

PAD 6706-7546 Wed 7:10 - 10 p.m.  
Fall 2002 Jupiter MLC 278

## APPLIED METHODS 2: Research Methodology

### Professor

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### Course Description

The study of the planning, design, and execution of research: problem formulation, data acquisition and processing, statistical analysis, interpretation, and report writing.

### Text

Donald R. Cooper and Pamela S. Schindler. *Business Research Methods*, 8th ed., Burr Ridge, IL: Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 2003. The web site for activities and resources is: [www.mhhe.com/business/cooper8](http://www.mhhe.com/business/cooper8).

### Major Assignments

Assignments for the course are listed below; a brief synopsis is also provided. Requirements and a description of evaluation procedures will be discussed during the course overview and provided at the time of the assignment.

Article Critique	15 %
Design Critique	15 %
Oral Report: methods or scaling	15 %
Term Project	25 %
Quiz/Quizzes	20%
Participation/ Internet questions	10 %

The first assignment, the Article Critique, is a *short paper* assigned immediately after the beginning of the course. By evaluating the criteria for "good research" (Chapter 1 of the text) in conjunction with a recent journal article of your choice, you establish a framework for the ingredients that distinguish quality research from deficient work.

The Design Critique, another *short paper*, is assigned in the first third of the course to help you assess the presence or absence of key project design elements and how they were (or should have been) executed for a successful project. You also select a recent journal article as the basis for this critique.

The oral report of an assigned primary data collection method (and/or scaling approach-- depending on class size) allows you to prepare a preview of one of the many method/techniques available. Your

explanation will open up further possibilities for your colleagues to use in their term projects. This oral report includes an outline handout and is accompanied by visual aids to enhance your presentation.

The Term Project builds on all the assignments and has its own multi-page instructional handout, provided to you later. We spend considerable time in class and out-of-class preparing you for this assignment. It is all quite predictable! The instructions are given before midterm so you have ample time to refine a topic, review the literature, collect a small data set, and analyze your findings. There are checkpoints along the way help us communicate about your progress. The focus of the assignment for this semester is public sector customer service (also referred to as client services and customer satisfaction in the literature). It is appropriate to merge this topic into a relevant work-related problem that you can solve/answer with your newly acquired research skills.

Quizzes remind you stay current with reading assignments. When you are not current, you cannot contribute to class discussion or effectively follow the flow of assignments throughout the course. Failure to keep up has adverse consequences especially for your term project. The quiz schedule is shown on the Activity Schedule.

Participation/ Internet Questions are the last category of assignments. Participation in class activities, questions, feedback to me and other presenters are all indications of how active you are as a learner. The Internet Questions are found on the book web site in a downloadable .pdf file. There is a question for each chapter in the text. We will frequently use this as a springboard for class discussion of the evening's topic.

## **Instructional Philosophy**

The course covers research practices used in the public, not-for-profit, and private sectors by introducing various methodologies, techniques, and decision tools. Since neither problems nor data know whether they are "public" or "private," we use a wide range of interdisciplinary tools to solve them. This is a public administration course with a focus on public sector problems; however, we do not encourage parochial thinking about research. Thus, the course design, the selection of the textbook, and other curriculum elements are constructed to help improve your problem solving skills using several applied components that integrate theory and practice.

**Quantitative Skills.** PAD 6701, statistics, *is a prerequisite* for this course. Research Methods builds on your knowledge of that subject. If you have completed 6701 or a graduate level equivalent, you may enroll in 6706.

**Oral and Written Skills.** Communication skills are very important to the organizations that employ our graduates. I place a strong emphasis on the quality and quantity of your oral and written contributions to the class. The participation score (10%) is determined in part by your contributions. Students who are well prepared, well organized, and articulate gain credibility with me.

## **Course Requirements**

- **Attendance.** Students having positions requiring travel should be aware of the following policies. All students with demanding work schedules should take this course when their work requirements are the least pressing. Students missing in excess of three class sessions (approximately 20% of the semester) will be asked to voluntarily withdraw from the course or be involuntarily dropped from my roster. Missing an oral report constitutes the loss the grade for the assignment; there is no make up. Anyone absent from the session in which the final Term Project is orally presented will not complete the course.

- **Written assignments** submitted late hurt the credibility of students. Points are deducted for late papers. All assignments should be edited and proofread. Documents that possess numerous errors of spelling, punctuation, syntax, author citation, or style manual format will be returned without a grade at the student's risk (and a late submission penalty).

- **Class time** does not always follow the university's published schedule for conventional courses. This course requires a significant amount of work outside of class, particularly the term research project, which involves data collection. When possible I will give you comp time for out-of-class research design and data collection.

### Advice

- Please take time to consult with me out of class when you need assistance with any aspect of the course or are uncertain about your performance. I am available before and after class and by appointment. You also have phone and email contact information.

- Papers prepared for this class should have a cover page showing the assignment, course, and your name. Please do not use folders; a staple in the upper left corner is sufficient.

- The style manual for our college is Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*. You may use it, the *MLA Handbook*, or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. In any case, order one from a local bookstore, amazon.com or Barnes & Noble and use it. Since this is a research course, I expect you to use proper citation format for ALL submitted assignments.

- My grading scale is: 93-100 A, 85-92 B, 77-84 C, 69-76 D, 68 or below, F. The university's +/- system is incorporated into my ranges.

## Applied Methods 2      Fall 2002 Schedule

Date: 8-28

Topic: Introduction to the course

Reading: N/A

Date: 9-4

Topic: Characteristics of good research/  
Research Ethics

Reading: Ch. 1, 5; Internet Question

Analysis Paper assigned: Article Critique

Date: 9-11

Topic: Scientific Thinking

Reading: Ch. 2, Internet Question

Analysis Paper due: Article Critique

Date: 9-18

Topic: Research Process

Reading: Ch. 3, Internet Question

Analysis paper assigned: Term Project

Date: 9-25

Topic: Research Design & Proposals

Reading: Ch. 4, 6

Analysis Paper Assigned: Design Critique

Assigned: Term Project Proposal

Date: 10-2

Topic: Secondary Data Sources/ Internet  
search strategies; Library Tour

Reading: Ch. 10

Date: 10-9

Quiz 1

Topic: Research Proposal Consultations

Reading: Ch 6 cont'd

Date: 10-16

Topic: Student Methods Presentations

Reading: Chs. 11, 12 + other readings

Analysis Paper due: Design Critique

**Notes:** Internet Questions will be assigned periodically and are not all included on this schedule. Cases, found in the back of your text, will be used for class discussion and will be assigned in advance. Video cases will not be assigned in advance but will be presented to supplement lecture or discussion for the evening.

Date: 10-23

Topic: Methods Presentations Cont'd

Reading: Ch.13

Date: 10-30

Topic: Methods Presentations Cont'd

Reading: Ch. 14

Date: 11-6

Topic: Sampling

Reading: Ch. 7

Date: 11-13

Topic: Measurement

Reading: Chs. 8, 9

Date: 11-20

Topic: Informal Scaling Presentations

Reading: Ch. 9 cont'd

Date: 11-27

Quiz 2

Topic: Data Collection and Statistical Analysis

Reading: Chs. 15-18

Date: 12-4

Topic: Statistical Analysis and Report Writing

Reading: Ch. 20

Date: 12-11

Topic: Presentation of Term Projects

Analysis Paper due: Term Project

Course Evaluation

