Course Syllabus
BMGT 8241: Operations Management (OM) Research Methods I

PROFESSOR: Aravind Chandrasekaran
OFFICE: 650 Fisher
CLASSROOM: Fisher 600
EMAIL: chandrasekaran.24@osu.edu
CLASS TIME: Friday 1-4 PM
OFFICE PHONE: (614) 292-4223
OFFICE HOURS: Please feel to stop by my office anytime. I am usually around most of the days (M-F). Email me otherwise for an appointment.

OBJECTIVES
The learning objectives of this doctoral OM research methods seminar are: (1) to discuss how to conduct problem driven research (2) develop foundational understanding on qualitative research (3) develop foundational understanding on field experimental research and survey research methods.

ORGANIZATION
The topic areas around which the seminar is organized and the schedule for discussing these topic areas are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 25</td>
<td>Course Overview and Introduction to Problem Driven Research &amp; Engaged Scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 1</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 8</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Methods in OM</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Introduction to Field Experimental Research</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Field Experiments in OM</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>Survey Research Techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>Contemporary Survey Research in OM</td>
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REQUIRED BOOKS

GRADING
Your course grade will be determined according to the following breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary Critiques</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>25%</td>
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FINAL EXAM
There will be one final exam. It will cover the content covered in all three seminars. The questions will take the form and flavor of general exam questions in operations management.
PRESENTATIONS

There will be three papers assigned for presentation to 6 students. Each paper will have 2 presenters – one taking the perspective of the author (/ job-market candidate) defending the work in the paper and the second one takes the perspective of the cynical reviewer (/ audience) opposing the work. Students are required to prepare a presentation defending and opposing the work that should be about 20 minutes in length. Please follow the template (below) for discussing when designing your presentation.

In addition, each student will present her or his research paper on TBD. These presentations will be about 20-30 minutes in length followed by questions and answers.

PARTICIPATION AND SUMMARY CRITIQUES

Each student is expected to contribute to the discussion at each meeting. To aid this process, each student will be required to submit a critique every week (see your readings). Quality of the critiques is weighted more than quantity. Critiques should bring out both good and bad points of the papers or the questions. Be sure to consider the assumptions, techniques, and difficulty and relevance of the problem addressed by the paper. I have provided a template for discussing the papers. You can use it to guide the writing of your critiques. For other methodological questions, please refer to the bolded portions in the template.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Each student will present her or his research paper on TBD (in December). These presentations will be about 20-30 minutes in length followed by questions and answers. Refer to the following commentary when developing your research proposal (Why I hate Passive verbs and Love My Word Processor http://people.stern.nyu.edu/wstarbuc/Writing/Fussy.htm)
TEMPLATE FOR DISCUSSING PAPERS

* Our seminar will focus primarily on motivation, theory and research methods – and how to align these elements in a good research study. The bolded portion of the template can be used when developing the critiques

PROBLEM STATEMENT
- What is (are) the research question(s) guiding the paper?

MOTIVATION FOR YOUR STUDY
- Why are the authors doing what they you doing?
- Why should anybody (academics and/or practitioners) care about what the authors are doing?
  (In other words, why is the paper interesting and important for academics and/or practitioners?)

LITERATURE REVIEW
- What are different streams of academic and practitioner literature that the paper draws upon?
- How is the paper positioned with reference to the relevant bodies of literature?
- How does this paper contribute towards advancing the current literature?

THEORY
- What are the conceptual underpinnings of the study?
- What is (are) the model(s)/framework(s)/hypotheses being examined? What is the justification?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS
- What is the research design for conducting the study? Is it a good design to test their arguments
- What kind of approach (or a combination of approaches) is best suited for addressing the research questions: empirical (cross-sectional, longitudinal), analytical, computational?
- What is the unit/level of analysis, and why is it appropriate?
- What is the sample for the study? Why?
- What kind of data have the authors collected? Why?
- What is the model specification? How do the authors justify their model specification?
- What are the steps in the (data) analysis?
- How do the authors ensure the robustness of (data) analyses?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
- What are the interpretation of the results with reference to the research questions and the conceptual underpinnings of the study?
- Which findings are intuitive, and which findings are counterintuitive? Why?
- Are their results robust? What type of tests is done to check for robustness?

CONCLUSIONS
- What are the contributions of the study to the academic and the practitioner literature? (So what?)
- What are the limitations and their implications?
- What are the directions for future research?
TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (THAT WILL EVOVE DURING THE SEMESTER)

*Assigned as a reading, presented and discussed in the class.
**Assigned as a reading, but not for presentation; will be referred to or discussed briefly by the instructor.
★Summary Critique for that week

Week 1 – August 25
Course Overview, Introduction

** Engaged Scholarship and Design Science Research: Linking Research and Practice (Aravind Chandrasekaran, Brad Staats, Andy Van de Ven, and Joan Van Aken)


Week 2 – September 1
Qualitative Research Methods


Critique 1: What are the challenges and benefits of doing case study research? When is this method useful? How do you overcome the challenges?

Week 3 – September 8
Qualitative Research in OM


**Week 4 – September 15**  
**Introduction to Field Experiments**


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**Critique 2: Based on your readings, what are the Dos and Don’t’s of field experiment?**

**Week 5 – September 22**  
**Field Experiments in OM**


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Week 6 – September 29

Introduction to Survey Research


Week 7 – October 6

Survey Research in OM (Related topics)


★ Exam time – TBD

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