INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Aziza Zemrani
Office: Tuesday 4:30-5:00
Office Hours: By appointment
Do not hesitate to send me an email if we need to talk so we can agree on a convenient time for a phone call, Skype or Collaborate session, or a meeting. You can download Skype for Business and log in with your university credentials, or use the web-based Skype for Business built in to your Office 365 Mail.
Office Telephone: (956) 665-7845
E-mail: aziza.zemrani@utrgv.edu

Response Time:
Generally, I will respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them. If I plan to be away from my computer for more than a couple of days, I will let you know in advance. Any technical questions can be referred to Blackboard Support.
I will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically 3 days following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Blackboard home page under the link to this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the basic concepts, tools, techniques and uses of applied quantitative and qualitative research relative to public administration. Topics to be discussed include research design, data gathering, statistical analysis and the methods of formal preparation and presentation of reports. The structure and the sequencing of the topics covered go back and forth between methodological and statistical issues attempting to intertwine relevant concepts in a logical manner with the research methodology and steps involved in designing a research.

Prerequisite

There is no prerequisite for this course as stated in the graduate school handbook. However, a basic understanding of statistics is recommended. While it is desirable to have had some prior coursework in statistical inference, this course does begin with the basics. The level of mathematical treatment is somewhat more advanced than an undergraduate class but will still be moderate (high school algebra). We will not dwell upon derivations.

Please complete the Participant Information Survey in our Module 0 Learning Activities folder to get to know you more.
TEXTBOOK & COURSE MATERIALS

Required Text

Research Methodology a Step by Step guide for Beginners- Fourth Edition. Ranjit Kumar

Recommended Texts & Other Readings

You will be reading a variety of self-selected texts along with the required texts as you progress through the research proposal process. Please plan to devote a considerable amount of time to reading throughout this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
understand the basic concepts and definitions of social science research
differentiate between quantitative and qualitative research
describe major characteristics of research
articulate the importance of maintaining ethical principles of good research
determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables
perform descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS
develop a proposal for a simple study
identify the different types of research methods and select an appropriate research design
develop an understanding of how to derive hypotheses
develop a plan for conducting research (a research design)

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Computer Hardware

To participate in this Hybrid course, you should have easy access to a computer less than 5 - years old with high-speed internet connection via cable modem, LAN or DSL.

Student Technical Skills

You are expected to be proficient with installing and using basic computer applications and have the ability to send and receive email attachments.

Software

• Mozilla’s Firefox (latest version; Macintosh or Windows)
• google Chrome (latest version; Macintosh or Windows)
• Adobe’s Flash Player & Reader plug-in (latest version).
Virus protection
Microsoft Office

**Technical Assistance**

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Blackboard you can:

Visit the Blackboard Student Help Site
Submit a Blackboard Help Ticket

Help Contact Information (UTRGV Blackboard Support):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Brownsville</th>
<th>Edinburg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Rusteberg Hall Room 108</td>
<td>Education Building Room 2.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>956-882-6697 or 956-882-6792</td>
<td>956-665-5327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of Operation</td>
<td>Monday – Friday 7:30AM – 6:00PM</td>
<td>Monday – Friday 7:30AM – 6:00PM</td>
</tr>
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**COURSE ORGANIZATION & ONLINE TOOLS**

**Course Structure:**

This course will be delivered face to face and self-paced online through the course management system Blackboard Learn. You will use your UTRGV account to login to the course from the My UTRGV site and under applications click on Blackboard Learn.

This course is organized into modules of instruction, as outlined in the Course Schedule and Due Dates below. Each module is listed by its main topic and contains required readings, videos, and assignments that allow you interact with the content while building your research proposal.

**Note:** Most materials used in conjunction with the course are subject to copyright protection.

**Discussion Forums**

You will find the following discussion forums in the course Blackboard site:

- **General Help:** Post any questions or comments you may have about course mechanics or technical issues to this forum.
Forums related to collaborative and discussion assignments, as described in Learning Module sections

Forums versus Email

If you have a question about course content or mechanics, I encourage you to post it to the General Help discussion forums. Doing so gives students in the course an opportunity to help one another and allows everyone to benefit from answers to your questions. Of course, don’t hesitate to email me directly if your concern is of a personal nature.

My role in discussion forums is that of a facilitator. I will occasionally correct misconceptions and/or redirect conversations that need redirecting. I may also post comments following the completion of discussion indicating my general impressions of the comments and conclusions.

**TOPIC OUTLINE/SCHEDULE**

**Important Note:** Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each week's corresponding weekly content area. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Foundation</td>
<td><em>Research Methods Statistics</em> (Salkind) Chapter 1: Statistics or Sadistic? It’s Up to You</td>
<td>Discussion: Problem Identification and Research Question Assignment: Self-assessment Quiz Hands-on SPSS Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Research and Variables</td>
<td><em>Research Methods Statistics</em> (Salkind) Chapter 2: Means to an End: Computing and Understanding Averages Chapter 3: Vive La Difference: Understanding Variability</td>
<td>Assignment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 3) Hypothesis and relationships | **Assigned Readings**  
**Research Methods**  
**Statistics (Salkind)**  
Chapter 4: A Picture Really is Worth a Thousand Words  
Chapter 5: Ice Cream and Crime: Computing Correlation Coefficients  
Chapter 6: Just the Truth: An Introduction to Understanding Reliability and Validity  
**Research Readings**  
Discussion:  
Literature review and methodology  
**Assignment:**  
Self-assessment Quiz  
Hands-on SPSS Assignment |
| 4) Models and data collection | **Assigned Readings**  
**Research Methods**  
**Statistics (Salkind)**  
Chapter 7: Hypotheticals and You: Testing Your Questions  
Chapter 8: Are Your Curves Normal? Probability and Why it Counts  
**Assignment:**  
Self-assessment Quiz  
Journal Article Analysis (Group)  
Hands-on SPSS Assignment |
| 5: Statistics               | **Assigned Readings**  
**Research Methods**  
**Statistics (Salkind)**  
Chapter 9: Finding and Analyzing data  
Additional Material on Blackboard.  
Chapter 9: Significantly Significant: What it Means for You |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Self-assessment Quiz&lt;br&gt;Hands-on SPSS Assignment&lt;br&gt;Research project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assigned Readings</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Statistics (Salkind)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Chapter 11: t(ea) for Two: Tests Between the Means of Different Groups&lt;br&gt;Chapter 13: Two Groups Too Many? Try Analysis of Variance&lt;br&gt;Chapter 15: Cousins or Just Good Friends? Testing Relationships Using the Correlation Coefficient&lt;br&gt;Chapter 16: Predicting Who’ll Win the Super Bowl: Using Linear Regression</td>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Self-assessment Quiz&lt;br&gt;Hands-on SPSS Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Research Paper&lt;br&gt;Research Presentation&lt;br&gt;Final Comprehensive exam (generated from quizzes)&lt;br&gt;Inferential Statistics</td>
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**GRADING POLICY**

**Graded Course Activities**
List all assessments, tests, etc. that will determine the students’ final grade. Modify the chart below based on your grading policy such as points or weight. You can also alter the chart to reflect your needs.

**Example:** Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Assessment Quizzes</td>
<td>P/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (2 article analysis)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions (2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignments</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Project Proposal: 5%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation:5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper: 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Comprehensive Quiz+ Inferential Statistics)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
F = Below 70%

**Late Work Policy**

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up assignments or quizzes, or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

**Viewing Grades in Blackboard**

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the Blackboard Grade Book. Click on the My Grades link on the left navigation to view your points.

Your instructor will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically 3 days following the completion of an activity. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Blackboard home page under the link to this course.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Participation**

Face to face and hybrid courses require your active participation. Here are some tips for success:

- In discussion forums, you learn from one another by posing questions, justifying your comments, and providing multiple perspectives. When you prepare for discussions through thoughtful reflection, you contribute to your own successful learning experience as well as to the experience of your peers.

- Log in to the course frequently (at least several times per week for long semesters and daily for summer sessions) and check the announcements. This will keep you apprised of any course updates, progress in discussions, assignment information, and messages requiring immediate attention.

- Be aware of and keep up with the Course Schedule in the Syllabus.

- Participate in team activities to the best of your ability. How well your team does—and how well you do—depends on all the team members working cooperatively.

**Communication Skills**

All students must have adequate writing skills to communicate content in a professional and concise manner. Students must be proficient in their written presentations including strategies for developing ideas, citing scholarly references, writing style, wording, phrasing, and using language conventions. Students must follow APA guidelines,
non-sexist language, and include sufficient references to support their thesis and ideas in the paper.

**Netiquette**

Netiquette describes the code of conduct for an online environment. It ensures respect for others and prevents misunderstandings or unintentional offenses to others. The netiquette described here is amended to ensure your success in this course.

- When you are typing or submitting a response, do not use all capital letters (caps). Caps is equal to SHOUTING YOUR MESSAGE.
- Although it is customary to use acronyms (ex. ROFL - rolling on floor laughing, BTW - by the way, or FYI - for your information) when chatting online, try to avoid using these. There may be those in this course who are not as experienced as you and may miss out on understanding.
- Although you are encouraged to participate and ask questions, it is asked that you do not spam other users (SPAM refers to unwanted or excessive email). Before sending mass emails, consider using the discussion board to post general inquiries or requesting assistance from your instructor.

*Students should conform their writing to APA Style Guidelines.*

**Time Commitment**

Hybrid courses are typically just as time intensive, and may be more rigorous than traditional courses. Many students claim that hybrid courses require more time and commitment. As you begin this course, you would be wise to schedule 8 or more hours per week for studying materials and completing assignments. Falling behind in this course is particularly problematic because the concepts we cover are cumulative. This means that not becoming proficient with information and objectives presented and assessed in a particular week can lead to low scores for that week as well as in subsequent weeks.

**UTRGV Policy Statements**

**Students With Disabilities**

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

**Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

**Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.
Mandatory Course Evaluation Period

Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (https://my.utrgv.edu/home); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019 Module 1</td>
<td>October 4 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019 Module 2</td>
<td>November 29 – December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019 (full semester)</td>
<td>November 15 – December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

Scholastic Integrity

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence:

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.
Course Drops

Recommended on all syllabi: May be modified by the instructor as long as it is not inconsistent with UTRGV Policy.

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6- drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

Student Services

Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

- **Learning Center**: BSTUN 2.10 Brownsville or ELCTR 100 Edinburg
- **Writing Center**: BLIBR 3.20610 Brownsville or ESTAC 3.119 Edinburg
- **Advising Center**: BMAIN 1.40010 Brownsville or ESWKH 101 Edinburg

**Career Center**: BCRTZ 12