



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014

## **GRA 6721 Research Methodology for Logistics, Operations, and Supply Chain Management**

### **Programme**

Master of Science in Business (Logistic - Supply Chains and Networks), Master of Science in Business (Strategy)

### **Responsible for the course**

Marianne Jahre

### **Department**

Department of Strategy and Logistics

### **Term**

According to study plan

### **ECTS Credits**

6

### **Language of instruction**

English

### **Introduction**

Students participating in this course will be guided towards the completion of a research proposal. The main aim of the course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills in order to successfully complete a master's thesis.

The course covers the philosophical underpinnings of research in business with focus on logistics, operations and SCM. This includes the fundamentals of research design. The main section of the course covers both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

### **Learning outcome**

#### **Acquired knowledge**

- (i) To understand how to write a research proposal.
- (ii) To gain knowledge of concepts and tools to collect and analyse data for research in logistics, operations and SCM.
- (iii) To understand and appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies and data sources.
- (iv) To gain a broader understanding of advanced information search strategies.

#### **Acquired skills**

- (i) To be able to compare and contrast different research designs.
- (ii) To be able to compare and critique different research designs, methodologies and data collection methods.
- (iii) To be able to design samples, research questions and research proposals appropriately.
- (iv) To be able to use and evaluate advanced methods for information 'harvesting' and search techniques, and critically evaluate information sources.
- (v) To understand what a critical literature review is and how it can be designed and executed.

#### **Reflection**

- (i) To understand how research design influences and is influenced by the theme of interest.
- (ii) To appreciate how to conduct original research at the MSc level and evaluate the research process.

### **Prerequisites**

A Bachelor's degree qualifying for admission to the Master programme. Students should have basic knowledge in statistics and in the use of library sources and search techniques. Students should be majoring in logistics at BI or (for exchange students) majoring in logistics, operations and/or SCM at their home institution.

### **Compulsory reading**

#### **Books:**

Bryman, Alan, Emma Bell. 2011. Business research methods. 3rd ed. Oxford University Press

#### **Other:**

During the course there may be hand-outs, articles and other material on additional topics relevant for the course and the examination.

Saunders et al. 2012. Research Methods for Business Students. 6th ed. Pearson Essex, UK. Chapter 3: Critically reviewing the literature, pp. 70-124

### **Recommended reading**

### **Course outline**

Introduction to the Research Process - philosophy of science, research proposals, research process, research ethics  
Research Design - problems, questions, collection and design  
Secondary Research and Analysis - literature searching, literature reviews, review articles, database management  
Qualitative Research - assumptions, ideas, methodologies and methods  
Quantitative Methods: surveys and modelling - assumptions, ideas, methodologies and methods  
Database Development, Management and Use

The course provides guidance on writing the thesis registration form and start of developing a thesis proposal.

### **Computer-based tools**

Various computer-based tools may be used in the course.

### **Learning process and workload**

A course of 6 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 160-180 hours.

Students are expected to participate actively and to be well prepared before attending class.

Please note that while attendance is not compulsory in all courses, it is the student's own responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/It's learning or text book.

### **Examination**

Term paper (55%)

Class participation (35%)

A completed and approved work assignment given by the library (10 %)

Completion of a thesis registration form – pass/fail

Specific information regarding student evaluation beyond the information given in the course description will be provided in class. This information may be relevant for requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several elements of the overall evaluation.

This is a course with continuous assessment (several exam elements) and one final exam code. Each exam element will be graded using points on a scale (e.g. 0-100). The elements will be weighted together according to the information in the course description in order to calculate the final letter grade for the course. You will find detailed information about the point system and the cut off points with reference to the letter grades on the course site in It's learning.

### **Examination code(s)**

GRA 67211 for the thesis registration (pass/fail)

GRA 67212 (continuous assessment) for the final letter grade in the course counting 100%

### **Examination support materials**

Not applicable, no written exam.

Exam aids at written examinations are explained under exam information in the student portal @bi. Please note use of calculator and dictionary in the section on exam aids

### **Re-sit examination**

It is only possible to retake an examination when the course is next taught.

The assessment in some courses is based on more than one exam code.

Where this is the case, you may retake only the assessed components of one of these exam codes.

Where this is not the case, all of the assessed components of the course must be retaken.

All retaken examinations will incur an additional fee.

### **Additional information**

#### **Honor Code**

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

Any violation of the honor 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 honor code and academic integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask