The student is required to write to the Quality Assurance Committee within fourteen days of being notified of the result of the academic discipline or grade review process. The Quality Assurance Committee reviews the salient facts and seeks to determine if there was evidence that was not taken into account or a questionable judgement made at the previous process. If the determination is that there is no new evidence or anything to suggest a questionable judgement, the appeal is dismissed and the student and the Academic Standards Committee are so informed immediately. If the determination is that the matter warrants further investigation, the Quality Assurance Committee refers it to the Executive Management Committee for reconsideration. The result of this is passed immediately to the student, the Quality Assurance Committee and the Academic Standards Committee. The decision of the Executive Management Committee represents the end stage of the College's appeals procedure.