

**Research Methods HLP 6535**  
Dept. of Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management  
College of Health and Human Performance  
University of Florida  
**FALL 2024**

**INSTRUCTOR**

Svetlana Stepchenkova, Ph.D.  
Professor  
FLG 186C; 352.294.1652  
**Email:** svetlana.step@ufl.edu

**DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

Rachel Fu, Ph.D.  
Professor  
FLG 240C  
racheljuichifu@ufl.edu

**CLASS MEETS:** Fridays 12:50-3:50 PM in FLG235.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesdays 11 am – noon and 1-2 pm. Or by appointment.

**FALL 2024 PERMANENT ZOOM LINK**

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96371878824?pwd=THp3VlpabG1rQWFHNUFLUURxQkMyQT09>

Meeting ID: 963 7187 8824

Passcode: 391431

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS**

If not in class or office, then **strictly via Canvas Inbox!** Your message with your name, course, and section number will be forwarded to the instructor's UF e-mail box. Using the instructor's e-mail creates course management and record-keeping issues. Use Canvas mail for questions about the course content, grades, special circumstances, and accommodations. Expect a response within 24 hours, not including weekends and holidays.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course lays out the foundations for conducting research in the business and academic world. That includes stating a problem, gathering information to identify the current state of knowledge pertaining to the issue, developing a sound research plan, preparing the study with ethical considerations in mind, collecting data, analyzing data, and writing a report based on the study results. The course largely concentrates on quantitative study designs, although qualitative approaches are also covered.

**OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

- Define a scientific method to answer questions of theoretical or practical significance. Describe how to conduct a study using the scientific method.
- Discuss ethical guidelines in research.
- Demonstrate comprehension and knowledge of various research designs covered in the course through quizzes, individual homework assignments, exams, and the term project.
- Formulate research questions, state hypotheses, select an appropriate method, create a research instrument, collect data, do basic analyses, and report and interpret the results.

- By the end of the course, students will be able to design and carry out a small-scale research project in tourism, hospitality, leisure, park management, sport management, or related fields. The project includes a problem statement, a search for related literature on the topic of interest and available statistical data, selecting an appropriate research method, formulating hypotheses and/or expected outcomes, data collection, and analysis.
- Practice oral and written skills in presenting the term project results.

## TEXTBOOKS

There is no required textbook for the course. Generally, any textbook on research methods in social sciences will work for the course. Lectures largely follow “Doing Research in the Business World” by David Gray. Material about qualitative methods is taken from “Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods” by John W. Creswell. Another suitable book for quantitative methods is “Exploring Research” by Neil J. Salkind, any edition.

## ASSESSMENT

This class will have practicums, two exams, a research method presentation, and a term project. The overall grade will be a combination of the grades in the following categories:

1. Practicums (15%)
2. Exam 1 and Exam 2 (40%)
3. Research Method Presentation (15%)
4. Term Project: Presentation and Written Report (30%)

The final percentage points are translated into the letter grades as follows:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade
		87-89.99	B+	77-79.99	C+	67-69.99	D+
93-100	A	83-86.99	B	73-76.99	C	63-66.99	D
90-92.99	A-	80-82.99	B-	70-72.99	C-	60-62.99	D-

A score below 60 constitutes a failing grade. After the assignment’s grade is released, students are given one week to contest the grade. **IMPORTANT:** Students with a failing score for the Term Project receive the grade of Incomplete for the course regardless of how well they did in the other areas.

**RESEARCH METHOD PRESENTATION:** Each student group will present a research method: qualitative interview, focus group, case study, non-participant observation, and ethnography/participant observation. Students will introduce and explain the method, outline the applicability scope, and show how the method works using a research study. Students should budget for no more than 25-minute presentations, which will be followed by Q&As. The presentation will be assessed along the following dimensions:

- **CONTENT** – clear and logical explanation of the method.
- **ARTICLE SUITABILITY** – the study should be a good example of the method and help demonstrate what the method is about.
- **CREATIVITY AND INTERACTIVITY** – the presentation should generate interest from the audience.

- OVERALL IMPRESSION – time management, quality of slides, and self-presentation.

TERM PROJECT: Students will conduct a small-scale study as the course outcome. It will include a statement of the problem, a brief literature review, method, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis. The depth of statistical analysis (for quantitative studies) may vary and will depend on students’ skills. Student groups will meet with the instructor during office hours at least once and no later than **October 18** to discuss progress on the term project. Students will present their projects in class and submit the written report. Detailed instructions are posted on CANVAS.

Evaluation for presentations:

- CONTENT – All necessary parts are present, and explanations are clear and logical.
- CREATIVITY AND INTERACTIVITY – the presentation generates interest from the audience.
- OVERALL IMPRESSION – time management, quality of slides, and self-presentation.

Evaluation for the written report:

Letter Grade	Point Range	Evaluation	
A	90-100	Excellent	Excellent, scholarly, and advanced college-level work. Original, creative ideas and delivery. Perfect grammar, APA format.
B+	87-89.99	Good	Good college-level work exceeds requirements. It is creative and thought-provoking, and the grammar is acceptable. However, some areas are noticeably weaker than others.
B	80-86.99		
C+	77-79.99	Satisfactory	This is average work. The assignment is not thought through, and/or the presentation is not cohesive. Improvement is needed in depth, consistency, originality of thought, and presentation.
C	70-76.99		
D+	67-69.99	Marginal	This is below-average work. Substantial improvements are needed in content, reasoning, and delivery, as well as grammar and formatting.
D	60-66.00		
E	59.99 or lower	Failure	The assignment is not submitted or is incomplete.

### SUBMISSION POLICIES

Follow closely the course logistics with respect to submission of your work.

The course follows the UF policy regarding plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty. The UF defines plagiarism in the following way:

*“(a) Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:*

1. Quoting oral or written materials, including but not limited to those found online, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.”

Refer to the abovementioned Honor Code for a complete explanation of the University of Florida Academic Honesty Policy.

## ATTENDANCE

There are 14 three-period classes in this course. A student can miss without penalty one class that does not have an exam or presentation; however, if a missed class has a graded assignment, there will be no make-up opportunity. Beyond this allowance, each class missed without a legitimate reason, as identified by the UF attendance policy, will result in a 1% deduction from the overall course grade. Five missed classes will result in a failing grade for the course.

A student experiencing an illness should visit the UF Student Health Care Center or their preferred healthcare provider to seek medical advice and obtain documentation. If you have an illness, family emergency, or death, please contact the Dean of Students Office ([www.dso.ufl.edu](http://www.dso.ufl.edu)) and follow the DSO Care Team procedures for documentation and submission of a request for make-up assignment. Do not provide any documentation to the instructor regarding illness or family emergency. This is your personal and protected information. The DSO is qualified to receive and verify the documents you provide and will contact the instructor. The instructor will consider the recommendations from the DSO.

Attendance policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

## COURSE CALENDAR: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Week	Date	Topic	Readings from David Gray Student Presentations
W1	23-Aug	COURSE OUTLINE Philosophical foundations of research Scientific method Quantitative vs. qualitative research Role of theory	DG 1, 2, 6, 7, 8
W2	30-Aug	Steps in research process Research designs: cross-sectional, experimental, longitudinal, historical, etc. Research ethics The concept of variables	DG 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
W3	6-Sep	Population and sample Sampling error Types of probability sample Sample size Types of non-probability sample Limits to generalization. Hypotheses	DG 9, 15 Method: Qualitative Interview
W4	13-Sep	Operationalization and measurement Reliability Validity	DG 6, 18 Method: Focus Group

Week	Date	Topic	Readings from David Gray Student Presentations
W5	20-Sep	Reducing error Scales Interview contexts Potential problems	DG 6, 16 Method: Non-participant Observation
W6	27-Sep	Designing a questionnaire Types of questions Rules for designing questions Data collection	DG 10, 11 Method: Case Study
<b>W7</b>	<b>4-Oct</b>	<b>Exam 1</b>	
W8	11-Oct	Experimental designs Quasi-experimental design	DG 17 Method: Ethnography and Participant Observation
W9	18-Oct	Descriptive and inferential statistics, Hypothesis testing Statistical significance	DG 23
W10	25-Oct	T-test, ANOVA, Correlation, and Regression	DG 23
W11	1-Nov	Guest lecture: Big Data research	
<b>W12</b>	<b>8-Nov</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
W13	15-Nov	Students work on Term Projects. Instructor is available to consult.	DG 26, 27
<b>W14</b>	<b>22-Nov</b>	<b>Term Project Presentations</b>	
	<b>9-Dec</b>	<b>Written Report is due</b>	

*I wish everyone a great semester with this course!*

*Dr. S.*