

UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE AND SOCIETY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Master of Science (MS) in Public Policy

Course Coordinator: Dr. Aisha Azhar

Please read the contents of this document carefully. It will be assumed that you have obtained complete familiarity with this document. The course coordinators and other staff are not liable for any oversight on your part regarding obligations and responsibilities set out in this document. Direct all questions to your course coordinators.

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1. Course Staff

Course Coordinator	Dr. Aisha Azhar	Email:	aisha.azhar@umt.edu.pk
Rooms No:	SGS offices 3 rd Floor Library Building, UMT		
Office Hours:	Wednesday 3.00 – 6.00- Preferably through appointment		

2. Course overview

This course aims to extend and deepen the understanding of different research approaches and methodologies in the areas of public administration and policy to develop skills for applying different research methods in the broad range of management disciplines. This course will prepare students for undertaking an independent research study and examining key steps in developing a research strategy and their research projects or full research papers. The course will provide students with knowledge and skills to guide them through a literature review, develop research questions, consider and assess different theoretical approaches to research and choose a theoretical perspective that will inform the methodology, selection of research strategy/design, and the application of particular research methods.

The followings are the aims of this course:

- To develop understanding of the nature of research, research process and design, and about creation of knowledge in public administration, public management and policy disciplines;
- To develop understanding of different research approaches and traditions, different research methodologies, methods and techniques;
- To introduce the key features of selected research methodologies;
- To expose students to decisions in proposing and implementing research design, including ethical and professional issues; and
- To develop and apply fundamental research skills, such as critiquing research papers, conducting literature review, and designing and presenting a research project.

2.1 Student learning outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the nature, types and characteristics of research in public administration and policy disciplines;
- Understand different research approaches and how they relate to different methodologies;
- Apply various research approaches and methodologies;

- Critically analyze and review research papers and assess their strengths and weaknesses;
- Conduct information searches, critically assess relevant literatures;
- Identify research problems, develop and justify research questions and hypotheses;
- Understand ethical aspects of research and discuss them within different research approaches and contexts; and
- Write up and present a research project/ paper.

2.2 Approaches to learning and teaching

This course emphasizes the interaction not only between course coordinators and students but more importantly among students. The lively peer interaction as a cornerstone of learner centered teaching method enables students to challenge conventional thinking, engage in debates to test ideas and provide solutions to methodological issues of management and marketing disciplines. A set of readings will be assigned for each week.

2.3 Teaching strategies

The learning apparatus in this course consists of interactive discussion through case studies, class exercises and group activities. Interactive discussion sessions expound the appropriate theoretical content of the text and relevant readings. This will provide the learning opportunity through a direct interaction among students and course coordinators. *In order to gain most from the discussions and class activities, the assigned text/reading should be read before the class to participate in the class discussions.*

3. Student responsibilities and conduct

3.1 Workload

It is expected that you will spend at least **ten hours** per week studying this course. This time should be made up of reading, research, working on exercises and problems, and attending classes. In periods where you need to complete assignments the workload may be greater.

Over-commitment has been a cause of failure for many students. You should take the required workload into account when planning how to balance study with other commitments and activities.

3.2 Attendance

Your regular and punctual attendance at lectures is expected in this course. University regulations enforces that if students attend **less than eighty per cent** of scheduled classes they may be refused final assessment.

3.3 General conduct and behaviour

You are expected to conduct yourself with consideration and respect for the needs of your fellow students and teaching staff. Conduct which unduly disrupts or interferes with a class, such as **sending text or talking on mobile phones**, is not acceptable and students may be asked to leave the class.

3.4 Keeping informed

You should take note of all announcements made in lectures or on the course web site. From time to time, the University will send important announcements to your e-mail address without providing you with a paper copy. You will be deemed to have received this information.

4. Learning assessment

4.1 Formal requirements

In order to pass this course, you must make a satisfactory attempt at all assessment tasks (please see below).

4.2 Assessment details

Final Exam	50%
Midterm Exam	25%
Class participation/ Discussant	5%
Literature Review & Interview Guide/Process Assignment	10%
Research Proposal/ Research Paper	10%
Total	100%

4.3 Research proposal/ Papers

This assignment is to be completed as an individual assignment or+ maximum in pairs (depending upon the number of students enrolled in the course). The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your ability to:

- Identify relevant and interesting research problem(s) in your field, and demonstrate their significance;

- Assess the current body of knowledge and formulate research question(s);
- Understand the process of designing, distributing and completing a survey
- Justify your research approach and methodology to examine your research questions; and
- Discuss research design, data collection and data analysis methods/techniques;
- Discuss results, their practical implications and limitations, if any.
- Provide succinct conclusion and recommendations.

You are required to develop the arguments based on your literature review (particularly your identification of areas in need of further research) to prepare a research project or paper on a topic of your choice. Your research projects or papers should include a short literature review but must not duplicate it.

Your proposal/paper should include the following (as appropriate):

1. An introduction that describes your research problem, the objective of your study, its contribution to knowledge and the literature, why the research is important (e.g., what gap(s) in the literature it addresses and why addressing the gap is important) and who will benefit from the research.
2. An overview of the literature review and an outline of your research objective and questions
3. Theoretical grounding of the study and a description of your conceptual framework and /or theoretical propositions.
4. Research methodology including the approach, research design, and research method(s) suitable for your study, and an explanation of the rationale for your chosen method(s).
5. A description of data gathering strategy (including sampling) and data analysis
6. An explanation of your approach towards operationalization; illustrate how you intend to address ethical issues and quality issues such as validity and reliability, trustworthiness and authenticity, etc. (choose those that apply to your research approach).
7. An outline of your proposed data analysis strategy.

Research projects are to contain original ideas and material, and should fully reference the work of other researchers. Research projects/ papers should not exceed 4000 words, excluding bibliography. Each paper is to be accompanied by a full set of cited references. Papers are to be typed using 12 point font and 1.5 line spacing and submitted in Word.

This assignment includes a presentation component. All students are requested to present their research projects in weeks 15 and 16. Marking criteria focus on the quality, strength and

soundness of the research projects/ papers, and quality of writing and presentation. Marks will be deducted for excessively long research projects or papers.

4.4 Paper Critique & Systematic Literature Review Assignments

Students would be given one or two research papers highlighting the issues of research methodology in the areas of management from reputable journals. Students are required to carefully analyze it and write a paper critique during the semester. A paper critique report should not exceed 700 words.

The purpose of the paper critique is to learn to read academic articles and develop critical thinking, writing and argumentation skills.

4.5 Discussant

In the first class, you will sign up for a week in which you will be in charge of facilitating class discussion. Depending on the size of the course, we will have 1-2 discussants per session. As a discussant, your job is to come up with 3 questions for the class to discuss. These questions should be more than about summarizing the readings. Instead, they should bring up connections between readings of that week or to prior weeks. Alternatively, they can urge the class to think about how the readings connect to current policy debates.

I will serve as both moderator and participant in our weekly class discussions. The purpose of these presentations is not to merely summarize the content of the readings. Each presentation will indicate how ideas in that particular reading relate to others in the same week. Presentations should raise critical issues and questions for discussion.

The class participation is an important component of the assessment tasks for this course. Therefore, it is highly recommended that relevant reading material should be read and prepared before coming to the class. Your effective preparation will ensure higher marks for your class participation.

4.6 Final exams

The final exams will be comprised of short essay-type and few applied questions. The questions need the reflections of your understanding throughout the course. The format of final exam would be decided upon the completion of the course. The instructor would review the progress in class discussions, quizzes, assignments and exams and then would decide accordingly the content to be included in the exam.

4.7 Assignment submission procedure

Late work will be penalised at the rate of 25 percentage points per “week day” (per 24 hours of the weekday or part thereof). Assessed work will not be accepted for the award of a mark

if it is more than three ‘weekdays’ late. This penalty for late submission and the three-day rule may be waived upon presentation of a medical certificate of illness for the relevant period, or upon documented evidence of a serious and utterly exceptional crisis (such as death in the immediate family). **Students must keep copies of all work submitted.**

Each assignment should be submitted with the appropriate cover sheet. In case of team work, please ensure that the names of all members are included on the assignment cover sheet.

5. Grades

All assessment components will be assessed using the grading system of the University.

a)

Letter Grades	Grade Points
A+/A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
F	0.0

6. Academic honesty and plagiarism

The University regards plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct, and has very strict rules regarding plagiarism. For full information regarding policies, penalties and information to help you avoid plagiarism see your course coordinator. You are encouraged to consult course coordinators for plagiarism related queries during his consultation hours.

7. Student resources

Kindly note that it is very important to gain familiarity with the subject matter of the readings and cases prior to attendance in classes.

7.1 Course resources

Textbooks:

Miller, G. J. & Yang, K. 2008. *Handbook of Research Methods in Public Administration*, CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, LLC

Reference Materials:

The reference materials will be provided as additional book chapters, case studies and academic journal articles in the relevant classes.

8. Course schedule

The titles of topics and relevant readings are provided below for your easy reference throughout the semester. Relevant readings will be handed in during lecture hours on bi-weekly basis. This is not a distance learning course so you have to attend the required number of sessions.

Course Contents and Schedule		
Weeks	Contents	Readings
Week 1	Course preliminaries and introduction	Readings would be provided every week.
	Module 1: Theory based Public Administration and Public Policy Inquiry	
Week 2	Epistemological Approach to Research	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chap 2: The Logic of Inquiry in the Field of Public Administration</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 3: Theory based Public Administration and Public Policy Inquiry</p> <p>Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2011). Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution? <i>Academy of management review</i>, 36(1), 12-32.</p> <p>Mansfield, E. (1991). Academic research and industrial innovation. <i>Research policy</i>, 20(1), 1-12.</p> <p>Karl Popper Objective Knowledge, "A Realist View of Logic, Physics, and History" http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/at/popper.htm</p> <p>Thomas Kuhn, <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i>, Ch. 9 "The Nature and Necessity of Scientific Revolutions" http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/kuhn.htm</p>
Week	Paradigms and Research Questions	Millar & Yang 2008. Chap 3: Dealing with Multiple Paradigms in Public Administration Research

3		<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chap 4: Where Do Research Questions Come from and How Are They Developed?</p> <p>Krauss, S. E. (2005). Research paradigms and meaning making: A primer. <i>The qualitative report</i>, 10(4), 758-770.</p> <p>Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2011). Generating research questions through problematization. <i>Academy of management review</i>, 36(2), 247-271.</p> <p>Sutton, R.I., & Staw, B.M. (1995). What theory is not, <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i>, 40, 371-384</p> <p>Corley, K. G. and Gioia, D. A. (2011). Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution?" <i>Academy of Management Review</i> 36 (1): 12-32</p>
Week 4	Systematic Literature Review	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chap 5: Writing a Literature Review: The Art of Scientific Literature</p> <p>Okoli, C., & Schabram, K. (2010). A guide to conducting a systematic literature review of information systems research.</p> <p>Keele, S. (2007). Guidelines for performing systematic literature reviews in software engineering: Technical report, EBSE Technical Report EBSE- 2007-01</p>
	<i>Literature Review Assignment Due</i>	
	Module 2: Research Design	
Week 5	Research Design and Issues	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chap 6: Purpose and Significance of Research Design</p> <p>Colquitt, J. A., & George, G. (2011). Publishing in AMJ—part 1: topic choice. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 54(3), 432-435.</p> <p>Bono, J. E., & McNamara, G. (2011). Publishing in AMJ—part 2: research design. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 54(4), 657-660.</p> <p>Colquitt, J. A., & Zapata, C. P. 2007. Trends in theory building and theory testing: A five-decade study of</p>

		Academy of Management Journal. Academy of Management Journal, 50: 1281-1303
		Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 7 The Research Problem, Method, and Serendipity: An Investigator's Journey
Week 6	Reliability and validity in Research Designs	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 8 Threats to Validity in Research Designs</p> <p>MacKenzie, S. B., Podsakoff, et al. (2011). "Construct measurement and validation procedures in MIS and behavioral research: Integrating new and existing techniques." MIS Quarterly 35(2): 293-334</p> <p>Boyd, B.K., Gove, S., & Hitt, M. A. (2005). Construct measurement in strategic management research: Illusion or reality? Strategic Management Journal, 26, 239-257</p> <p>Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. Journal of Applied Psychology, 88, 879- 903</p>
Week 7	Qualitative Research	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 10 Qualitative Research Methods</p> <p>Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done?. Qualitative research, 6(1), 97-113.</p>
Interview guide and Analysis Due		
	Optional	Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 11 Comparative Research in Public Administration: A Historical-Institutionalist Perspective
Week 8	Mid Term Exam	
Module 3: Measurement and Data Collection		
Week 9	Description of Data & Sampling	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 13 Describing and Measuring Phenomena in Public Administration</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 14 Sampling and Data Collection</p>
Week 10	Survey Methodology	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 15 Using the Survey as an Instrument of Inquiry in Research</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 16 Questionnaire Construction</p>

		<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 17 Collecting Survey Data via Telephone: A Primer</p> <p>Rindfleisch, A. & Malter A. J. et al. 2008. "Cross-sectional versus longitudinal survey research: Concepts, findings, and guidelines." <i>Journal of Marketing Research</i> 45 (3): 261- 279</p> <p>Rogelberg, S. G., & Stanton, J. M. (2007). Understanding and dealing with survey nonresponse. <i>Organizational Research Methods</i>, 10, 195- 209</p> <p>De Beuckelaer, A., & Lievens, F. (2009). Measurement equivalence of paper-and-pencil and internet organizational surveys: A large scale examination of 16 countries. <i>Applied Psychology: An International Review</i>, 58, 336-361</p>
	Content Analysis (Optional)	Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 18 Obtaining Archival and Other Existing Records
	Module 4: Data Management	
Week 11	Data Coding and Scaling	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 19: General Issues in Data Management</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 20: Constructing Data Sets and Manipulating Data</p> <p>A small simulation exercise would be run for coding the data.</p>
	Module 6: Basic Quantitative Analysis	
Week 12	Quantitative Analysis I	Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 22 Introduction to Data Analysis
Week 13	Quantitative analysis II	<p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 23 Applying Matrix Algebra in Statistical Analysis</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 24 Univariate Analysis</p> <p>Millar & Yang 2008. Chapter 25 Statistics for Nominal and Ordinal Data</p>
	Module 7: Policy Analysis	
Week 14	Policy Analysis	Research in policy development and other social spheres
Week 15	Papers submission & presentations	
Week 16	Papers presentations	
	Final exam	