

BGS 402
Fearless Investigation-Research
Online Course Syllabus for Spring 2015

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Office Hours: By appointment

Welcome to web-based BGS 402!

The *best* way to contact me is by e-mail. This is an online course; therefore, expect most communication to be online. I will respond to e-mails within a 48 hour time period. All e-mails *must* include BGS 402 in the subject line.

Required Textbook:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition); ISBN: 9781433805615
TAMU-Commerce Bookstore prices: New \$33.30; Used \$26.65

Suggested Optional Textbook:

Perrin, R. (2011). Pocket Guide to APA Style (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning. ISBN 9780495912637

Course Description:

This course is to investigate the techniques of the research process as applied to business and economics. Experience is gained in defining research problems, designing a research project, and in collecting, analyzing, recording and interpreting data. Also, an analysis of pertinent literature in business and economics is conducted.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate and utilize the various components of APA formatting.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct a review of the literature using scholarly sources.
- Demonstrate the ability to create a formatted annotated reference list using scholarly sources.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop a business related research question/problem.
- Demonstrate and utilize the scientific research method through an analysis process using descriptive, historical, correlational, and experimental research methods involving a researched business question/problem.

General Policies for Classes:

It is the student's responsibility to drop the course if the student does not wish to participate. Any student who will not be able to log into the class web site for more than three (3) days (i.e., because of an extended business trip etc.) should contact the instructor in advance.

All students enrolled at the University will follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. See Student's Guide Handbook, Rules and Procedures, Code of Student Conduct at <http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

The instructor presumes that each student has a working knowledge of eCollege and has a MyLeo e-mail address. The Instructor urges registered online students to familiarize themselves with eCollege by going through the eCollege tutorial or orientation process. This will ensure that each student will have sufficient knowledge on how to accomplish the requirements of the course. It is NOT the Instructor's responsibility to teach students on how eCollege works.

First time eCollege users:

eCollege is generally very user-friendly; however, should you have any questions or concerns about it, you may want to complete an eCollege orientation. You can access the online eCollege Orientation by clicking on the following link: <http://online.tamuc.org/>. The home page will give you directions on how to proceed from there. Your login is your Campus-wide ID # and your password is the same as you use for your MyLeo.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a "Browser Test," login to eCollege, click on the 'MyCourses' tab, then select "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

Technical Support:

If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the eCollege Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Help Desk can be reached by sending an email to helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or by calling 1-866-656-5511 or by clicking on "Live Support" on the toolbar within your course to chat with an eCollege representative. Additionally, you can click on the "Help" button located at the top of each page for more information.

Services for Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Policies Relevant To BGS 402 Students:

Course Grading: Knowledge of the substantive material covered in the course is of central importance. Grading will include, where appropriate, consideration of content as well as grammar, style, spelling, and organization.

Grading, Key Content Areas, and Assignments: Grades in BGS 402 are based upon a student's work in three key content areas: quality, consistency, and quantity. These content areas reflect the course objectives and the core communication skills that students are expected to learn. Each of these content areas represents a fixed percentage of the course's content. Since this is a junior level course, grading will include consideration of content as well as grammar, spelling, style, and organization.

Research Paper	20%
Module Assignments	20%
Quizzes	40%
Discussions	20%
Total	100%

Percentages for course grade level are as follows:

A =	90-100 %
B =	80-89 %
C =	70-79 %
D =	60-69 %
F =	00-59 %

Grades will be awarded based upon a point system. Your total number of points will be divided by the total number of points available to determine your grade percentage. Extra credit work will NOT be assigned and late assignments will not be accepted.

Research Paper:

The research paper is worth 20% of your final grade. Students must use APA Style formatting and citation. Additional format instructions are provided along with assignment details. Assignments are expected no later than 11:59 p.m. (CST) on the day they are due. **Late papers will NOT be accepted! Students will receive a grade of zero for failing to correctly upload an assignment and on time.** The research topic will be given in eCollege.

Submitting papers: All written assignments/research papers must be submitted to the appropriate dropbox within eCollege and be produced in 12-point, Arial or Times New Roman type, and double-spaced, with one inch margins. Always use block left format with jagged right margins. Always use tabs at the beginning of paragraphs. Proofread carefully. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style count heavily in this course.

Quizzes:

There will be quizzes given in each module throughout the semester for a total of 40% of your final grade. Please see the schedule on the last page for the dates the quizzes will be open. The quizzes will be timed and can only be accessed once; therefore, once you begin, you may not stop and come back to it later. The quizzes should be taken by the student without their textbook. Make sure you have a reliable internet connection before beginning.

NOTE: If a student experiences “technical difficulties”; is absent from the exam for extenuating circumstances; or incorrectly submits the exam, a comprehensive make-up exam may be given to the student during final exam week. If a student cannot meet the scheduled exam deadline, contact the instructor for alternative arrangements at least one week PRIOR to the exam date.

Module Assignments: There will be module assignments given each week. These are worth a total of 20%. The module assignment will consist of one of the following: case study, research of relevant topics, or other written assignments. As a general guideline, your grade on this portion will be a function of the quality, quantity, and consistency.

Submitting Module Assignments: All written assignments must be submitted to the appropriate dropbox within eCollege and be produced in 12-point, Arial or Times New Roman type, and double-spaced, with one inch margins with correct APA formatting. Always use block left format with jagged right margins. Always use tabs at the beginning of paragraphs. Proofread carefully. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style count heavily in this course.

Discussion Boards: The discussion board is worth 20% of your grade. The preferred pattern for the discussion activity is that it becomes a conversation, not necessarily a series of posts and replies.

The format for grading the discussions will apply to both semester-long and other discussions (including the section/readings). Grading will include quantity of postings and replies, quality of postings and replies, number and variety of topics discussed in discussions, frequency and regularity of discussions, and timeliness. Students are expected to share their thoughts, responses and/or ideas, in order to learn from each others opinions. Initial postings and replies are not considered differently in the grading process. Although some professors may set minimum numbers or “appropriate” numbers of postings and replies, students in this class should be aware that the number of postings and replies is only one factor that goes into the grading. Grading of the discussions does tend to be somewhat cumulative, in that a few really outstanding posts or replies may not provide very many points. On the other hand, many low quality posts do not add much value to the discussions. Students should also be aware that copying things off the internet and posting it should include an appropriate reference. Also remember that simply making this kind of posting without making personal observations is not a quality post. Duplicated posts that someone else has already made and replies that are essentially "me too" or "I agree" without further discussion are not quality postings. It is the responsibility of each student to keep up with the scheduled readings and discussions for the chapters. Please also note that heavy activity during the last few days cannot compensate for a lack of participation during the term. Plan to participate throughout the entire semester. Once the chapter discussions have been closed, they will not be re-opened and will be in read-only format.

IMPORTANT POSTING RULES:

- 1) Postings may be a few sentences or a couple of paragraphs in length. The key to a quality post is that it provides thoughtful, clear analysis, and insight into the topic or questions. Your postings will be carefully read.
- 2) To achieve the highest possible score for discussion participation, student should maintain active engagement through consistency and quality. Quality is more important than quantity.
- 3) Plagiarism among students (copying others’ postings) will not be tolerated. Please note that TAMU-C has explicit rules regarding plagiarism and will be subject to penalties. Students are advised to carefully read everyone’s postings to ensure that no one has plagiarized your answer.
- 4) Students with very few or no substantive class participation will not receive the highest credit and failure to post at all will result in student not receiving participation points.
- 5) Proofread all posts and written communications to eliminate any offensive references, poor sentence syntax, misspelled words, etc. Keep errors to a minimum.

Professional Conduct: The instructor reserves the right to manage a positive learning environment and thus will not tolerate inappropriate conduct in the course. This includes contributing inappropriately in class, disregard assignments and grading policies, etc. Additionally, I expect every student to maintain a professional level with respecting opinions of the instructor, students, and guest speakers. Understand that this factor of your grade is highly subjective. I will explain to you why I graded you the way I did, and I will grade students fairly in relation to each other.

Academic Integrity:

In this course the need for collaboration is undeniable if you are to excel, even in cases of individual work. There is a fine line in this process. You are encouraged to seek the help and advice of others. However, you *must* do your own work. My personal

policy, which will guide this course, is this: I trust you to behave honestly and ethically in all circumstances. Please ask me if you have questions about what is proper and what is not.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Instructors “are expected to uphold and support student integrity and honesty by maintaining conditions that encourage and enforce academic honesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.” See 13.99.99.R0.10 Academic Honesty at <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/13.99.99.R0.10AcademicHonesty.aspx/>

Plagiarism:

Some people seem to believe that anything found on the Internet is free to use as they please. The "cut and paste" option also makes it quite tempting. However, information on the web must be properly cited just as you would any "hard copy" periodicals. In this course, APA style citation is expected. Any written assignments must include in text citations as well as a separate reference page. Keep the following in mind:

1. It is generally not advisable to quote anything verbatim in a paper unless there is an overriding reason to do so, such as the use of a particular phrase or sentence that illustrates a point well and should not be changed. When you do so, you must provide place the statement in quotes in addition to a footnote at the end of the quote. Not placing the statement in quotes implies that the wording is your own.
2. Changing a few words in a sentence (for example, "large" to "big") may alleviate the need for quotes (depending on how much you change), but it is not the best way to go. If you are not going to provide a direct quote, then the material should be stated in your own terms. Changing a couple of words implies laziness.
3. Every idea you get from another source must be cited. Placing 100 citations in a paper does not imply that the work is not original, but that you did a proper job of giving credit where it was due.
4. The real danger in a "cut and paste" approach to report writing is that you end up including a lot of information that is related to the topic about which you are writing, but does not really address what you are trying to say. Putting things in your own words allows you to focus your comments more effectively.

Any deviation from the guidelines concerning quotes and citations constitutes plagiarism, as it suggests that you are trying to submit someone else's work and creativity as your own. In accordance with the Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct Section 5.b [1, 2, 3], the penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Tentative Schedule for BGS 402 Spring 2015
Please Note: Late assignments will NOT be accepted.

Week Of:	Chapter:	Course Work:	Due:
January 20	Introduction to the Course 1 Writing for the Behavioral and Social Sciences	Academic Honesty Policy Discussion Module I Assignment Syllabus/Module I Quiz	1/30 1/30 1/30 1/30
January 26	2 Manuscript Structure and Content	Discussion Module II Assignment Module II Quiz	2/6 2/6 2/6
February 9	3 Writing Clearly and Concisely 4 The Mechanics of Style	Discussion Module III Assignment Module III Quiz	2/20 2/20 2/20
February 23	5 Displaying Results	Discussion Module IV Assignment Module IV Quiz	3/6 3/6 3/6
March 9	6 Crediting Sources	Discussion Module V Assignment Module V Quiz	3/27 3/27 3/27
March 30	7 Reference Examples	Discussion Module VI Assignment Module VI Quiz	4/10 4/10 4/10
April 13	8 The Publication Process	Discussion Module VII Assignment Module VII Quiz	4/24 4/24 4/24
May 6	Research Project due (Must be turned in by 11:59p.m.)		

Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to change this schedule as circumstances may dictate. All changes will be announced.

Rubric for Module Assignments/Research Paper

	4	3	2	1 or 0	
Criterion	A-level qualities (90–100)	B-level qualities (80–89)	C-level qualities (70–79)	D- or F-level qualities (60–69 or <60)	Score
Completeness	Complete in all respects; reflects all requirements	Complete in most respects; reflects most requirements	Incomplete in many respects; reflects few requirements	Incomplete in most respects; does not reflect requirements	
Understanding	Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an accomplished understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s)	
Analysis, evaluation, and recommendations	Presents an insightful and thorough analysis of all issues identified; includes all necessary financial calculations	Presents a thorough analysis of most issues identified; includes most necessary financial calculations	Presents a superficial analysis of some of the issues identified; omits necessary financial calculations	Presents an incomplete analysis of the issues identified	
	Makes appropriate and powerful connections between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates complete command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes appropriate connections between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates good command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes appropriate but somewhat vague connections between the issues and concepts studied in the reading; demonstrates limited command of the strategic concepts and analytical tools studied	Makes little or no connection between the issues identified and the strategic concepts studied in the reading	

Analysis, evaluation, and recommendations	Supports diagnosis and opinions with strong arguments and evidence; presents a balanced and critical view; interpretation is both reasonable and objective	Supports diagnosis and opinions with reasons and evidence; presents a fairly balanced view; interpretation is both reasonable and objective	Supports diagnosis and opinions with limited reasons and evidence; presents a somewhat one-sided argument	Supports diagnosis and opinions with few reasons and little evidence; argument is one-sided and not objective	
	Presents detailed, realistic, and appropriate recommendations clearly supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents specific, realistic, and appropriate recommendations supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents realistic or appropriate recommendations supported by the information presented and concepts from the reading	Presents realistic or appropriate recommendations with little, if any, support from the information presented and concepts from the reading	
Research	Supplements case study with relevant and extensive research into the present situation of the company; clearly and thoroughly documents all sources of information	Supplements case study with relevant research into the present situation of the company; documents all sources of information	Supplements case study with limited research into the present situation of the company; provides limited documentation of sources consulted	Supplements case study, if at all, with incomplete research and documentation	
Writing mechanics	Writing demonstrates a sophisticated clarity, conciseness, and correctness; includes thorough details and relevant data and information; extremely well-organized	Writing is accomplished in terms of clarity and conciseness and contains only a few errors; includes sufficient details and relevant data and information; well-organized	Writing lacks clarity or conciseness and contains numerous errors; gives insufficient detail and relevant data and information; lacks organization	Writing is unfocused, rambling, or contains serious errors; lacks detail and relevant data and information; poorly organized	
APA guidelines	Uses APA guidelines accurately and consistently to cite sources	Uses APA guidelines with minor violations to cite sources	Reflects incomplete knowledge of APA guidelines	Does not use APA guidelines	
Total:					

Note: Criteria are evaluated on a 4-3-2-1-0 basis. Total rubric points are converted first to a letter grade and then to a numerical equivalent based on a 0-100 scale: 33-36 = A (93-100); 32 = A- (90-92); 30-31 = B+ (88-89); 24-29 = B (83-87); 23 = B- (80-82); 21-22 = C+ (78-79); 15-20 = C (73-77); 14 = C- (70-72); 7-13 = D (60-69); 0-6 = F (below 60).

[Edison State College, June '09]