

**UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - VARNA**  
**FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS AND LOGISTICS**

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Adopted by the FC (record № 11/ 25. 04. 2024)

Adopted by the DC (record № 9/ 16. 04. 2024)

**ACCEPTED BY:**

**Dean:**

(Assoc. Prof. D. Zlateva PhD)

## SYLLABUS

**SUBJECT: RESEARCH METHODS**

**DEGREE PROGRAMME: Business and Management; BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

**YEAR OF STUDY: 4; SEMESTER: 7**

**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>	<b>WORKLOAD, hours</b>	<b>TEACHING HOURS PER WEEK, hours</b>
CURRICULAR: incl. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LECTURES</li><li>• SEMINARS / LAB. EXERCISES</li></ul>	30 30	2 2
EXTRACURRICULAR	180	-

Prepared by:

1. ....  
(Assoc. Prof. Petya Dankova PhD)

2. ....  
(Senior Assist. Prof. Petar Petrov PhD)

Head of department  
of Industrial Business and Logistics: .....  
(Assoc. Prof. Plamen Pavlov PhD)

## **I. ANNOTATION**

*The course "Research Methods" aims to acquaint students with the methods of conducting qualitative and quantitative research and its specifics. It imparts knowledge about the stages of the research process and the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods. As a result, students will be able to freely develop and implement research projects to gather information and provide sound recommendations to support management decision-making.*

*The course focuses on data collection techniques and approaches to its analysis and application in management. Practical work in the discipline is carried out through online research systems.*

*In the course of training, the following key competencies are applied and developed, according to the recommendation of the Council of the European Union (2018): numerical, scientific and engineering skills and digital and technology-based competences.*

## **II. THEMATIC CONTENT**

№	TITLE OF UNIT AND SUBTOPICS	NUMBER OF HOURS		
		L	S	L.E.
<b>Theme 1. The Research Process</b>		2	2	
1.1.	The role of the research process in business management			
1.2.	The relation between the research process and the decision-making process			
1.3.	Stages of the research process			
<b>Theme 2. Typology of Research Methods</b>		2	1	
2.1.	Comparative analysis			
2.2.	Method selection criteria			
<b>Theme 3. Qualitative Research Methods</b>		4	4	
3.1.	Observation			
3.2.	Interviews			
3.3.	Focus groups			
3.4.	Projective techniques			
<b>Theme 4. The Research Process of Quantitative Surveys</b>		2	2	
4.1.	Explanation of the process stages			
4.2.	Sequence of the stages			
4.3.	Cyclic recurrence of the research process			
<b>Theme 5. Problem Analysis and Goal Setting</b>		2	2	
5.1.	Defining the research problem and situational analysis			
5.2.	Goal setting and discussing research topics			
<b>Theme 6. Sampling Procedures in Research</b>		2	2	
6.1.	Sample types			
6.2.	Representative studies			
6.3.	Alternative approaches			
<b>Theme 7. Developing the Questionnaire</b>		4	6	
7.1.	Question types			
7.2.	Scales			
7.3.	Writing questions			
<b>Theme 8. Testing and Spreading the Questionnaire</b>		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			
<b>Theme 9. Techniques for Increasing Response Rates</b>		2	1	
9.1.	Questionnaire content and design techniques			
9.2.	Communication with the respondents			

9.3.	Other techniques			
<b>Theme 10. Preparation for Data Analysis</b>		2	3	
10.1.	Export data to statistical analysis software			
10.2.	Basic analysis of data summary			
<b>Theme 11. Reporting Research Findings</b>		2	2	
11.1.	Content of the report			
11.2.	Formatting and results representation			
11.3.	Presenting the findings			
<b>Theme 12. Current Trends in Research Methods</b>		4	4	
12.1.	Application of big data			
12.2.	Artificial intelligence in business research			
12.3.	Online research trends			
<b>Total:</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	

### III. FORMS OF CONTROL:

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

### IV. LITERATURE

#### REQUIRED (BASIC) LITERATURE:

- Pajo, B. (2023) *Introduction to research methods: A hands-on approach*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Smith, S., Albaum, G. (2012) *Basic Marketing Research: Volume 1 Handbook for Research Professionals*. Qualtrics Labs, Inc.
- Tharenou, P., Donohue, R., & Cooper, B. (2007) *Management Research Methods*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

#### RECOMMENDED (ADDITIONAL) LITERATURE:

- Braunsberger, K., Wybenga, H. and Gates, R. (2007). A comparison of reliability between telephone and web-based surveys, *Journal of Business Research*, 60, 758–764.
- Cooper, D. & Schindler, P. (2013). *Business Research Methods* (12th edition). Irwin McGraw-Hill.
- Couper, M. P., Kapteyn, A., Schonlau, M. and Winter, J. (2007). Noncoverage and nonresponse in an Internet survey, *Social Science Research*, 36, 131-148.
- Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- 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.

6. Easterby-Smith, M., Lowe, R. & Thorpe, A. (2012). *Management Research: An Introduction* (4th edition). London, Sage Publications Ltd.
7. Fleming, C. and Bowden, M. (2009). Web-based surveys as an alternative to traditional mail methods, *Journal of Environmental Management*, 90, 284-292.
8. Illum, S., Ivanov, S., Liang, Y., (2010). Using virtual communities in tourism research, *Tourism Management*, Volume 31, Issue 3, June 2010, 335-340.
9. 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>
10. 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>
11. Pauwels, L., & Mannay, D. (2020). *The sage handbook of visual research methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526417015>
12. Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students* (6th edition), Prentice Hall.
13. Witte, J. C. (2009). Introduction to the Special Issue on Web Surveys, *Sociological Methods and Research*, 37, 3, 283-290.