SCHOOL/COLLEGE: College of Management  
DEPARTMENT NAME: Graduate Studies: MBA Program  
TERM: Fall ’16  

COURSE TITLE: Business Information and Decision-Making  
COURSE NUMBER: RSCH5500  
QUARTER CREDIT HRS: 4.5  
CONTACT HOURS: 45.0  
PREREQUISITES(S): Students should demonstrate skill in writing a formal paper using APA format.*  

PROFESSOR NAME: Paul J. Colbert, Ph.D.  
OFFICE LOCATION: Friedman Center 2nd floor  
OFFICE PHONE: (401) 598-1886  
OFFICE FAX: (401) 598-1125  
E-MAIL ADDRESS: Paul.Colbert@jwu.edu  

PUBLIC FOLDER: [https://ulearn.jwu.edu](https://ulearn.jwu.edu) (listed under My Courses)  
Selected readings and materials are posted to Ulearn  

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment  

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
This course enables graduate students to design and implement research in business and related disciplines through the development of problem-solving, critical thinking and quality decision-making skills important for business managers and leaders. Students examine processes for problem-solving and develop techniques in critical thinking to improve their understanding and evaluation of business information; and develop techniques in the selection and design of appropriate research methodologies in the identification of a research problem in a business environment. The course examines the research process from problem identification and setting through a review of pertinent literature as secondary sources and an examination of the descriptive survey research design. Particular attention is given to the student’s perspective of the research process and its applicability to his/her career endeavors. It provides a forum for the student to improve research and presentation skills through discussion and practical applications.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, a student should:

1. Define the research process for a research proposal: from observation and preliminary data-gathering to the problem selection, research questions, theoretical framework, and hypothesis formulation
2. Identify and access appropriate secondary research sources (including literature reviews)
3. Accurately interpret and evaluate published empirical research articles
4. Design and assess research in a situated business setting
5. Construct testable hypotheses for business situations

CONTENT OUTLINE

RSCH5500: Weekly Schedule

HAC 10 (Week 1 only)  FRCTR256 (Weeks 2-11)

Week 1: Introduction to Research (Fri 09/09)

Research: Review Ch.1 Sekaran & Bougie
Discussion: Decision-making
What is research in a business environment?
The Laroche Candy Company: Case Study (review)
Discuss questions – p.17

Read for Week 2: Sekaran & Bougie: Ch. 2 The Scientific Process
Assigned journal article [provided in ulearn]

Assignment Week 2: Complete Article Review Template on assigned journal article [provided in ulearn]

Week 2: The Scientific Method in Research (Mon 9/12)

Research: The Scientific Method
Review of Article Critique and requirements

Read for Week 3: Sekaran & Bougie: Chapter 4: Literature review
Case study: Pacific Futures Trading Company

Assignment Week 3: Memo format: Written responses to case study (Pacific Futures): Questions # 1, 2, and 6.
Be prepared to discuss key concepts in Ch. 4
Team selections and research topic

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Week 3: Literature review (09/19: Meet in HAC computer lab class # 4)

Research:  What is a literature review?
Article search: begin selection of (6) journal articles

Read for Week 4:  Sekaran & Bougie: Chap 3: The research process
Assignment Week 4:  Continue six (6) journal article search
Be prepared to discuss key concepts in Ch. 3

Week 4: The research process: the broad problem (Mon 09/26)

Research:  The research problem
Discussion of Article Critique # 1 requirements

Read for Week 5:  Continue six (6) journal article search
Due Week # 6
Read Ch. 5: (pp.67-87: Theoretical framework and hypothesis development
(discuss exercises 5.13 and 5.14)

Assignment for Week 5:  Article Critique: ulearn (Turnitin) due M 10/03 noon

Week 5: Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development (Mon 10/03)
Developing the hypothesis
Discussion of preliminary data gathering techniques
Preliminary questions for additional information

Assignment for Week 6:  1. List of preliminary questions for team meetings
2. Full Article Approval Form:
   APA Reference Cover sheet for ARL
   (6 required articles attached)

Week 6: Team Meetings (Meeting schedule) (Tues 10/11)

- Review of preliminary research questions
- Discussion of ARL requirements (example)
- Discussion of Article Critique # 2

Read for Week 7:  no textbook reading assignment
Assignment for Week 7:  Annotated Reference List (ARL) (20%):
Submit via ulearn (Turnitin) M 10/17 Noon
Team Article Critique # 2 (15%):
Submit via ulearn (Turnitin) M 10/17 6 PM

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Week 7: Elements of Design (Mon 10/17)

PDG and Preliminary Questions requirements
Discussion of elements of design

Read for Week 8: no text reading assignment

Assignment for Week 8: Team PDG template and Prel Questions list
1 per team due via e-mail Week 8 [M 10/24 Noon]

Week 8: Proposal Draft (Mon 10/24)

Discussion of Proposal Draft 6-7:30 PM (HAC 10)
PDG Team Meetings: [MBA CONFERENCE ROOM]
(team schedule on ulearn)

Read for Week 9: Ch. 11: Operational Definition (pp. 197-209)
Assignment for Week 9: Proposal draft: Problem and Its Setting due Week # 9:
Submit via Turnitin [ulearn: Turnitin Sun 10/30 6 PM]

Week 9: Operational definition (Mon 10/31)

Dimensions and elements of operationalizing a variable
Team reviews: problem/framework/hypotheses

Assignment for Week 10: Draft of Operational Definition e-mail Noon (11/07)

Week 10: Review of final research proposal components (11/07)

1. Final proposal components review 6-7 PM (Class)
2. Team meetings: Review of drafts and operational definitions (schedule via ulearn)

Assignment for Week 11: Rewrite final proposal (include Operational Definition)
Written Proposals/Presentation due Week 11

Week 11: Written/Oral Presentations of Research Proposals (11/14) (MBA Conf. Room)

1. Submit Written Proposals at top of class
2. Oral Presentations and Evaluations of Presentations

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EVALUATIVE CRITERIA:

Students will be assessed through successful completion of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Contribution (overall)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Critique # 1- Week 5</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Reference List-Week 7 (Team)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Critique # 2- Week 7 (Team)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Research Proposal (30%) &amp; Visual/Oral Presentation (10%) - Week 11</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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ATTENDANCE POLICY: Read carefully

The JWU attendance policy for all academic classes states:

“Absences will have a negative impact on final grades because individual course instructors define the specific role that engaged participation and the academic quality of your work plays in the calculation of final grades for each course. Students must consult the course syllabus and the instructor in each course for specific policies relating to attendance and make-up work in that course. Regular class attendance is essential to student success. Accordingly, responsibility for class attendance belongs to the student. Students are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time and remain for the entire class period, and to report to class fully prepared with textbooks and other required materials.”

NOTE: For RSCH5500, participation and engagement is vital to academic success. Therefore, students are expected to attend every class and team meeting.
OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT:

JWU is committed to outcomes assessment. Faculty and students are therefore part of an ongoing effort to determine and refine the effectiveness of instruction/learning.

MBA Outcomes Addressed in This Course:

Professional Business Competency

- Formulating relevant research questions to clarify a problem, topic, or issue
- Accessing and discriminately selecting empirical research appropriate to a problem or need, from a variety of sources, including information technologies
- Evaluating information against appropriate standards for its reliability, validity, accuracy, limitations, timeliness, point of view, and bias.

Critical Thinking and Communication Competencies

- Critical thinking: collecting, organizing, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating information related to the problem solving process
- Designing or selecting ethically feasible solutions to situated business and/or community problems that effectively overcome the obstacles or constraints of the problems, and then clearly explaining the rationale for the solutions
- Demonstrated competencies in written and verbal communication in making business research decisions

Graded Assignments:

- Class Contributions
  Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss concepts and procedures learned through the text and reading materials provided. Your contribution to class discussions is an integral part of your course grade. Various assignments throughout the course will be considered as part of your participation grade (i.e., Memo responses, Article Critique Preliminary template; group presentations on text chapter concepts).

- Article Critiques
  These assignments and the anticipated format will be discussed in class. Your review of a given empirical article (participation grade) will be discussed and submitted Week # 2.
  Critique # 1 is due Week # 5 (individual); Critique # 2 is due Week # 7 (team)

- Annotated Reference List (ARL) is due Week # 7 [team]
  An annotated reference list (ARL) is a reference list that summarizes each of the six (6) required journal articles that serve as the team’s secondary sources.

- Research Proposal (team)
  Each team will design a final project in the form of a research proposal. The proposal will include: (1) the problem and its setting that will address a typical business issue and/or question beginning with preliminary data gathering techniques to problem identification, literature review, theoretical framework, and operational definition to hypothesis formulation, and the justification and significance of the study.

August 31, 2016
### Assignment Calendar: CRN14299

**Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded and non-graded (NG) assignments</th>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>ARIAL FONT # 12, DOUBLE-SPACED, LEFT-ALIGNED</td>
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<tr>
<td>All hand-in assignments printed one-side only (no exceptions)</td>
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<td>No Late Assignments Accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Critique # 1 (15%)</td>
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<td>ulearn Turnitin M 10/03 Noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Reference List (20%):</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>ulearn Turnitin M 10/17 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary of 6 journal articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Critique # 2 (15%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ulearn Turnitin M 10/17 6 PM by team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team PDG template (NG)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Submit via e-mail M 10/24 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Draft: (NG)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ulearn Turnitin M 10/31 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational Definition (NG)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>e-mail M 11/07 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Proposal:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Proposal (30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual/Oral Presentation (10%)</td>
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<td>Class Contributions (Overall Participation) (10%)</td>
<td>All</td>
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SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS:

Johnson & Wales is dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to give learning disabled, physically challenged, and students with chronic medical conditions the opportunity to succeed in their academic pursuits. Students requesting services must have documentation on file with the Center for Academic Support and must request that the accommodation information be sent to me.

TURN-IT-IN NOTIFICATION:

Students agree that by taking this course, certain required assignments will be subject to submission to Turnitin.com for detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. *Turnitin assignments will be added directly into the ulearn course site.*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

If a student is found responsible for cheating, plagiarizing, or in any way compromising academic integrity, the student may be subject to both academic disciplinary action (including dismissal from class) and student conduct review action (up to and including dismissal from the university). For additional information refer to the *Academic Misconduct* section of the current student handbook.

STUDENT E-MAIL:

Each student at Johnson & Wales receives an e-mail account and uses Microsoft Outlook Web Access, a Web-based e-mail program that allows students to access their e-mail through their web browsers. Students are required to use their Johnson & Wales email account for all university-specific communication. We will use e-mail as a communication tool throughout the course. Please check your e-mail accounts on a regular basis for updates and/or changes to the syllabus, assignments and class requirements.

OCCUPANCY IN CLASS:

Occupancy in class is limited to faculty, officially registered students, aides authorized by the Center for Academic Support, and invited guests approved by the vice president of academic affairs or the dean of the respective school, college, or campus. No grade will be issued to any non-registered student in any course.

FOOD & BEVERAGES IN CLASS:

In academic buildings, food and beverage consumption is limited to designated eating areas only. *Under no circumstances is food to be consumed in graduate classrooms.* Please adhere to this policy.

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MOBILE PHONES AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS: (read carefully)

Communication devices such as mobile telephones must be silenced (set to vibrate) during class time and not visible. For safety purposes, including emergency communication, devices such as mobile telephones may be left on during class time (notify faculty) but disruptions to class due to communication devices will not be tolerated. Mobile communication devices should not be used during class time unless for emergency purposes and you have previously notified the professor. See: Providence Campus: Catalogs and Student Handbook

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING (N/A)

UNIT OF CREDIT:

The university measures undergraduate and graduate academic progress using the quarter credit hour system. Courses are offered in three formats and may combine two or more of those formats, which are lecture, laboratory, and experiential. Generally, one quarter credit represents 10 hours of instruction, which includes class lecture and additional classroom activities, and approximately 20 hours of study and preparation outside of the classroom; one lecture hour equals two laboratory hours or three experiential hours. Furthermore, laboratory and experiential courses may require additional hours of study and preparation outside of the classroom or learning environment.

SYSTEM OF RECORD FOR ACADEMIC GRADES:

Note that official academic grades can be accessed via jwuLink. Grades maintained in the ulearn course management system are for tracking purposes only and may not reflect all of the criteria considered when calculating the final grade.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

*APA Style and Documentation:

Follow the rules for APA style and documentation as described in http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx and the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th). Additional information will be provided in class as well as on the course library guide: RSCH5500 Libguide (available Week # 1) and http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/ (available on ulearn)

APPROVED COURSE CAPACITY: 25 maximum

CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS: Smart classroom (computer console and projector) and computer laboratory (SPSS software) for 2-3 class sessions.

The syllabus is a plan for conducting this course. It is also a contract between the student and professor. Based on the needs of students and the professor's perceptions of these needs, this syllabus is subject to change(s) and students will be notified in advance of such change(s).

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