



Course Description

ISS1301 | Introduction to Social Research | 3.00 credits

This course is a general introduction to research methodology in the Social Sciences, paying particular attention to research design, data collection, and data analysis. This is a course in Applied Social Sciences that will provide students with a survey understanding of social scientific research. This course will include an examination of empirical research, including literature reviews, theory, methodology, data collection, data analysis, and presentation of results.

Course Competencies:

Competency 1: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the scientific basis of social sciences research by:

1. Identifying the steps of the scientific method
2. Describing the historical foundations of the development of the social sciences
3. Identifying differences between scientific and non-scientific reasoning
4. Assessing different forms of logical reasoning
5. Recognizing common errors of logical reasoning
6. Describing the difference between correlation and causality
7. Exploring ethical considerations for social research, such as IRB requirements

Competency 2: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the relationship between research and theory by:

1. Evaluating various purposes for which social sciences research is used
2. Identifying major research paradigms of the social sciences
3. Assessing critical characteristics of the major social science's theoretical paradigms
4. Describing different types of variables
5. Describing procedures involved in the operationalization of variables in social research
6. Assessing the characteristics of different research sample designs

Competency 3: The student will demonstrate knowledge of how social research is structured by:

1. Assessing distinctive issues involved in the scientific measurement of social phenomena
2. Recognizing the significance of population sampling techniques
3. Distinguishing between different types of research sample designs
4. Conceptualizing a research design
5. Constructing an instrument for data collection
6. Selecting a sample
7. Collecting, processing, and displaying data

Competency 4: The student will distinguish between and assess different research methodologies by:

1. Identifying the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods
2. Describing the distinguishing characteristics of experiments, surveys, field studies, content analysis, secondary data analysis, and evaluation research
3. Assessing the appropriateness of different research methods for specific purposes
4. Describing the significance of reliability and validity in social sciences research

Competency 5: The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze quantitative and qualitative data by:

1. Recognizing the role of computers and statistical software in social research
2. Assessing issues in the scientific analysis of qualitative data
3. Identifying issues in data management and coding procedures for qualitative data
4. Evaluating basic statistical analysis procedures in social sciences

5. Assessing appropriate statistical techniques for different research designs

Competency 6: The student will demonstrate the ability to conduct a literature review by:

1. Discussing the purpose of literature review in research
2. Searching for existing literature that pertains to a particular body of work or area of research
3. Reviewing the selected literature
4. Developing theoretical frameworks from the literature review that pertain to a particular research problem
5. Developing conceptual frameworks as the basis for a research problem
6. Writing journal and conference paper summaries
7. Writing a literature review summary with adequately formatted in-text citations and references according to accepted APA and MLA formatting styles

Competency 7: The student will demonstrate an understanding of performing architectural analysis and refinement of the logical architecture of the system by:

1. Identifying and analyzing the non-functional requirements/architectural factors that impact the architecture
2. Developing quality scenarios that define measurable/observable responses that can be verified (i.e., developing quality scenarios of the form)
3. Analyzing alternatives and create solutions that resolve the impact
4. Designing for separating concerns to maximize low coupling and high cohesion at the architectural level
5. Applying Façade, Observer, and Controller patterns in architectural layers
6. Organizing packages to reduce the impact of changes to the system

Learning Outcomes:

- Communicate effectively using listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills
- Use quantitative analytical skills to evaluate and process numerical data
- Solve problems using critical and creative thinking and scientific reasoning
- Formulate strategies to locate, evaluate, and apply information
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical thinking and its application to issues in society
- Use computer and emerging technologies effectively
- Demonstrate an appreciation for aesthetics and creative activities