SS2034: RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Research Methods in Social Sciences: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

2034

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

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

SS2033 Research Methods for Behavioural Sciences

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to equip students with a comprehensive knowledge of research methods for pursuing more advanced and methodological issues in social research. It emphasizes, with equal balance on quantitative and qualitative methods, knowledge and practical skills for conducting research. It hopes to enable students to become familiar with the basic characteristics of social research, and to understand the nature of the components which are essential to the development as well as implementation of a criminological research project.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe key concepts and major methodological approaches in social science research;	30	x		
2	Identify the merits as well as limitations of social science research;	20	x	x	
3	Apply basic techniques used by social scientists in quantitative and qualitative data analysis; and	30	x	x	x
4	Write up a feasible research proposal.	20			

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	TLA1: Lectures	Lecturers explain social research principles and concepts.	1, 2, 3, 4	

| 2 | TLA2: Class assignments | In the weekly lectures, students are required to attempt a wide variety of class assignments on selected issues of academic and practical interests related to social research. They are expected to tackle the problems through a problem-solving approach. in addition, each student is required to submit a number of SPSS assignments so as to get himself/herself familiar with elementary statistical analysis | 1, 2, 3 | |
| 3 | TLA3: In-class Test | Students are required to attend an in-class test which includes multiple choice questions testing on students' understanding of the basic concepts. | 2, 3 | |

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	AT1: In-class testThe in-class test consists of 80 multiple-choice type questions.	1, 2, 3	40	
2	AT2: Class Assignments (Individual / Group)Both individual and group assignments on selected topic of both qualitative as well as quantitative social research methods are introduced so as to assess students' understanding and application of concepts and skills related to social research methods.	1, 2, 3	30	

3	AT3: Group Research ProposalA group research proposal of not more than 4,000 words is required. The aim of this assignment is to train students' abilities in integrating theoretical and empirical findings and arguments arising from literature review, formulating hypotheses, and choosing appropriate designs and analytical methods.	1, 2, 3	30	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Group Research Proposal

Criterion

1. Organisation: Refers to format and presentation: logical structure, good use of headings where appropriate# effective presentation.
2. Originality: Refers to original thinking, creativity, innovative analysis
3. Analysis: Refers to the quality, clarity, and depth of the analytical work involved in addressing questions and issues
4. Research effort: Includes resourcefulness, effort, and diligence in the search for and presentation of suitable information

5. English writing: Grammar, spelling, sentence construction, etc.
6. Referencing: Refers to the use of an accurate referencing system, appropriate citations in the essay, and avoidance of plagiarism.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

An excellent paper# very good mastery of the ideas or concepts, with excellent or innovative analysis. A is on the edge of this category, but still very good

Good (B+, B, B-)

A solid paper with reasonably good analysis and use of information.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Documentation, analysis, writing, use of concepts, referencing, and effort are mostly adequate for a passing grade, but with enough flaws and shortcomings that it cannot be judged to be "good" or "very good".

Marginal (D)

Barely a pass. Many serious flaws and shortcomings, but adequate effort and some research

Failure (F)

Does not demonstrate the minimum research effort and documentation# or substantial plagiarism

Assessment Task

2. Class assignments

Criterion

Ability to apply relevant concepts and skills related to social statistics and both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

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

3. In-class Test

Criterion

Scores of MCQ questions obtained.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

75 marks or above

Good (B+, B, B-)

60 to 74 marks

Fair (C+, C, C-)

45 to 59 marks

Marginal (D)

40 to 44 marks

Failure (F)

Below 40 marks

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

The nature and scope of social research, Problem Formulation, Issues of Measurement, Qualitative and Quantitative Research Design, Experimentation, Sampling and Survey Research, The logic and methodology of qualitative research, Questionnaire and Interviews, Observational and Unobtrusive Methods, Data Management and Processing, Idea of Descriptive and Inferential Statistics, Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation, Writing the research report.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Babbie, E. R. (2021). The Practice of Social Research (15th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
2	Neuman, W. L. (2020). Social research methods : qualitative and quantitative approaches, 8th ed. Essex: Pearson.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Berg, Bruce L. (2014). Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (8th ed.). Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.
2	Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2010). How to research (4th ed.). England: Open University Press.
3	Cargan, L. (2007) Doing social research Landham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield.
4	Denzin, Norman K., & Lincoln, Yvonna S. (2007). The landscape of qualitative research: Issues and theories (3rd ed.). London: SAGE Publications.
5	Ho, R (2014) Handbook of Univariate and Multivariate Data Analysis and Interpretation with SPSS, 2nd ed. Boca Ration: CRC Press.
6	Punch K. F. (2014) Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches, 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage publications.
7	Robson, C. (2011) Real World Research : a resource for users of social research methods in applied settings. Chichester : Wiley.
8	Salkind, N. J. (2012). Exploring research (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall Higher Education.