## Graduate Programs—NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

**Department:** School of Accounting  
**College:** College of Business  

### RECOMMENDED COURSE IDENTIFICATION:
- **PREFIX:** ACG  
- **COURSE NUMBER:** 7886  
- **LAB CODE (L or C):** ____________  

*(to obtain a course number, contact rpolanski@fau.edu)*

### COMPLETE COURSE TITLE: SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN BUSINESS


**CREDITS:** 3  

**GRADING (SELECT ONLY ONE GRADING OPTION):**  
- Regular  
- Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  

### COURSE DESCRIPTION, NO MORE THAN 3 LINES:
This course provides business Ph.D. students with an exposure to the major issues and debates on the scientific method in business, including the use and applications of insights from philosophy of science as it pertains to the business disciplines and an introduction to research design.

### PREREQUISITES: ADMISSION TO COLLEGE OF BUSINESS DOCTORAL PROGRAM  

### COREQUISITES:  

### REGISTRATION CONTROLS (MAJOR, COLLEGE, LEVEL):  

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**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED TO TEACH THIS COURSE:** Graduate Faculty Member, PhD

Faculty contact, email and complete phone number:  
Mark Kohlbueck  
mkohlbuecc@fau.edu  
(561) 297-1363

Departments and/or colleges that might be affected by the new course must be consulted and listed here. Please attach comments from each.

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**Approved by:**  
**Date:**

- **Department Chair:**  
- **College Curriculum Chair:**  
- **College Dean:**  
- **UGPC Chair:**  
- **Graduate College Dean:**__________  
- **UFS President:**__________  
- **Provost:**__________

**ATTACHMENT CHECKLIST**

- Written consent from all departments affected by new course

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Email this form and syllabus to UGPC@fau.edu one week before the University Graduate Programs Committee meeting so that materials may be viewed on the UGPC website prior to the meeting.

FAUnewcourseUG—Revised May 2012
ACG 7886 – 001, MICT 7979-002, MAN 7931-001
CRN 94461, 94516, 93724
Scientific Method in Business
Fall 2012
1:00 – 3:50 pm, Tuesday, BU102

Professor Information
Dr. Mark Kohlbeck
Office: KH 122
E-mail address: mkohlbec@fau.edu
Phone Number: (561) 297-1363

Office Hours
10:00 am – noon, Tuesday

Required Text and Materials

The above texts are supplemented with other readings.

Course Description
This course provides business Ph.D. students with an exposure to the major issues and debates on the scientific method in business, including the use and applications of insights from philosophy of science as it pertains to the business disciplines and an introduction to research design.

Course Prerequisites and Credit Hours
Prerequisites: Admission to College of Business PhD program
Credit Hours: 3 credits

Supplemental Course Description
This course provides business Ph.D. students with an exposure to the major issues and debates on the scientific method in business, including the use and applications of insights from philosophy of science as it pertains to the business disciplines and an introduction to research design. Descriptive analysis on the nature of science will be complemented by normative and
methodological perspectives on how scientific knowledge is created, accumulated and advanced in the business disciplines. The first half of the course will focus on the issues relating to science in business and the second half will cover research design issues in the pursuit of research questions in business.

Course Learning Objectives
This course provides Ph.D. students with knowledge on content and validity of scientific knowledge as well as the scientific processes and methods that could be used in research in their respective business disciplines. The learning objectives include:
1. Understand and evaluate various scientific approaches in the conduct of research
2. Evaluate the appropriateness of various scientific approaches within the student’s specific discipline
3. Assess theoretical and methodological appropriateness of various research designs
4. Critique research in terms of theoretical and methodological issues
5. Apply research design insights to the development of actionable research plans

Grading Scale
Letter grades are only relevant to final point totals and will be assigned based on the following distribution of the percentages of total possible points.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 ≤ Your %</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>88 ≤ Your % &lt; 90</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>85 ≤ Your % &lt; 88</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>80 ≤ Your % &lt; 85</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>78 ≤ Your % &lt; 80</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>75 ≤ Your % &lt; 78</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>70 ≤ Your % &lt; 75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 ≤ Your % &lt; 70</td>
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Course Evaluation Method
The following table summarizes each component of your grade for this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Critique and Related Presentation</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam(s)</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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</table>
Class Discussion: Students will actively take part in the class proceedings by contributing to the discussion, raising interesting issues and posing relevant questions. This may also include short assignments addressing the topic being covered. The following guidelines for effective participation should be adhered to.

1. Regardless of your work and other pressures, please ensure that you do the required readings for the week prior to class and actively participate in all the course proceedings for the week.
2. The following tasks are required of you each week:
   a. Reading the prescribed text material and assigned article(s)
   b. Taking part in class discussions

Apart from the above, the following may be additional activities for some weeks:
1. Reading other relevant non-prescribed article(s)
2. Completing prescribed assignments

Discussion Leadership: Each student will lead the discussion on a specific class day and will be given 45 minutes to summarize the major themes and issues and raise further questions on the topic. The student will also be responsible for taking the lead in answering other specific questions that may arise in class.

Research Critique and Related Presentation: Each student will critique the theoretical and methodological issues in a current working or published research paper assigned by the instructor based on the student's specific disciplinary orientation. The student will then present the critique during the final weeks of the semester. Additional details are provided below in Appendix A.

Exam(s): One or two exams will be administered. Exam content will be consistent with what a student would expect on a comprehensive exam.

Additional Course Policies

Professional Conduct. To foster a more professional learning environment and to develop habits that lead to success in the business work, all participants must engage in professional behavior, including:
1. Taking responsibility for individual actions.
2. Attending each class session, including arriving promptly and leaving at the designated time. Attendance sign-in sheets may therefore be used and excess absences may impact the participation grade.
3. Being attentive and an active participant in group activities and class discussions.
4. Respecting diversity in the classroom and treating everyone involved in the class in a civil manner.
5. Planning outside activities to avoid conflicts with the activities outlined in the syllabus.
6. Meeting all deadlines in the course for assignments, projects, etc.
7. Acknowledging the importance of clarity of expression in written and oral communication

**Missing Exams.** Make-up exams will be given for valid reasons (medical emergency, family emergency, university-scheduled events, religious observation, or class conflicts) consistent with University policy and the professor’s discretion. If you do not have a valid reason for missing an exam, a zero grade may be assigned. The professor also has the option of not providing a make-up exam and re-weighting the remaining exam(s) accordingly.

**Late Assignments.** Late assignments are accepted for valid reasons (medical emergency, family emergency, university-scheduled events, religious observation, or class conflicts) consistent with University policy and the professor’s discretion.

**Anti-plagiarism Software.** Written components of any assignment or project may be submitted to anti-plagiarism software to evaluate the originality of the work. Any students found to be submitting work that is not their own will be deemed in violation of the University’s honor code discussed above.

**Electronic Communication.** FAU email will be used in this course for content delivery, assignments, and other communications. Accordingly, it is the student's responsibility to check their FAU email account for announcements, etc.

**Pictures.** Photographs of each student may be taken / used in connection with the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>T 8/21</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
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<td>Dominant Approaches in Business Research</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>T 8/28</td>
<td>Theory Construction and Knowledge Development</td>
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<td>Knowledge Dissemination</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>T 9/4</td>
<td>Falsificationism and Other Theories of Science</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>T 9/11</td>
<td>Relativism and Interpretive Approaches</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>T 9/18</td>
<td>Rigor and Relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T 9/25</td>
<td>Introduction to Research Design</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>T 10/2</td>
<td>Statistical and Internal Validity</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>T 10/9</td>
<td>Construct and External Validity</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T 10/16</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>T 10/23</td>
<td>Time-series and Randomization</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T 10/30</td>
<td>Evaluation of Scientific Knowledge and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>T 11/6</td>
<td>Research Ethics and IRB Process</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>T 11/13</td>
<td>Disciplinary Readings / Critiques</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>T 11/20</td>
<td>Disciplinary Readings / Critiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>T 11/27</td>
<td>Disciplinary Readings / Critiques</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>R 11/29</td>
<td>Exam</td>
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<td>10:30 am – 1:00 pm</td>
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Tentative Reading List

Week 1
Chalmers, Chapter 1, 2 and 4

Week 2


Week 3
Chalmers, Chs. 5-10


Week 4


**Week 5**

Paul Shrivastava, "Rigor and Practical Usefulness of Research in Strategic Management," Strategic Management Journal, 8 (Jan-Feb), 1987, pp. 77-92


**Week 6**

Chalmers, Ch. 4, Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch. 1, Ch. 8


Week 7
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch. 2


Week 8
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch. 3


Week 9
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chs. 4, 5

Week 10
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chs. 6, 8

Week 11
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Chs. 9 (pp 292-311), 14


Week 12
Shadish, Cook and Campbell, Ch. 9 (pp 280-291)


Enroll in IRBNET.org.

Go to http://www.fau.edu/research/researchint/citi_training.php#human

Complete the CITI training for the social and behavioral research investigators. This takes about 2-3 hours to complete. Bring a copy of your completion certificate to class.
Selected University and College Policies

School of Accounting Policy. You are responsible for School of Accounting policies at http://business.fau.edu/departments/accounting/school-of-accounting-policies/index.aspx. These policies are considered to be an integral part of this syllabus.

Code of Academic Integrity. Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001, http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf

Disability Policy Statement. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) – In Boca Raton, SU 133, (561) 297-3880; in Davie, MOD 1, (954) 236-1222; in Jupiter, SR 117, (561) 799-8585; or, at the Treasure Coast, CO 128, (772) 873-3305 – and follow all OSD procedures.

Religious Accommodation Policy Statement. In accordance with rules of the Florida Board of Education and Florida law, students have the right to reasonable accommodations from the University in order to observe religious practices and beliefs with regard to admissions, registration, class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. For further information, please see Academic Policies and Regulations.

University Approved Absence Policy Statement. In accordance with rules of the Florida Atlantic University, students have the right to reasonable accommodations to participate in University approved activities, including athletic or scholastics teams, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the course instructor at least one week prior to missing any course assignment.

College of Business Minimum Grade Policy Statement. The minimum grade for College of Business requirements is a “C”. This includes all courses that are a part of the pre-business foundation, business core, and major program. In addition, courses that are used to satisfy the university’s Writing Across the Curriculum and Gordon Rule math requirements also have a minimum grade requirement of a “C”. Course syllabi give individualized information about grading as it pertains to the individual classes.
Incomplete Grade Policy Statement. A student who is passing a course, but has not completed all work due to exceptional circumstances, may, with consent of the instructor, temporarily receive a grade of incomplete ("I"). The assignment of the "I" grade is at the discretion of the instructor, but is allowed only if the student is passing the course.

The specific time required to make up an incomplete grade is at the discretion of the instructor. However, the College of Business policy on the resolution of incomplete grades requires that all work required to satisfy an incomplete ("I") grade must be completed within a period of time not exceeding one calendar year from the assignment of the incomplete grade. After one calendar year, the incomplete grade automatically becomes a failing ("F") grade.

Withdrawals. Any student who decides to drop is responsible for completing the proper paper work required to withdraw from the course.

Grade Appeal Process. A student may request a review of the final course grade when s/he believes that one of the following conditions apply:

- There was a computational or recording error in the grading.
- Non-academic criteria were applied in the grading process.
- There was a gross violation of the instructor’s own grading system.

The procedures for a grade appeal may be found in Chapter 4 of the University Regulations.

Disruptive Behavior Policy Statement. Disruptive behavior is defined in the FAU Student Code of Conduct as "... activities which interfere with the educational mission within classroom."

Students who behave in the classroom such that the educational experiences of other students and/or the instructor’s course objectives are disrupted are subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior impedes students’ ability to learn or an instructor’s ability to teach. Disruptive behavior may include, but is not limited to: non-approved use of electronic devices (including cellular telephones); cursing or shouting at others in such a way as to be disruptive; or, other violations of an instructor’s expectations for classroom conduct.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Florida Atlantic University respects the right of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions which do not impede their exercise. To ensure these rights, faculty members have the prerogative:

- To establish and implement academic standards
- To establish and enforce reasonable behavior standards in each class
- To refer disciplinary action to those students whose behavior may be judged to be disruptive under the Student Code of Conduct
Appendix A
Research Critique and Related Presentation

For the assigned article:

(1) Identify the main research question and summarize the paper’s main findings.

(2) Prepare visual presentations of the research using both Libby boxes and X’s and O’s.

(3) Elaborate on the academic and practical significance of studying the specific phenomenon or problem, including (a) what can be gained from additional knowledge, (b) who are the constituencies that would benefit from such knowledge, and (c) how would these constituencies benefit from such knowledge. In other words, what is the research’s contribution?

(4) Identify and discuss the theoretical explanations offered in the literature as cited by the author(s) to explain and/or predict the phenomenon or problem? Elaborate on any alternative explanations.

(5) Critique the conceptual model explicit or implicit in the paper in terms of how it extends prior research and the theory or theoretical frameworks underpinning the research.

(6) Critique the research design and method used in the paper in terms of its appropriateness, validity issues and how they were addressed, and validity issues that remain in the paper.

(7) If you were to conduct this research, what would you do different? That is, what would be your research design?