

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Adopted by the FC (record №12/29.04.2024)

Adopted by the DC (record №10/16.04.2024)

ACCEPTED BY:

Dean:

(Assoc. Prof. D. Dobrev, Ph.D.)

SYLLABUS

SUBJECT: MASTER DEGREE SEMINAR

DEGREE PROGRAMME: Master of Business Administration; MASTER'S DEGREE

YEAR OF STUDY: 6; SEMESTER: 11, 12

TOTAL STUDENT WORKLOAD: 240 hours; incl. curricular 60 hours

CREDITS: 8

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT WORKLOAD ACCORDING TO THE CURRICULUM

<i>TYPE OF STUDY HOURS</i>	WORKLOAD, hours	TEACHING HOURS PER WEEK, hours
CURRICULAR: incl. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LECTURES• SEMINARS / LAB. EXERCISES	30 30	1 1
EXTRACURRICULAR	180	-

Prepared by:

1.
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2.
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3.
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Head of department
of Management and Administration:
(Assoc. Prof. D. Serafimova, PhD)

I. ANNOTATION

Through the discipline "Master degree seminar (academic writing and research methods)," students are introduced to the content and technology of developing a master's thesis or conducting in-depth research on a given problem in the field of management.

The main directions of the discipline are related to clarifying the theoretical and methodological foundations when conducting empirical studies, characterizing the features of the scientific style of writing, requirements for their technical layout, and the public presentation of the obtained results.

More specifically, the course aims to introduce students to qualitative and quantitative research methods and their specificities. It provides knowledge about the stages of the research process and the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods. As a result of the training, students will be able to freely develop and implement research projects to collect information and provide reasoned recommendations to support management decision-making.

The study discipline offers the opportunity to acquire literacy competence, mathematical competence, and competence in the fields of sciences, technology and engineering, and digital competence.

II. THEMATIC CONTENT

№	TITLE OF UNIT AND SUBTOPICS	NUMBER OF HOURS		
		L	S	L.E.
Theme 1. Academic writing		2	2	
1.1.	What is academic writing? Basic principles in scientific research			
1.2.	Rules for scientific writing. Scientific argumentation. Formulation of the thesis and basic hypotheses			
1.3.	Preparation of a literature review			
Theme 2. The Research Process		2	1	
2.1.	The role of the research process in business management			
2.2.	The relation between the research process and the decision-making process			
2.3.	Stages of the research process			
Theme 3. Qualitative Research Methods		4	4	
3.1.	Observation			
3.2.	Interviews			
3.3.	Focus groups			
3.4.	Projective techniques			
Theme 4. The Research Process of Quantitative Surveys		2	2	
4.1.	Explanation of the process stages			
4.2.	Sequence of the stages			
4.3.	Cyclic recurrence of the research process			
Theme 5. Problem Analysis and Goal Setting		2	2	
5.1.	Defining the research problem and situational analysis			
5.2.	Goal setting and discussing research topics			
Theme 6. Sampling Procedures in Research		2	2	
6.1.	Sample types			
6.2.	Representative studies			
6.3.	Alternative approaches			
Theme 7. Developing the Questionnaire		4	6	
7.1.	Question types			
7.2.	Scales			

7.3.	Writing questions			
Theme 8. Testing and Spreading the Questionnaire		2	1	
8.1.	Preparation of the questionnaire for testing			
8.2.	Selecting target group for testing			
8.3.	Spreading the questionnaire across the target respondents			
Theme 9. Techniques for Increasing Response Rates		2	1	
9.1.	Questionnaire content and design techniques			
9.2.	Communication with the respondents			
9.3.	Other techniques			
Theme 10. Preparation for Data Analysis		2	3	
10.1.	Export data to statistical analysis software			
10.2.	Basic analysis of data summary			
Theme 11. Reporting Research Findings		2	2	
11.1.	Content of the report			
11.2.	Formatting and results representation			
11.3.	Presenting the findings			
Theme 12. Current Trends in Research Methods		4	4	
12.1.	Application of big data			
12.2.	Artificial intelligence in business research			
12.3.	Online research trends			
Total:		30	30	

III. FORMS OF CONTROL:

№	TYPE AND FORM OF CONTROL	Number	extracurricular, hours
1.	Midterm control		
1.1.	Project (on a predefined theme)	1	60
1.2.	Case studies	2	40
1.3.	Presentation	1	20
Total midterm control:		4	120
2.	Final term control		
2.1.	Examination (situational assignment)	1	60
Total final term control:		1	60
Total for all types of control:		5	180

IV. LITERATURE

REQUIRED (BASIC) LITERATURE:

1. Utrecht University (2015). A guide for scientific writing. Bachelor Earth Sciences, April, <https://students.uu.nl/sites/default/files/ge0-aw-guide-for-scientific-writing-2016.pdf>
2. Pajo, B. (2023) *Introduction to research methods: A hands-on approach*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

RECOMMENDED (ADDITIONAL) LITERATURE:

1. Cooper, D. & Schindler, P. (2013). *Business Research Methods* (12th edition). Irwin McGraw-Hill.

2. Couper, M. P., Kapteyn, A., Schonlau, M. and Winter, J. (2007). Noncoverage and nonresponse in an Internet survey, *Social Science Research*, 36, 131-148.
3. Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
4. Dillman, D. A. and Smyth, J. D. (2007) Design effects in the transition to web-based surveys, *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 32, 5, S90-S96.
5. Easterby-Smith, M., Lowe, R. & Thorpe, A. (2012). *Management Research: An Introduction* (4th edition). London, Sage Publications Ltd.
6. Fleming, C. and Bowden, M. (2009). Web-based surveys as an alternative to traditional mail methods, *Journal of Environmental Management*, 90, 284-292.
7. Illum, S., Ivanov, S., Liang, Y., (2010). Using virtual communities in tourism research, *Tourism Management*, Volume 31, Issue 3, June 2010, 335-340.
8. Nascimento, L. D S., & Steinbruch, F. K. (2019). The interviews were transcribed, but how? Reflections on management research. *RAUSP Management Journal*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RAUSP-05-2019-0092>
9. Parente, T. C., & Federo, R. (2019). Qualitative comparative analysis: A configurational approach in management research. *RAUSP Management Journal*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RAUSP-05-2019-0089>
10. Pauwels, L., & Mannay, D. (2020). *The sage handbook of visual research methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526417015>
11. Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th edition), Prentice Hall.
12. Smith, S., Albaum, G. (2012) *Basic Marketing Research: Volume 1 Handbook for Research Professionals*. Qualtrics Labs, Inc.
13. Tharenou, P., Donohue, R., & Cooper, B. (2007) *Management Research Methods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
14. Witte, J. C. (2009). Introduction to the Special Issue on Web Surveys, *Sociological Methods and Research*, 37, 3, 283-290.