

RESEARCH METHODS

IE University

Professor: **ANTONELLA FAZIO**

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Academic year: 23-24

Degree course: FIRST

Semester: 2^o

Category: COMPULSORY

Number of credits: 3.0

Language: English

PREREQUISITES

None

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of how to conduct research in Economics. To do so, the students will carry out their own research project supervised by the Professor. To achieve this, the students will learn the main steps involved in the research process: identify a topic, formulate a research question/hypothesis, find and critically evaluate relevant literature, develop a research proposal, plan the methods for locating and collecting economic data, select appropriate research designs and methodologies. The course will introduce students to practical day-to-day skills needed to be a research economist and provides an opportunity for them to demonstrate their ability to undertake independent research work.

OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS

The aim of this course is to enable students to undertake independent research work for a thesis, a consulting project or a peer-reviewed publication by demonstrating critical and analytical abilities. After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- 1) Conduct independent research work
- 2) Understand different research methods
- 3) Comprehend the difference between a theoretical/conceptual framework and a literature review.
- 4) Select and write a research project in clear manner
- 5) Present their research in public
- 6) Understand the relevance of ethics in research

METHODOLOGY

This course takes learning-by-doing how to conduct research in Economics. Some sessions take the form of lectures; however, the main objective is that students will be able to develop their own research. Many sessions will require teamwork, discussions, and oral presentations.

| Teaching methodology | Weighting | Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in |
|---------------------------|-----------|--|
| Lectures | 26.67 % | 20 hours |
| Discussions | 6.67 % | 5 hours |
| Exercises | 6.67 % | 5 hours |
| Group work | 20.0 % | 15 hours |
| Other individual studying | 40.0 % | 30 hours |
| TOTAL | 100.0 % | 75 hours |

PROGRAM

SESSION 1 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Introduction: How to conduct research in Economics?

- Defining research
- How to select a research topic?
- What is a research question and hypothesis?
- Relevance and Contribution
- Literature Review

Homework for next session: select your research topic (individually or by pairs maximum).

SESSION 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Introduction (second part): How to conduct research in economics?

- Overview all the steps involved in research: research question and aim of the research; literature review; theoretical framework; research hypothesis; methods.
- Writing style and structure of an economic paper.

Homework for next session: Find and select five (5) academic papers that could be relevant for developing your research topic. You will need to orally present your results in the next session(s). Guidelines will be posted on blackboard.

SESSIONS 3 - 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Assignment 1 - Team presentations: Research question and structure of the literature review.

Find and select five (5) academic papers that could be relevant for developing your research topic. You will need to orally present your results in the next session(s). Guidelines will be posted on blackboard.

Homework for next session: read to discuss in session 5 the following paper:

Article: "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation". (The American Economic Review, Vol 91, No. 5, pp1360-1401) (ced)

SESSION 5 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Theoretical framework:

- Aim of the theoretical framework.
- Difference between opinion and argument.
- Appropriateness of existing models to address the research question.

Classwork1 – Padlet activity.

- **Discussion of the article previously assigned:**

Article: "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation" (The American Economic Review, Vol 91, No. 5, pp1360-1401) (ced)

SESSION 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Midterm Exam: Submission and presentation of a Research proposal

The midterm exam is divided into two (2) parts: writing submission and class presentation. This assignment will guide you to develop the research project you selected at the beginning of this course.

- Introduction
- Research question-hypothesis
- Literature Review
- Theoretical framework
- References of potential sources

Suggested reading:

Book Chapters: Lleras-Muney, Adriana (2004). "Some Suggestions about How to Write an Empirical Paper"(Optional)

SESSION 7 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Introduction to different methodological approaches - Quantitative methods:

- Difference between qualitative and quantitative methods
- Data Collection.
- Sampling process & Bias.
- Introduction to quantitative methods (experimental methods).

SESSION 8 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Nonexperimental Quantitative methods:

- Spurious correlation
- Correlation vs causation
- Casual empiricism
- Simple statistical hypothesis testing
- Problems when analysing data
- Regression analysis

SESSION 9 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Classwork2- Quantative methods

Homework for next class: watch the documentary ---The Stanford Prison Experiment (BBC)

Video: The Stanford Prison Experiment (BBC) (Youtube)

SESSION 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Ethics in research

- What is ethics?
- What is ethics in research?
- Why is ethics important in Economics?
- Ethics and research methods

SESSION 11 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Qualitative methods:

- Difference between qualitative and quantitative research
- Observation, interviews, and content analysis
- Mix-Methods

Homework for next class: watch the documentary- Soudtrack for a revolution

Video: Soundtrack for a revolution (vimeo)

SESSION 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Classwork3- Qualitative methods

SESSION 13 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Working on your own research proposal in class supervised by your professor:

- Solid Research Question
- Complete Literature Review
- Theoretical Framework and methodology
- Sources
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions and limits Suggested reading:

Article: Nikolov, P (2013): Writing Tips for Economics Research Papers (Harvard Library) (Optional)

SESSIONS 14 - 15 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Final Exam: mini research article

The final exam is divided into two (2) parts: writing submission and class presentation. This assignment will guide you to develop the research project you selected at the beginning of this course.

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Theoretical Framework
- Methodology
- Conclusions

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Recommended

- Babbie, E. R. (2021). *The practice of social research*. 15th Edition. Cengage learning. ISBN 9780357360767 (Printed)

- Greenlaw, S. (2003). *Doing economics. A guide to understand and carrying out economic research*. Charles Hartford Ed. ISBN 0618379835 (Printed)

- McCloskey, D. (2000). *Economical Writing*. Second Edition. Waveland Press. ISBN 1577660633 (Digital)

- Thomson W. (2001). *A Guide for the Young economist*. The MIT Press. ISBN 9780262016162 (Printed)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Your final grade will be based on the following criteria:

| Criteria | Percentage | Comments |
|--------------------|------------|------------------------------------|
| Group Presentation | 10 % | Assignment 1 |
| Group Presentation | 5 % | Classwork 1 |
| Workgroups | 5 % | Classwork 2 (Quantitative methods) |
| Workgroups | 5 % | Classwork 3 (Qualitative methods) |
| Intermediate Tests | 10 % | Oral Presentation |
| Intermediate Tests | 20 % | Writing Submission |
| Final Exam | 15 % | Oral presentation |
| Final Exam | 30 % | Writing Submission |

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Each student has four attempts over two consecutive academic years to pass this course. For every BIE Program mandatory class, students are required to obtain the minimum grade of 5 required to pass the course. Students whose grade in the Final Exam (or the largest assignment) is below 5 will fail the course. The rule applies to whichever assignment carries the greatest weight to the final grade. Dates and location of the final exam will be posted in advance and will not be changed.

Students must attend at least 70% of the sessions. Students who do not comply with the 70% attendance rule will receive a 0.0 on their first and second attempts and go directly to the third one (they will need to enroll in this course again the following academic year). Students who are in the third or fourth attempt must contact the professor during the first two weeks of the course.

ATTENDANCE

In-person attendance is mandatory at IE University, as it is an essential factor of IE's learning methodology. While we do closely monitor attendance in each course, we also consider our students responsible for their own agenda and commitments, as adult university students. With that in mind, each student may miss up to 30% of the sessions within a given course and still maintain the possibility of passing that given course. This 30% "buffer" is to be used for any absences, such as: illnesses, personal emergencies, commitments, official/governmental matters, business and/or medical appointments, family situations, etc. Students should manage their various needs, and situations that may arise, within that 30% buffer. If a student is absent to more than the allowed 30% of the sessions (regardless of the reason), s/he will obtain a 0.0 grade for that course in both the ordinary and extraordinary calls of the current academic year, and s/he will have to retake the course during the following academic year.

Please pay close attention to your attendance. The program strongly encourages attending 100% of the sessions as it will improve your learning outcomes, it will increase the class performance and it will benefit your participation grade. Noncompliance with deadlines for Non-Classroom Learning activities or assignments will result in an absence for the session.

Extreme cases involving emergencies such as: extended hospitalizations, accidents, serious illnesses and other cases of force majeure, are to be consulted with the Program Management (bir.biemadrid@ie.edu) for assessment of the situation and corresponding documentation, in order to support and guide each student optimally.

For more information about the university attendance policy, please check; <https://www.ie.edu/student-guide/bir/policies-and-guidelines/attendance/>

RETAKE POLICY

Any student whose weighted final grade is below 5 will be required to sit for the retake exam to pass the course (except those not complying with the attendance rules, whom are banned from this possibility).

Grading for retakes will be subject to the following rules:

- The retakes will consist of a comprehensive exam or equivalent assignment. The grade will depend only on the performance on this exam; continuous evaluation over the semester will not be taken into account.
- Dates and location of the retakes will be posted in advance and will not be changed.
- The exam/assignment will be designed bearing in mind that the passing grade is 5 and the maximum grade that can be attained is 8 out of 10.

PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC HONESTY

Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting another person's ideas, texts or words as your own. This includes in order of seriousness of the offense:

- providing faulty sources;
- copy-pasting material from your own past assignments (self-plagiarism) without the instructor's

permission;

- copy-pasting material from external sources even while citing them;
- using verbatim translations from sources in other languages without citing them;
- copy-pasting material from external sources without citing them;
- and buying or commissioning essays from other parties.

IEU students must contact the professor if they don't know whether the use of a document constitutes plagiarism. For help with your academic writing, contact the Writing Center (writingcenter@faculty.ie.edu). The professor will also advise the student on how to present said material. All written assignments must be submitted through Turn-it-in, which produces a similarity report and detects cases of plagiarism. Professors are required to check each student's academic work in order to guarantee its originality. If the originality of the academic work is not clear, the professor will contact the student in order to clarify any doubts. Students using external tutorial support should report it to the professor and the BIR Program from the moment they began receiving this support. In the event that the meeting with the student fails to clarify the originality of the academic work, the professor will inform the Director of the Bachelor Program about the case, who will then decide whether to bring the case forward to the BIR Academic Review Panel. Very high similarity scores will be automatically flagged and forwarded to the Academic Review Panel. Plagiarism constitutes a very serious offense and may carry penalties ranging from getting a zero for the assignment to expulsion from the university depending on the severity of the case and the number of times the student has committed plagiarism in the past.

PROFESSOR BIO

Professor: **ANTONELLA FAZIO**

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ANTONELLA FAZIO

Antonella Fazio currently works at IE Business school in a research project on illegal pharma. She studied Economics (BA and MA). She completed her PhD in History at the European University Institute focusing on economic history. She has also been a postdoctoral researcher in the department of Economics of the Universidad de los Andes and at SMAG and CriDIS at Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL – Belgium) and has been an adjunct professor in economics. For several years she was a researcher at the Center of Economic development, Universidad de los Andes. Antonella has a special interest in empirical research and quantitative methods. Her research interest includes political and social economy, development and economic and business history. Before working at IE, she joined the European Parliament within the Robert Schuman traineeship program. Previously, she has worked as economic advisor at the City Council of Bogota as well as in an EU Legal Consultancy based in Brussels.

OTHER INFORMATION

Office hours:

- Presential / online: by appointment
- Contact details: afazio@faculty.ie.edu

CODE OF CONDUCT IN CLASS

1. Be on time. Students arriving more than 5 minutes late will be marked as "Absent". Only students that notify in advance in writing that they will be late for a specific session may be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor). Students attending online must always have their cameras on during the session or risk being marked absent.
2. If applicable, bring your name card and strictly follow the seating chart. It helps faculty members and fellow students learn your names.
3. Do not leave the room during the lecture: Students are not allowed to leave the room during lectures. If a student leaves the room during lectures, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter and, therefore, will be marked as "Absent". Only students that notify that they have a special reason to leave the session early will be granted an exception (at the discretion of the professor).
4. Do not engage in side conversation. As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed. If you have a question, raise your hand and ask it. If you do not want to ask it during the lecture, feel free to approach your teacher after class. If a student is disrupting the flow of the lecture, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and, consequently, will be marked as "Absent".
5. Use your laptop for course-related purposes only. The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor. The use of Social Media or accessing any type of content not related to the lecture is penalized. The student will be asked to leave the room and, consequently, will be marked as "Absent".
6. No cellular phones: IE University implements a "Phone-free Classroom" policy and, therefore, the use of phones, tablets, etc. is forbidden inside the classroom. Failing to abide by this rule entails expulsion from the room and will be counted as one absence.
7. Escalation policy: 1/3/5. Items 4, 5, and 6 above entail expulsion from the classroom and the consequent marking of the student as "Absent." IE University implements an "escalation policy": The first time a student is asked to leave the room for disciplinary reasons (as per items 4, 5, and 6 above), the student will incur one absence, the second time it will count as three absences, and from the third time onward, any expulsion from the classroom due to disciplinary issues will entail 5 absences.