

MHR 8781: Research Methods in Strategic Management

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Office: Fisher 848; Hours by appointment.

Class: To be announced

Introduction to the Course:

This course provides a Ph.D. level overview of research designs used to study non-experimental phenomena within and between organizations. The course assumes that participants are familiar with the philosophy of science as well as basic statistics, probability theory, and linear regression. Familiarity with the foundations of the strategic management field is helpful but not required. Masters students may enroll with the permission of the instructor, but are unlikely to find the material covered helpful in completing their degree plans.

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to help participants improve their ability to apply and evaluate research using methodological approaches commonly used in high-quality, non-experimental management research. While designed for strategic management scholars, it is also of value to others who are interested in publishing in top-tier management journals in other fields. The course provides an introduction to fundamental issues including the assumptions underlying OLS regression, discrete choice analysis, instrumental variables, panel data analysis, and event history analysis. In addition, the course provides examples of well-received papers applying these models and an opportunity to apply these techniques using datasets provided by the professor. Ultimately, the objective is to help you learn to conduct independent empirical research and to critically evaluate others' empirical research.

Minimal attention will be given to mathematical proofs and other technical matters in this course. I suggest participants consider purchasing textbooks by Greene, Wooldridge, or others listed in the supplementary readings section of the syllabus. While the course offers basic opportunities to “get your hands dirty” with data, you should also enroll in courses or purchase manuals to help develop your SAS or Stata skills. Again, recommendations are offered under supplementary readings.

Instructional Procedure:

The course will be taught using a seminar style. Each session includes a set of focal conceptual readings (to introduce or review the methodology discussed), a set of applied readings (to illustrate how others have used the tool), and a set of supplemental readings (to allow you to delve deeper into particular topics). I have included a set of questions to guide your thinking before, during, and after each in-class discussion. In contrast to other strategic management seminars that cover particular theories or topics, this seminar will aim, individually and collectively, to develop technical responses to these basic research design questions. Finally, some sessions will include a short problem set assignment to allow you to “get your hands dirty” manipulating and/or analyzing data.

Evaluation:

The grading plan describes the relative importance attached to each of the individual activities used

¹ I have benefited from conversations with Javier Gimeno, Ashton Hawk, Glenn Hoetker, Tammy Madsen, & Jeff Reuer while developing this syllabus.