SYLLABUS

RM401E_1_0108_26

Introduction to Research Methods

ACADEMIC AREA :	**MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY**
PROGRAMME :	**PGE**
PERIOD :	**FALL**
COORDINATOR :	**Ms. Joanne GARDNER LE GARS**
INSTRUCTOR(S) :	**Mr. Clément LONGONDJO ETAMBAKONGA** **Ms. Hajar EL KHOULALY**
CONTACT HOURS :	**Ms. Joanne GARDNER LE GARS** **Qi ZHANG**
STUDY TIME :	**15.0 hours**
CREDITS :	**null hours (Class preparation, homework and assessments)**
	2.0 ECTS
AOL :	**YES**

PRE-REQUISITE MODULES :

None

MODULE DESCRIPTION :

This course will provide students with the knowledge and skills required to conduct a business research project using mixed methods (i.e. qualitative and quantitative approaches). The research skills that students will develop in this course can be applied in industry (e.g. in external and internal consulting), as well as in academic research (e.g., in the graduate dissertation research project). The course takes a learning-by-doing approach – students will work on a realistic research project throughout the course, present their work and receive feedback. In the process of preparation and implementation of a realistic research project, students will learn how to formulate a business research problem, use external sources of knowledge (the literature) to support their project design decisions and plan and implement a research project. In so doing, they will also learn how to analyze the quality (reliability/validity) of scientific articles and to communicate (present and defend research findings) based on the results of their research projects.

CONTRIBUTION TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

- Create Impact by formulating recommendations informed by scientific research and managerial judgement #CreateImpact

MODULE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILOs) :

At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Distinguish types of knowledge and how to generate scientific knowledge via a research process
2. Identify a business problem, and refine this using the literature to specify a researchable phenomenon
3. Use the academic literature to build a theoretical background, formulate a research question & design a study,
4. Formulate hypothesis / investigative question & determine appropriate data collection/ analysis approaches to test/ respond to these using a valid and reliable research approach

TOPICS COVERED :

1. The nature of knowledge and importance of management research for business decisions 2. Research design: types, strategies and logics of applied research 3. The research process for applied quantitative or qualitative research projects 4. Research quality and specific criteria used to evaluate quantitative and qualitative research

RESEARCH-LED TEACHING :

Students will be exposed to academic research on multiple occasions (i.e. to understand the how to justify research & how to undertake an academic literature review)

CSR AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS :

Students will be encouraged to identify & analyze business problems worthy of research interest - these may have implications for CSR

CSR NB HOURS :

8

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS COVERED :

- 03 - Good health and well-being
- 04 - Quality education
- 05 - Gender equality
- 08 - Decent work and economic growth
- 09 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- 13 - Climate action

TEACHING METHODS :

The course takes a learning-by-doing approach – students will work in teams on realistic research problems in an Agile manner.
Every session consists a lecture covering theoretical concepts, short formative activities/ quizzes and a project workshop. During the workshop time, students will work on activities often linked to the project work

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT :

Continuous/Final	Group/Individual	Assessment	Weight	Duration	ILOs assessed
Continuous	Group	Participation or task completion	40%		all
Individual Final Exam in class	Individual	Quiz	20%		all
Continuous	Individual	Written assessment at home	40%		2, 3, & 4

Assessment 1 details:

Development & presentation of a research poster comprising three progressive stages:
i) Video capsule of initial project idea- 25%
ii) Oral (supported by literature classification table) - 25%,
iii) Research poster & presentation & partner team questions - 50%.

Poster Content as follows: (i) Introduction: diagnosis & justification of business problem, (ii) Literature review - summary of scientific knowledge pertaining to the topic & justification of research qn, iii) Theoretical framework & hypotheses (or investigative qns) & research design, (iv) summarize insights based on lit to explain problem & ID strategic recommendations to address it)

Assessment 2 details:

Two quizzes (50% each) will be conducted in S2 (based on S1 & S2 content) and S4 (based on S3 and S4 content)

Assessment 3 details:

Students will critically audit the methodological quality of their group's project and explain/ justify/ critique the research decisions made during the project development process

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY :

Academic integrity at Rennes SB is about sharing a set of values and practices promoting intellectual honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all aspects of learning, studying and researching. Upholding academic integrity is key to maintaining the reputation of the student and the ultimate value of Rennes SB Degrees. Students are expected to demonstrate these values when submitting assessed work.

Academic misconduct is defined as gaining or attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage for yourself or for others during formal assessments. The following are examples of academic misconduct:

· Cheating
· Plagiarism
· Falsification
· Gaining an unfair advantage
· Assisting others in committing academic misconduct, such as by using generative AI
· Falsification of records or official documents
· Unauthorised access to restricted information or data
· Unauthorised or unethical use of generative AI

Academic misconduct is a serious offense and can result in consequences such as module failure, research project failure, or even exclusion from Rennes SB. To prevent unintentional academic misconduct, it is essential to read and comply with the Rennes SB Academic Integrity Policy for Assessments (available on RISE). Regarding use of AI in learning and assessment please consult your professor for specific instructions pertaining to this module.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

Saunders, M., 2023. Research methods for business students. Person Education. [eBook, 2019, 8e edn, https://bit.ly/3oyPUJr]
Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2022). Business research methods. Oxford university press.

Additional Reading

Collis, J. and Hussey, R., 2021. Business research: A practical guide for students. Bloomsbury Publishing. [eBook 2013 edn https://bit.ly/3PFkqOX]

MODULE PLAN SESSIONS :

Plan Session 01 :

Session 1: Business research - purpose & justification

--The value/purpose of research in the business context
--The research process & why it is necessary for informed decision-making (knowledge vs belief)

Justifying research project - the academic literature review:
------ Purpose & types of literature review
------ How to use specialist literature sources to justify a choice of research topic

Activities (initiating project poster group work):
--Group: Guided brainstorming using specific specialist sources to identify & justify an interesting business issue

--Group- ASSESSED: Creation of a project pitch to be delivered in class (or by video for large groups) (assessed by teacher):

---- Use of 5 W's to summarize the topic + justify research project idea based on scale of issue/ opportunity, temporal horizon, economic (or CSR related), performance implications for specific stakeholders) - all claims supported by appropriate sources

Plan Session 02 :

Session 2: Research design

--Working with external sources of knowledge to articulate a good research question
--Identification & formulation of different types of hypotheses
--Preliminary research design (Philosophies, research types, research strategies)
--Understanding when to develop hypotheses & when to use investigative questions
-- Understand, compare & contrast strengths & limitations of main research strategies

Activities:
-- Grp: Develop research qns for group project (using question development template) & quality check them using the SMART criteria
-- Grp: progress the literature review & identify main design choices for group project, develop investigative questions or hypotheses based on research type
--Grp assessed: initiate literature classification spreadsheet in preparation for S3 oral

--Individual Quiz (assessed) - session 1 & 2 content

Plan Session 03 :

Session 3: Research design – quality considerations

-- Understand, compare & contrast strengths & limitations of main research strategies (case study, survey, experimental)
-- Recognize research approaches (mixed/ quali/ quantitative & data properties)

-- Evaluate research quality:
----For quantitative research quality - reliability & validity
----For qualitative research quality - trustworthiness (credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability)

-- Understand how to use AI in the literature review process
---- Use of Elicit AI & NotebookLM

-- Learn citation rules

Activities:
-- Group activity: group project - complete literature review, update literature review classification spreadsheet,ensure coherence with hypotheses/ investigative questions

-- Group assessed work- ORAL: explain content of the literature review classification spreadsheet to the teacher (during class activity)

Plan Session 04 :

Session 4: data collection

-- Understand variable types and variable relationships

-- Understand how to represent variable relationships using a conceptual / analytical framework

-- Probability / non-probability sampling techniques (random/ non-random)

-- Qualitative data collection methods: overview key methods (interviews, focus groups, ethnography)

--Quantitative data collection method: overview: questionnaires / structured observations / experimental

Activities:
--Group project activity: create a conceptual map/ framework with correctly represented variable relationships, to consolidate the literature review output (based on the classification spreadsheet)
-- Individual: assessed quiz (research design and variable relationships)

Plan Session 05 :

Session 5: Mini-conference of research posters

Applied session: teams will pitch their proposed research project by presenting their posters

--Each group shares their poster with their partner team
--All groups successively review the partner poster
--All groups prepare 4 insightful, critical questions pertaining to specific sections (i the justification, ii) proposed methods, and iii) literature review findings....)
--Questions per group are shared with the teacher (who will choose the best qns to be asked during the peer Q&A).
--Groups do poster presentations (10 max. minutes/group + partner team asks questions)