

## **RES 641: Doctoral Tutorial I- Research Methodology (12 credit equivalency)**

Research Doctorate Tutorials- Doctor of Philosophy (by Dissertation)  
Akamai University

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A first research tutorial designed for doctoral level students pursuing the degree by dissertation research-only. Seminar I emphasizes effectiveness in research design, data gathering and presentation of the findings. The minimum expected outcome for this tutorial is a design for the research methodology for the dissertation. Open only to students pursuing the degree by research. [Instructor to be assigned]

### **PREREQUISITES**

Permission of the Chair of the student's Dissertation Committee

### **COURSE TOPICS**

- Effectiveness in research design
- Data gathering
- Selection of
- Presentation of the findings

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course, the student will be able to:

- Formulate good research questions and design appropriate research.
- Critically analyze and evaluate research terms, concepts, and techniques
- Understand the various methods for conducting empirical research and the general principles involved in doing social research
- Develop analytical thinking capabilities through comparison and contrast in the application of theories and concepts to social problems and conceptualize more clearly a personal "world view"
- Appreciate the benefits of applied research
- Write a research report.
- Understand and select research methods appropriate to the planned dissertation research of the student, under the leadership and approval of the doctoral committee chair.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR RESEARCH SEMINARS**

Seminars help in expanding the student's literature search, building competence in scholarly argument and high-level verbal and written skills. Seminars guide students in the presentation of at least one scholarly research paper each semester before a scheduled gathering of colleagues, formal symposium or professional conference.

For students pursuing the degree by research only or the combined graduate program, there is an expectation that students participate in doctoral research seminars designed to support development of essential competencies. As an element of the seminars, students are expected to pursue mentored (as well as self-directed) foundational readings that extend understanding of the theories principles and practices in their defined field of study. For instance, in Seminar I, students submit an annotated bibliography for mentor approval.

Students are expected to comprehend the critical features of sound quantitative or qualitative research including subject selection, research design, and statistical analysis in order to develop a sound dissertation or project proposal. Students will be expected to define an applied problem or theoretical issue that to investigate, articulate a rationale for the study of the problem or issue, and formally propose and implement a quantitative or qualitative method of evaluation of the issue or problem. Students will demonstrate the ability to complete a thorough scholarly literature review on the topic they wish to present. Students are encouraged to select research methodologies that will assure valid and reliable evaluations of the effects of variables on individuals or groups being studied. The intent is to ensure that students have the competency to examine applied or theoretical issues in their fields of study and implement programs of intervention that are cogent, scholarly, and make an original contribution to the body of information available in their fields. Each student must clearly address issues related to research with human subjects and live animals.

Students are encouraged to enter dialogue with their mentor early in the conduct of the degree program to clarify their area of specialization. Students may select from among the many fields of inquiry covered by the program coursework, or explore viable personal interests with their mentors.

Students are directed to undertake theoretical and practical discussions with faculty and at Akamai and colleagues at outside institutions involved with the student's field of study. Students submit written plans for mentor approval relative to ongoing discussions.

Students are expected to submit scholarly written work (approximately 10,000 words) in each seminar as directed by the instructor. These papers must reflect high-level information gathering skills, publishable quality written work, with effective academic argument with proper citations and referencing of the literature. The student submits the scholarly paper for mentor evaluation and detailed follow-up discussions. It is acceptable that work in the doctoral seminars be directly related to and supportive of the proposed dissertation project that will follow the seminars.

Students are also expected to demonstrate successful skills in the formal verbal presentation of their work (in increasingly more formal and detailed manner) before their professional colleagues. Presentations may be made at professional conferences, seminars, workshops or retreats or at scholarly symposia organized by the student via formal written invitation. Students may also make arrangements to speak before college classes or meetings of professional associations, fraternal organizations, non-profit and community membership organizations. Under certain carefully monitored circumstances, students may arrange to make presentations in an innovative manner through videoconference, production and distribution of video- or audiotapes and other electronic, distance and online means. The mentor is provided record of the presentation.

Each research seminar is summarized by means of a telephone conference (at student's

expense) permitting detailed oral review and follow-up of the seminar activities.

## **COURSE AUDIENCE**

Open as a required class for students pursuing the research doctorate.

## **FACULTY-STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Telephone Contacts**

The student will initiate an initial telephone conference with the instructor within one week of enrollment to clarify a plan of action for the course. This initial contact will help familiarize the student and instructor with one another, and permit the transmission of clear expectations for completion of course requirements. Periodic telephone interaction as required, at student's expense, should be continued for the duration of the course.

### **Email Communications**

Frequent email communications between student and instructor should be initiated and continued for the duration of the course.

### **Alternative Communications**

Students may send communications and materials via postal service, as appropriate. Chat room sessions, when available, can be held on a weekly basis.

## **COURSE DELIVERY STYLE**

Students read assigned materials and conduct an exhaustive search for the research literature in a selected topical area of student research and pursue foundational readings specific to the student's research under the direction of the instructor (according to an approved plan for study). The participant creates a draft of the research methodology relative to the student's proposal for dissertation.

## **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Required Textbook**

There is no required textbook for this course, however, an extensive library and Internet literature search is to be conducted under the guidance of the instructor from which the students will select appropriate reading materials in support of their directed studies. Selection of foundational learning resources is considered a required aspect of the proposal for study related to this course.

### **Alternative learning materials:**

Khanh Academy Videos Online in Research Methods

Online videos cover a full array of basic statistics research topics needed by doctoral students

<http://www.khanacademy.org/#statistics>

### **Statistics eBook Online**

This book covers data sets and scenarios from a wide range of application areas of statistics

<http://cast.massey.ac.nz/core/index.html?book=general>

### **Qualitative Analysis Tools Online**

A qualitative approach is one where there is a need to interpret data through the identification

and possibly coding of themes, concepts, processes, contexts, etc., in order to build explanations or theories or to test or enlarge on a theory.

<https://digitalresearchtools.pbworks.com/w/page/17801694/Perform%20Qualitative%20Data%20Analysis>

### **Participatory Action Research Techniques**

<http://doctoratelifelife.blogspot.com/2008/03/participatory-action-research-video.html>

### **Participatory Action Research on Wikipedia**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory\\_action\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory_action_research)

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Assignment #1: Collaborative Communication with Instructor**

Initiate telephone contact with the instructor to clarify the plan of action for the course and initiate collaborative email communications. Maintain email contact with the instructor for the duration of the course. Initiate and continue journal notations concerning all communications with the instructor.

### **Assignment #2: Proposal for Study**

Prepare a proposal for study covering each of the following points, and submit for feedback and approval from the instructor, before initiating studies:

1. List the important topics for study that will be included in this course.
2. List the objectives for the course, indicating what competencies, skills and knowledge will be gained through completion of the course. These learning objectives should be described as outcomes in measurable terms.
3. List at least one primary textbook associated with the topics listed for this course, and include a brief bibliography of other important learning resources (journals, videotapes, conferences, field sites and so on).
4. Clarify the timetable for communications with the instructor during the project.
5. Explain the importance or the need for the studies. Clarify how the course might contribute to the betterment of your community, profession, environment or academic discipline. Explore the potential benefits to your personal, scholarly, and professional development.
6. Identify the settings and locations and describe the situation within which the studies will be conducted. Include contact information (full address, telephone number, and email address), as appropriate, for outside sponsor organizations involved with you in the conduct of your studies in this course.
7. Identify in detail the primary activities that will be undertaken and their sequence in the conduct of the studies and carefully identify the expected outcomes.

### **Assignment #3: Literature Review of Research Methods**

Conduct a library and Internet search for scholarly literature in texts and journals specifically related to the selected topics under investigation within the course, under the direction and guidance of the instructor. By design, this should be an exhaustive but narrow and well-focused gathering of literature within the defined area under investigation with emphasis upon applied issues student's field of dissertation research. Make journal notations concerning the salient points of all readings and prepare an annotated bibliography that

identifies the many ways the literature informs practice or readies you for more advanced studies.

#### **Assignment #4: Scholarly Paper**

Prepare a major paper containing an overview of the research methods you have selected for use in undertaking your dissertation. The paper should be approximately 20 double-spaced typewritten pages and include thorough referencing of the literature. Deviations within this assignment may be negotiated with the instructor but some form of written or recorded information must be submitted for faculty review.

### **INDIVIDUALIZATION OF STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS**

The primary purpose of this course is to provide opportunities for students to carefully inspect the applicability of the theoretical literature within their own professional environment. This course allows students to select topics for study, identify appropriate literature and alternative learning resources for research preparation.

### **COURSE EVALUATION**

The instructor will evaluate the completeness and effectiveness of the student's written materials, including the proposal for study, annotated bibliography and scholarly paper on research methods for dissertation.

The instructor will reflect upon the following expectations in evaluating the work of the student:

- Completeness and detail of presentations
- Richness and diversity of the material presented
- Clarity of references to the scholarly readings
- Focus and conceptual quality
- Richness and coherence in translation of academic theories and concepts
- Appropriateness of applications
- Quality of writing of the scholarly presentation

### **COURSE GRADING DETERMINANTS**

The course grade will be calculated according to the following formula:

Proposal for Study	20%
Annotated bibliography	30%
Scholarly paper	50%

### **COURSE COMPLETION TIMETABLE**

While the student is expected to carry out and complete all assignments and meet the expectations of the instructor within 175 days (25 weeks) from the start date, students are encouraged to pursue the course requirements according to the following timetable.

Week #1: Make telephone contact with the instructor for the purpose of establishing the plan of action and scheduling the timeline and mode of communications for the duration of the course. Secure a recommended bibliography from the instructor and begin to gather text and journal literature in support of the selected topic. Explore the details of your proposal for study with the instructor and secure recommendations for inclusion.

Week #2: Submit by email your complete proposal for study and a summarization of the agreed upon plan of action for the course. Continue to gather literature and begin readings and maintenance of journal notations (which must continue for the duration of the project) related to all readings. Begin creation of an annotated bibliography of the special topic literature

Week #4: Continue to read and review the literature. Maintain journal notations related to all readings. Begin to organize your thinking related to the professional environment for the field observations.

Week #6: Initiate journal notations. Continue to review the scholarly literature, maintain journal notations, and continue frequent communications with instructor.

Week #12: Prepare and submit the annotated bibliography. Begin at this point to formulate reflections concerning observed differences between the scholarly literature as it applies within the real world of the workplace or professional environment.

Week #13: Begin preparation of written report related to research methods to be selected for use in the student's dissertation. Begin structuring the scholarly paper. Continue communications with instructor and maintenance of journal notations.

Week #15: Submit scholarly paper.

Week #16: Receipt of effective feedback from the instructor.

## **SPECIAL NOTES AND INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Course Completion**

The grade of Incomplete may be given ONLY AFTER discussion with the instructor and only if there is an extremely good reason to give such a grade. An Incomplete will NOT be given because a student is "behind" in work, needs extra time, simply because s/he wants to delay the completion of the assignments. It is important that you turn in assignments within the parameters of the agreed timeline. However, there are often unforeseen circumstances which may befall any of us, therefore, I will be patient with you in the event of some personal crisis. Don't surprise me at the last minute, call me, email me, and we will work it out.

### **Thoughts about Writing**

Purchase a collegiate writing style manual. If you are unclear which is the appropriate manual, please contact me and we can discuss this important issue. All written work should adhere to the writing style and manuscript preparation guidelines described in your style manual. Pay extra special attention to the rules related to referencing and citation of the academic literature. In all circumstances, you will be expected to acknowledge the works of others that have informed the work you wish to submit as your own.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty in any of its forms, including cheating, plagiarism, misuse of the University web site, failure to comply with guidelines for the conduct of human or animal research, and all aspects of professional ethics, will not be tolerated. Any form of academic dishonesty is a basis for dismissal from the program.

## **FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Instructor to be assigned.

Students are directed to consult their approved program timeline or communicate with the Office of the University President to confirm selection of their course instructor.