COURSE TITLE   Research Methodology  
COURSE CODE    BUS330  
COURSE CLASSIFICATION Programme Elective  
PREREQUISITE   All Core Courses  
HOURS ASSIGNED 45 Hours  
MODE OF TUITION Section  
NUMBER OF CREDITS 3  

OBJECTIVES  
• To enable students to undertake independent research of a business problem, and to analyze and present their findings.  
• To familiarize students with the basic techniques of collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data.  
• To formulate a research proposal for a business project.  

INDICATIVE CONTENT  
• Basic Concepts  
• Relationship between theory and research, definition of research problems; literature survey; research design and formulation of hypothesis; qualitative vs. quantitative research and methods.  
• Qualitative research  
• Semi-structured and open-ended techniques, content analysis, interviews.  
• Collection of Data  
• Unstructured and structured observation; questionnaires and interviews; scaling techniques; errors.  
• Analysis of Data  
• Analysis, testing of hypotheses and drawing conclusions; statistical techniques and software.  
• Presentation of Results  
• Organization of presentation, report writing, citations, research publication, oral presentation.  

TEACHING APPROACH  
Teaching methods for this course include lectures, discussions, and tutorials. Part of this course will be tailor-made to prepare students for their directed projects.  

ASSESSMENT  
Continuous Assessment: 50%, and Project Proposal: 50%.  

RECOMMENDED TEXT  
Course Description:
This course aims at giving students a solid grounding in the investigative techniques essential to the production of a sound business project. It also addresses the important area of report writing with particular reference to the hallmarks of a high quality project report. This course will culminate in the production of a comprehensive project proposal.

Objectives:
On completion of this course students should:
1. comprehend the importance of, and approach to, conducting a critical review of literature relevant to the chosen topic,
2. be able to decide on a research approach and justify that approach in the context of project objectives,
3. understand the methodologies relevant to the collection of accurate secondary and primary data,
4. be familiar with basic techniques relevant to the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data,
5. comprehend the elements required in a project report, and the requirements relevant to the writing of the report, and
6. be able to write a comprehensive, logical, and comprehensible project proposal.

Teaching Approach:
Students will meet the tutor for two seminars. The first seminar will consist of input from tutors which will focus on providing students with the knowledge, tools and techniques associated with the conduct and writing of a project. Tutors will illustrate their input with examples including, where appropriate, the use of past projects as models of good or bad practice. Student exercises in class will include, for example, short case studies illustrating the strengths and weaknesses of various research approaches and exercises addressing some essential techniques for analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data.

The second seminar will be devoted to furthering the students project proposals. This will give the opportunity for students to immediately consider and apply what has been discussed in order to refine their proposals. In this part of the seminar, the tutor will be involved in providing one to one assistance to individuals or pairs of students in ensuring the application of the knowledge to developing a comprehensive, logically structured, well argued, and comprehensible project proposal.

Assessment:
Assessment will be based on a comprehensive project proposal of approximately 3,000 words. For assessment purposes, tutors will address the following aspect of the proposal:
1. Scope of proposed project - have students been realistic in the choice of topic bearing in mind the constraints of access to primary and secondary data and the time available for completion of the project,
2. Title - does the title of the proposed project truly reflect the proposed project content?
3. Statement of objectives - is the statement sufficiently focused and does the statement allow the project individual/team to be able to demonstrate whether or not objectives have been achieved i.e., is/are the objective(s) capable of being measured?
4. Rationale - to what extent is the proposal convincing in arguing that the topic is an important area of for investigation?
5. Literature review - to what extent does the proposed literature review provide an adequate framework for the investigation and justify the proposed method of investigation? (It is expected that an initial review will have been conducted and incorporated in the proposal).
6. Method - is the proposed method of investigation appropriate to the objective(s) of the project and justified in the initial literature review? and
7. Project Plan - to what extent does the project timetable appear realistic?

Indicative Content of Seminars

1. Clarification of the research objective
   Attributes of a good research topic, generating and refining research ideas, turning ideas into projects.
2. Conducting a literature review
   The need to be critical, literature sources available, planning and conducting a literature search, obtaining and evaluating the literature, recording the literature.
3. Deciding on a research approach, research ethics, and access to data sources
   Differing approaches to research, the need for a clear strategy, multi-method approaches, the credibility of findings, research ethics, problems of access, and strategies to gain access.
4. The use of secondary data
   Types of secondary data and their uses, locating secondary data, and the advantages and disadvantages of secondary data.
5. Collecting primary data
   Probability and non-probability sampling, the use of participant observation and structured observation, employing semi-structured and in-depth interviews, the use of questionnaires.
6. Analyzing quantitative data
   Preparing data for analysis, exploring and presenting data, using statistics for analysis, and describing data using statistics.
7. Analyzing qualitative data
   Strategies for qualitative analysis, analytical procedures, and quantifying qualitative data.
8. Writing the project proposal and project report
   Writing the proposal, structuring the report, organizing the report's content, using an appropriate writing style, distinguishing between findings and conclusions, writing recommendations, and referencing.

Readings

References
SPSS Inc. (2003), SPSS Base 11.5 Application Guide.
### BUS330-01 Fall 2006 Course Schedule

**Class Time:** Mon 1:30-3:00, Wed 11:00-12:30  
**Classroom:** ARG02, NAB112

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topics/Activities/Assignments</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1: 4/9-6/9 | Introduction and Project Guidelines  
Discussion of Proposed Topics | Chap. 1 |
| 2: 11/9-13/9 | Introduction to Business Research  
Problem Definition | Chap. 2 |
| 3: 18/9-20/9 | Defining Research Problems for Projects  
Critical Literature Review and Integration | Chap. 3 |
| 4: 25/9-27/9 | Presentation of Literature Review  
Research Design | Chap. 4 |
| 5: 2/10-4/10 | Oct. 2nd National Day Holiday  
Access to Data and Ethics and Sample Selection | Chap. 5 & Chap. 6 |
| 6: 9/10-11/10 | Secondary Data  
Observation | Chap. 7 & Chap. 8 |
| 7: 16/10-18/10 | Interviews  
Instrument/Questionnaire Construction | Chap. 9 & Chap. 10 |
| 8: 23/10-25/10 | Data Analysis  
Lab Session: SPSS problem assignment | Chap. 11 & Chap. 12 |
| 9: 30/10-1/11 | 30/10 Chung Yeung Festival  
Lab Session: Discussion of results | Chap. 13 |
| 10: 6/11-8/11 | Report Writing  
Communicating Your Findings & Presentation | Chap. 13 |
| 11:13/11-15/11 | Project Consultation: First Draft | Chap. 13 |
| 12: 20/11-22/11 | Project Consultation: Second Draft | Chap. 13 |
| 13: 27/11-29/11 | Project Presentation Presenters: TBA | Chap. 13 |
| 14. 4/12-6/12 | Project Presentation Presenters: TBA  
Last Day of Class and Project Proposal Due | Chap. 13 |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:</td>
<td>Report on Data Collection and Data Coding</td>
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<td>2:</td>
<td>Data Input and Cleaning, Descriptive Statistics for the Sample</td>
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<td>3:</td>
<td>Inferential Statistics and Hypotheses Testing</td>
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<td>4:</td>
<td>Other Types of Results from Interviews and/or Focus Groups: Content Analysis, Protocol Analysis and Narratives</td>
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<td>5:</td>
<td>Reporting and Discussion of Results</td>
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<td>6:</td>
<td>Limitations and Managerial and Practical Implications</td>
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<td>7:</td>
<td>Writing with clarity, simplicity, and style</td>
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<td>8:</td>
<td>Editing, and proofreading</td>
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<td>9:</td>
<td>First draft for review</td>
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<td>10:</td>
<td>Progress Report</td>
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<td>11:</td>
<td>Draft two for review</td>
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<td>12:</td>
<td>Progress Report</td>
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<td>13:</td>
<td>Final Draft for review</td>
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<td>14:</td>
<td>Project Presentation: TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:</td>
<td>1 May Labor Day: No Class</td>
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