

SS5302: RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Effective Term

Semester B 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Research Methods in Social Sciences

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

5302

Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to introduce basic research methods in social sciences, including both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and their application in social science issues. The course will cover research strategies and designs, practical issues in quantitative and qualitative methods, and research ethics and values.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	To demonstrate a thorough understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods in social sciences and their application in different research settings	40	x	x	x
2	To identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of different research methods in social research	10	x	x	x
3	To design a correlational study on a social science topic	30	x	x	x
4	To comment critically on selected qualitative and quantitative studies	20	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	1.Lecture	There will be weekly lectures, with topics prepared and presented by lecturers. The lectures may assign student to read essential and/or supplementary readings concerning the topics.	1, 2, 3, 4	2hr/week
2	2. Group Discussion	Students are required to participate in group discussion in class on various practical issues in social research.	1, 2, 3, 4	1hr/week

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Fieldwork Notes	1, 2	20	
2	Research Project	1, 2, 4	40	
3	SPSS Exercise	1, 2, 3	40	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Additional Information for ATs

AT1: Fieldwork Notes

To collect first hand fieldwork data, and make necessary arrangements to make the dataset comprehensible to the instructor and other students. The fieldwork notes (around 1,500 words) should be submitted in the middle of the semester.

AT2: Research Project

To conduct a research project based on the fieldwork data (from AT1).

AT3: SPSS Exercise

Students are required to complete a set of SPSS exercises provided by the instructor.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Fieldwork Notes (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

1.1 Ability to demonstrate data collection and data arrangement in a systematic way

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Research Project (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

2.1 Ability to demonstrate learning

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

SPSS Exercise (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

3.1 Ability to show the acquisition of knowledge accurately

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Fieldwork Notes (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

1.1 Ability to demonstrate data collection and data arrangement in a systematic way

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the competence to systematically collect data with highly degree of richness.

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for the competence to systematically collect data with highly degree of richness.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the competence to systematically collect data with highly degree of richness.

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for the competence to systematically collect data with highly degree of richness.

Assessment Task

Research Project (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

2.1 Ability to demonstrate learning

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the capability to examine critically and apply innovatively the knowledge and theories learnt, and discuss critically the implications of the application in specific research contexts.

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for the capability to examine critically and apply innovatively the knowledge and theories learnt, and discuss critically the implications of the application in specific research contexts.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the capability to examine critically and apply innovatively the knowledge and theories learnt, and discuss critically the implications of the application in specific research contexts.

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for the capability to examine critically and apply innovatively the knowledge and theories learnt, and discuss critically the implications of the application in specific research contexts.

Assessment Task

SPSS Exercise (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

3.1 Ability to show the acquisition of knowledge accurately

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the ability to apply the knowledge with high accuracy.

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for the ability to apply the knowledge with high accuracy.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the ability to apply the knowledge with high accuracy.

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for the ability to apply the knowledge with high accuracy.

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Introduction to basic research steps in social sciences, measurement of social science issues, qualitative and quantitative social research, presentation of rigorous research in social sciences.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. 2018. Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks Calif.: Sage.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Moreto, W. D. (2015), 'Poaching in Uganda: Perspectives of Law Enforcement Rangers' , Deviant Behavior , 36/11: 853--873.
2	Babbie, E. 2020. The Practice of Social Research. 15th ed. Belmont, CA.; Wadsworth Publishing.