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Reforming Master Programmes in Finance in Armenia and Moldova / REFINE

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# THE COURSE RESEARCH AND WRITING OVERVIEW

*RAU*

*Mariam Voskanyan*



# BASIC INFORMATION



<b>TITLE OF THE COURSE</b>	Research and writing
<b>TEACHERS</b>	Mariam Voskanyan
<b>YEAR OF THE COURSE</b>	1
<b>SEMESTER OF THE COURSE</b>	2
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Russian, English
<b>NUMBER OF ECTS CREDITS</b>	2

# LEARNING OUTCOMES



LO Level	After completing this course students should be able to
Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehend a concept of methodology in research</li> <li>• Avoid plagiarism</li> <li>• Support central arguments</li> <li>• Test a hypotheses</li> <li>• Write a methodology for a research project</li> <li>• Write a literature review</li> <li>• Design a research proposal</li> <li>• Structure a research project</li> <li>• Present and defend a research proposal</li> <li>• Conduct a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research</li> <li>• Chose appropriate components for the methodology and a research project</li> <li>• Understand research skills, techniques and tools for conducting a research project</li> </ul>
Analysing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make accurate referencing and citations</li> <li>• Use academic databases and academic sources</li> </ul>
Evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect primary and secondary data</li> <li>• Understand the place of quantitative and qualitative methods in research</li> <li>• Use evidence when constructing arguments and supporting a hypothesis</li> <li>• Do data coding and analysis</li> </ul>

# SYLLABUS OF THE COURSE



WEEK	TOPIC
1	<b>Part 1. Introduction to scientific activities for master students.</b>
2-3	<b>Part 2. Introduction to research and writing</b>
4	<b>Part 3. Methodology</b>
5	<b>Part 4. Research Proposal</b>
6	<b>Part 5. What is Synopsis?</b>
7-9	<b>Part 6. Synopsis Submission and Presentation</b>

# Part 1. Introduction to scientific activities for master students.



- What is scientific work on master level?
- What kind of scientific activities master students have to pass in the process of studying?

# Part 2. Introduction to research and writing



**What is a Research? What is a Literature Survey (sources and databases, referencing)? What is a Literature Review? What is a Plagiarism?**

This session focus is on the definition of a research. It gives an overview of how to carry out a research project, what sources to use in terms of their scientific appropriateness, gives a practical guideline on the use of databases and explains the difference between a literature survey and a literature review and why the literature review has a crucial role while carrying out your research. The lecture will then explain the students what is plagiarism in academia, the danger of plagiarism in scientific progress, academic ethics and how to avoid these. ***All essays will be tested with anti-plagiarism software. Cases of plagiarism will automatically mean a failure of the course.***

# Part 2. Introduction to research and writing



## Writing a Research Project (essay, paper, report, dissertation)

Second session gives students guidelines on how to construct a research project (essays, research papers, reports and dissertations). Students are invited to consider important distinctions relevant to the writing of their research papers, conducting research, presenting claims and central arguments in their works. Certain common requirements and criteria exist for research projects writing despite the disciplinary and subject area, hence students will learn particular research writing requirements and structures and learn about the grading system for research projects at the end of the course.

They will learn how to avoid subjectivity and ensure analytical approach in the research by combining arguments and counter arguments and validating their claims as such. Students will be introduced to the notions of “hypothesis”, “argument”, “evidence”, “justification”, “concept” “normative”, “explanation”, “indicator”, and “generalisation”. The focus of the class is to introduce students how they should test their hypothesis through theoretical arguments and empirical claims, practice and observation and how these all constitutes an academic research work.

# Part 3. Methodology



## What is a Methodology? Research Methods, Research Techniques, and Research Tools

The purpose of this class is to explain that the cornerstone of any research is the *methodology*. Students will get the definition and concept of “methodology”, “research methods”, “research techniques”, and “research tools”. The lecture will also introduce the notions of “knowledge creation” in the research, the notion and definition of the “discipline”, “school of thought” “multidisciplinary field”, “empirical project”, “normative project” and various methodological demands in research and will show in what ways are they important while covering a research gap in the work.



# Part 3. Methodology



## Qualitative Research Methods

Current class is an introductory session on qualitative research methods. Students will learn about fundamental differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches of data gathering, categorisation, and analysis. Students will also distinguish conceptual analysis and relational analysis. Finally, the class will introduce crucial elements of a critical evaluation of research documents and data.

# Part 3. Methodology



## Discourse Analysis

The purpose of this session is to familiarise students with the main notion and elements of discourse analysis in qualitative research, its different forms and tools. Students will learn about advantages and disadvantages of the discourse analytical approach and in what research projects it is advised to use the DA, and when one better apply content analysis instead.

# Part 3. Methodology



## Content Analysis

In this class students will focus on Discourse Analysis vs. Content Analysis research techniques. They will then learn main components of content analysis. Students will also be trained on how to use content analysis by counting words into numbers and categories.

# Part 3. Methodology



## Case Study

This class is on case study methods and techniques. Students will be trained to use different case study designs, what data are relevant to use in such research approaches and how to analyse the data and results in case studies.

# Part 3. Methodology

## Interviewing, Survey Research, Focus Groups, Observation and Field Work

This lecture will teach students how to conduct in-depth structured and semi-structured interviews and methods to analyse text and talk afterwards. Students will then learn doing a survey research; will get the definition for populations parameters (such as countries, units, and people), and will be trained to identify the sampling sizes and frames afterwards.

# Part 3. Methodology



**Mixed-Methods Approach. Triangulation. Socio-Legal Research and Analysis. Impact Assessment Methods.**

During this lesson students will get introduced to the meaning of triangulation occurred in research and its role in methodology. They will also learn about various types of mix-methods approaches, such as socio-legal analyses or impact assessment methods as such discovering the notion of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research and its trend in the modern methodological demands.

# Part 3. Methodology



## Reliability and Validity

Significant component in methodology is to check if the research is consistent in its validity and reliability. Herewith the lesson's purpose is to teach students what research tools and techniques to employ to assess the validity and reliability and what problems can occur in doing so.

# Part 3. Methodology



## Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods

This class gives a brief introduction to quantitative research methods focusing on the following techniques and tools: levels of data, measures of central tendency; measures of variability; variance; standard deviation; Statistical Notation. It also provides an introduction to Probability; Probability Distributions; the Normal Curve; Sampling Distributions; Sampling Distribution of Means

Point and Interval Estimation; Confidence Intervals of the Mean; Significance Tests; Types of Errors; P-values Comparing Groups; Comparisons of Means; Contingency Tables; Chi-Square Test; and Residuals.



# Part 3. Methodology



## Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods

Second class on quantitative research methods will define the notions and tools for direction and strength of correlation, partial correlation, introduction to bivariate regression, linear relationships, the least squares prediction equation, assumptions of regression, Gauss-Markov theorem, OLS estimator as BLUE, and multivariate relationships

# Part 4. Research Proposal



## Writing Your Research Proposal

In this class students will learn how to organise the sketch of their research project by constructing a research proposal. We will discuss steps and components that make an academically accurate research proposal. Students will then be divided into groups to construct a research design of their own and present it in the class. This part of a class activity will be a repetition before the main VIVA exam.

# Part 5. What is Synopsis?



- In this class students will learn how to write synopsis. We will discuss steps and components of the synopsis: the relevance of the study, goal, objectives, object and subject, the structure of the master's thesis.

# Part 6. Synopsis Submission and Presentation



- Students first will submit synopsis and then present it in the class.

# TEACHING METHODOLOGY



- **Lecturing**, which includes the explanation of the topic of the syllabus to the master students. The emphasis is on the presentation of the content. Provide master students with all information about research methods for writing master thesis.
- **Classroom discussion, workshops.** It is supposed to discuss all topics of master thesis during classroom discussion. Giving some examples from different kinds of research.
- **Presentation** of the lectures, all necessary materials about the topics.
- **Brain storm.** Discussing specific topics of researches, giving some views on solving the scientific problems.
- **SWOT** analyze. Analyzing the topics of master thesis and the main idea of future research.

# LABOUR MARKET RELEVANCE



- The relationship between discipline and the labor market is that master students learn to do research competently, which will increase the competitiveness of students in the labor market. They can use this skills both in Armenia and in international labor market.
- With the ability to do research, master students will be able to apply for more qualified and well-paid jobs. Specially it can help them with there carrier development in financial sector in Armenia.
- Researcher skills allow students to more flexibly solve tasks in the workplace. Specially in banking sector in Armenia.

# ASSESSMENT AND GRADING



- Students will be assessed based on the synopsis they submit (50% of the final grade) and present at the end of the course (50% of the final grade ). First part of grading means that master students have to write and submit on time synopsis of master thesis. Second part of grading means that master students have to present their synopsis to the lecture and audience during last three weeks of the course.

# REFERENCES



## Core Readings

1. Bruce L. Berg (2007), *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 4th edition (or newer), Allyn and Bacon, A Pearson Education Company
2. David Silverman (2001), *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, Second Edition, Sage
3. Alan Bryman and Robert G. Burgess (2002), *Analyzing Qualitative Data*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, Routledge
4. Alan Agresti and Barbara Finley (2009), *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences*, New Jersey: Pearson Education, International edition, 4th edition
5. Reza Banakar and Max Travers (2005), *Theory and Method in Socio-Legal Research*, Onati International Series in Law and Society, Hart Publishing



# COURSE ASSIGNMENT 1



- Submission of synopsis of the Master thesis (50% of the final grade).
- During first 2 weeks of the semester students must choose the topic of the master thesis and supervisor. Then, they have 2 weeks to discuss with supervisor structure of master thesis, main parts of future research, the main aim, hypothesis, method of research. At the 5<sup>th</sup> week of semester master students must submit final version of synopsis.

# COURSE ASSIGNMENT 2

- Presentation of synopsis of the Master thesis (50% of the final grade).
- The main idea of this part of assignment is to make sure, that students are clearly understand topic of their research. Master students have to present their synopsis in 3-5 minutes. Then we spent several minutes for questions and discussing the topic.



# THANK FOR ATTENTION

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