APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/2011

DRE 1012 Research Design and Methodological Choices

Programme
Common course

Responsible for the course

Department

Term
According to study plan

ECTS Credits
12

Language of instruction
English

Introduction
Research design is commonly defined as a program or a blueprint that guides researchers through the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting observations. Its essentialness is however rooted in its effects on the validity of knowledge claims. Research design is pivotal in affecting the strength, persuasiveness, and authoritativeness of claims concerning causality, external validity, and construct validity, to name a few. Research design is both a science and an art. While some of the major principles are firmly established, we continuously observe rejuvenations, extensions as well as bold innovations. The course examines in detail an amalgam of research designs and common design pitfalls with the aim of assisting students in designing research inquiry which is publishable, influential and important.

Learning outcome
The aim of the course is to introduce students to an amalgam of research designs that can be employed and methodological tradeoffs and challenges that need to be addressed in the pursuance of designing research inquiry which is publishable, influential and important.

At the end of the doctoral course the students should be able to:
Choose an appropriate research design
Design research which is publishable and potentially influential
Understand the strengths and weaknesses of various designs
Critically appraise contemporary research designs

Comprehend the variety of philosophical perspectives underlying research in the social sciences.

Prerequisites
Admission to a PhD Programme is a general requirement for participation in PhD courses at BI Norwegian School of Management.

External candidates are kindly asked to attach confirmation of admission to a PhD programme when signing up for a course with the doctoral administration. Candidates can be allowed to sit in on courses by approval of the course leader. Sitting in on courses does not permit registration for courses, handing in exams or gaining credits for the course. Course certificates or conformation letters will not be issued for sitting in on courses

Compulsory reading
Books:
Chalmers, A. F.. 1999. What is this thing called science?. 3rd ed. Buckingham : Open University Press. Pages 1-129
Elster, Jon. 1983. Explaining technical change : a case study in the philosophy of science. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. Part I, Pages 15-91
Shadish, William R., Thomas D. Cook, Donald T. Campbell. 2002. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference. Boston, MA : Houghton Mifflin

Collection of articles:
Please see the course outline on It's learning for the detailed list of articles. 2010

Recommended reading
Books:
Bryman, Alan, Emma Bell. 2007. Business research methods. 2nd ed. Oxford : Oxford University Press. Introductory level book
Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava, David Nachmias. 2008. Research methods in the social sciences. 7th ed. New York : Worth Publishers. A seminal textbook: Recommended literature
Pedhazur, Elazar J., Liora Pedhazur Schmelkin. 1991. Measurement, design, and analysis : an integrated approach. Hillsdale, N.J. : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. A seminal textbook: Recommended Literature
Singleton, Royce A., Bruce C. Straits. 2010. Approaches to social research. 5th ed. New York : Oxford University Press. Recommended literature

Course outline
The course will cover a wide range of issues including:
Experimental research designs
Quasi-experimental research designs
Qualitative research designs
Validity
Sampling
Measurement
Common method bias
Unit of analysis
Moderation and mediation effects
The underlying assumptions of research
Theory and theoretical contribution

Computer-based tools
Not applicable

Learning process and workload

Workload (12 ECTS)	
Lectures	60 hours
Specified learning activities (including reading)	150 hours
Autonomous student learning (including exam preparation)	105 hours
Two class presentations	10 hours
Total	325 hours

Examination
Class presentation.
Individual term paper will account for 100% of the grade. (process evaluation)
The term paper will be assessed using the ECTS grade scale, A-F.
Both parts of the evaluation must be passed.

Examination code(s)
DRE 10121 counts for 100% of the final grade

Examination support materials
Not applicalbe

Re-sit examination
Re-takes are only possible at the next time a course will be held. When the course evaluation has a separate exam code for each part of the evaluation it is possible to retake parts of the evaluation. Otherwise, the whole course must be re-evaluated when a student wants to retake an exam.

Additional information
Honour Code
Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and represent values that are encouraged and promoted by the honour code system. This is a most significant university tradition. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the ideals of the honour code system, to which the faculty are also deeply committed.

Any violation of the honour code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the programs at BI and are at the heart of the honour code and academic integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honour code, please ask.