Jindal School of Banking & Finance

Course Outline

Course Title	Social Science Scholarship
Core or Elective	Elective
Program and Batch	Ph.D
Semester & Academic Year	Spring 2026
Credits	3 (90 Minutes session)
Discipline/Area	Research
Provide details, if this course is a Prerequisite for any course/specialization	None
Name of the Faculty Member/Course Instructor	Prof. Tarun Dhingra
Contact Details of the Faculty Member(s)	tarun.dhingra@jgu.edu.in ; +91-9837321447 (call and whatsapp)
Contact Details of Support Staff	NA
Faculty Member's Open Office Day/s & Time	Room No. 18, 7th Floor, West side, New Faculty Office Block Twice a week with an appointment

Introduction to the Course

Social Science Scholarship offers direction and resources to support PhD candidates and junior faculty members as they wish to establish themselves in social science research. Senior academicians may make use of this course as a source of inspiration to guide their junior and PhD students. This course offers information that is rarely given in PhD programmes and arranges similar guidance and resources pertaining to attaining success in research. The methods and guidance offered are based on the author's years of experience, who have effectively overcome many of the same obstacles and provided mentoring numerous younger faculty members and successful PhD candidates.

This course is designed to equip you with the knowledge, skills and techniques needed to excel in social science research.

Course Overview:

Why we need to do research? What do we understand by the term social science research? What are the present business problems which can lead to a good thesis? How to find out a research problem?

What are the different paradigms and approaches of carrying out research? What are the two views of realities- process and variance-based research and which one suits for my research problem? How to make a defendable research proposal/synopsis and successfully execute it? How to communicate your research?
How to make a clear understanding of what social science research is a prerequisite of a successful career in academics and it starts with doing thesis. From where to start and navigate in this world which has more questions than answers are a burning problem. Every budding researcher needs a roadmap to follow to do good research and master the ability to conceptualize the research problem and have a clear understanding and appreciation of various facets of social science research.

The prolific researchers understand this and develop an ability to convert various business problems into good research problems and ultimately come out with a good quality thesis. My interaction with Ph.D students and young faculty colleagues over a period of time have shown that there is a lack of understanding in the areas of problem identification, problem definition, literature review, research design, theorisation etc. The focus of this course is to familiarize aspiring researchers with the broad approaches that can be used for conducting social science research. I wish to provide the participants hands on experience through this course on various aspects of doing quality research.

Course Learning *Outcomes* (CLO)

This course addresses the fundamentals of research in the social sciences: theory, research design, methods, and critique. It is designed for Ph.D. students who wish to undertake research publishable in scholarly social science journals.

Course Learning

By the end of this course, the students will be able to:

CLO1: Demystify the Social Science Research landscape (Remembering & Understanding)

CLO2: Develop Expertise in Social Science Research Problem Formulation and Research Design (Apply & Analysing,)

CLO3: Master the Art of Social Science Research Investigation (Evaluating & Creating)

Teaching Method

This is a conceptual and analytical -oriented course, requiring students to actively do the pre-reading and participate in classroom discussions and activities. Students must attend all classes, come prepared by reading and analysing the compulsory readings beforehand, and be ready to contribute analyses and insights during discussions.
Most of the classes will include "in-class activities" such as class participation, discussions, and presentations. These activities will be graded, so maintaining 100% attendance is crucial.
If a student is absent due to health reasons or other circumstances, they must still complete and submit all in-class assignments with satisfactory quality for their grades to be released.

Essential readings and cases are listed below, with additional readings provided during the course, mostly in-class. These readings will form the basis of class discussions, so thorough preparation is expected.

Technical Information: Students are not required to purchase any special hardware or software for this course. We will be using UMS (https://ums.jgu.edu.in/login/index.php) or Moodle (https://elearning.jgu.edu.in/moodle/login/index.php) Learning Management System to manage the engagement during the course (including assignment submission).

Class Policies

1. **Digital Devices Policy**
    a. **Cell Phones:**
        i. Use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited in class (unless specified by the course instructor for specific activity). The students need to switch off the mobile or put it on silent and airplane mode during lectures. These need to be submitted to the faculty instructor at the beginning of the lecture and taken back at the end of the session. In case the student is expecting an emergency call, they can seek permission from the instructor beforehand and receive the call.
        ii. Anyone found using a mobile phone during the class without faculty's permission will be marked absent for the whole session without any exception.
        iii. Repeat violation will result in deduction of 10 marks along with penalty of "being marked absent".
    b. **Laptops/Tablets/Notebooks:**
        i. You must carry a laptop in every class. It will sometimes be used for in-class activities (including research or typing a document). You cannot use a mobile phone for this work.
        ii. In every class, you **must carry a physical notebook/paper and pen** to take notes, as well as to do in-class assignments.
        iii. You will **NOT be allowed to keep your laptop/tablet open for taking digital notes**. Please make your notes physically on paper notebook and digitize it after class time**.**

2. **Attendance: You will be expected to be in class before time & submit your mobile phone to the instructor immediately.**
    a. **Reference Time**: Please match your mobile/wristwatch time with https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/india/new-delhi . In case of any disagreement, we will check the time from this website and consider it to be the correct time.
    b. Attendance will be taken in the first 5-minutes at the beginning of the class and if necessary, after the break. Failing to get any of the attendance, at the beginning or after the break will lead to the student being marked absent for the class.
    c. If you enter are late upto 5 minutes, you will lose 2 marks.
    d. If you are late upto 10 minutes, you will lose 2 marks and 0.5 attendance (cumulatively calculated at end of month)
    e. Beyond 10-minutes, you will not be allowed to enter the class and marked absent.

3. **Class Culture:** Students are expected to follow the core values of Respect and Reflection throughout the class.

a. **Respect the speaker:** Listen attentively to the speaker at ALL times, whether it is instructor or fellow classmate.

Evaluation Schema

This is a continuous evaluation course with no mid-term or end-term examination.

Assessment Task	**Marks**	**Nature**	**Week of assessment**
A1- Micro Assessment (MA)	30	Individual/Group (article presentation)	Continuous
MA1- Research Proposal Worksheet	10	Individual	Session 3
MA2- Review your problem statement	10	Individual	Session 9
MA3- Two pages write up of your synopsis	10	Individual	Session 28
A2- Research Proposal Presentations- Mid review	20	Individual	Session 29-30
A3- Research Proposal Presentations- Final Review	50	Individual	Session 29-30

Textbook/Course Package/Other Readings

Textbook- Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). Engaged scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research. Oxford University Press.

These books are worth acquiring as they will be useful as a reference.

1. The Logic of Scientific Discovery by Karl Popper.
2. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions by Thomas S. Kuhn.
3. Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences, by Jon Elster.

All other readings will be made available through LMS.

Several of the readings will be for in-class activities and assignments and will be made available as soft copy or printed copy during the class.

Grade Sheet:

The schema of the grade sheet may change. Students will be informed well in advance of any changes in the schema of the grade sheet.

Grade	Percentage of Marks	Grade Points	Grade Description
O	80% and above	8	**Outstanding** – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
A+	75% – 79.75%	7.5	**Excellent** - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
A	70% – 74.75%	7	**Very Good** - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyse existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
A-	65% – 69.75%	6	**Good** - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
B+	60% – 64.75%	5	**Fair** – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
B	55% – 59.75%	4	**Acceptable**- Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B-	50% – 54.75%	3	**Marginal**- Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
P1 or C	45% – 49 75%	2	**Pass 1:** Pass with Basic understanding of the subject matter.
P2 or D	40% – 44.75%	1	**Pass 2:** Pass with Rudimentary understanding of the subject matter.
F	Below 40%	0	**Fail:** Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course.
P	Pass	"Pass" in a pass/fail course.	**'P'** represents the option of choosing between Pass/Fail grading system over the CGPA grading system in the COVID 19 semester in Spring 2020. The option is provided when students attain a minimum of 40 percentage marks under the current grading structure in a given subject.
I	Incomplete		Extenuating circumstances preventing the student from completing coursework assessment, or taking the examination; or where the Assessment Panel at its discretion assigns this grade. If an **"I"** grade is assigned, the Assessment Panel will suggest a schedule for the completion of work, or a supplementary examination.

JGU Policies and Expectations

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

Learning and knowledge production of any kind is a collaborative process. Collaboration demands an ethical responsibility to acknowledge who we have learnt from, what we have learned, and how reading and learning from others have helped us shape our own ideas. Even our own ideas demand an acknowledgement of the sources and processes through which those ideas have emerged. Thus, all ideas must be supported by citations. All ideas borrowed from articles, books, journals, magazines, case laws, statutes, photographs, films, paintings, etc., in print or online, must be credited with the original source. If the source or inspiration of your idea is a friend, a casual chat, something that you overheard, or heard being discussed at a conference or in class, even they must be duly credited. If you paraphrase or directly quote from a web source in the examination, presentation or essays, the source must be acknowledged. The university has a framework to deal with cases of

plagiarism. All form of plagiarism will be taken seriously by the University and prescribed sanctions will be imposed on those who commit plagiarism.

Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements:

JGU endeavours to make all its courses accessible to students. All students with any known disability needing academic accommodation are required to register with the Disability Support Committee dsc@jgu.edu.in. The Committee has so far identified the following conditions that could possibly hinder student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties; visual impairment; hearing impairment; medical conditions; specific learning difficulties e.g., dyslexia; mental health. The Disability Support Committee maintains strict confidentiality of its discussions. Students should preferably register with the Committee during the month of June/January as disability accommodation requires early planning. DSC will approve of and coordinate all disability related services such as appointment of academic mentors, arranging infrastructural facilities, and course related requirements such as special lectures, tutorials, and examinations.

Safe Space Pledge:

This course may discuss a range of issues and events that might result in distress for some students. Discussions in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel disturbed due to either the content of the course or the conduct of the discussions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. This does not mean that you need to feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say. Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibitions and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students, but also with the instructor.

Session Plan

Session Details	
Session-1-2-3	**Introduction To Social Science Scholarship and Road to Research Proposal**
Objectives of the sessions	1. Faculty and Scholar introductions 2. Introductions to the course & policies 3. Social science scholarship: Journey, challenges and mile stones 4. Students introduce themselves and their research topic/problem
Readings	1. Whetten, "What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution," AMR, 1989. https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/AMR.1989.4308371 2. Hambrick, "Too much of a good thing?" AMJ, 2007 https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/AMJ.2007.28166119 3. John R. Platt (1964). "Strong inference". Science 146 (3642) Supplementary readings- Sutton, Robert I., and Barry M. Staw. (1995). What theory is not. Administrative Science Quarterly, 40, 371-384. (Also comments by Karl E. Weick, "What theory is not, theorizing is" and Paul J. DiMaggio, "Comments on "What theory is not")
Pedagogy	Instructor led discussion on readings, Students comprehension of readings
Exercise	Student Example of Research Proposal Worksheet 1. What is your research problem and question? • Address general questions of who? what? where? when? why? & how? The problem exists up close &; from afar 2. What is your proposed answer to the research question? • Is your answer any better than the status quo or a competing plausible alternative answer? 3. How will you empirically study your proposed answer? • Outline a research design for gathering data to examine your proposal. 4. How will you communicate and use study findings to address your research question & problem? 5. Background questions: • For whom and with whom are you conducting the study? • Who's point of view will you take in conducting the study? • Who will you engage to answer these questions? summary of article by groups
Action Item	Research Proposal Worksheet
Session-4-5	**Philosophy of Science Underpinning Scholarship**
Objectives of the sessions	1. What philosophy of science are you practicing? • Positivism • Relativism and Postmodernism • Pragmatism • Critical Realism

Readings	▪ Azevedo, "Updating organizational epistemology," in Baum (2002), pp. 715-732. ▪ Alvesson, Hardy & Harley, "Reflecting on Reflexitivity." JMS, 2008 ▪ Mirvis, Mohram, & Worley, *Doing Relevant Research*, (2021)
Pedagogy	Lecture; Instructor led discussions; Hands on exercises
Exercise	Exercise: NIH RFP on Work-Family Relationships, summary of article by groups
Action item	Formulating team research proposal underlying philosophy of science and present
Session-6-7-8	**Formulating the Research Problem**
Objectives of the session	**What problem and question do you want to study?** 1. Situating the problem 2. Grounding the problem in reality 3. Diagnosing the problem 4. Problem solving by formulating the crucial question
Readings (for reference)	• Davis, "That's Interesting," (1971) and "That's Classic!" (1986). • Eden & Jones (1983) "Messing About in Problems," pp. 39-59. • Edmondson, Crossing Boundaries to Investigate Problems in the Field, 2011 • Van de Ven & Delbecq, "The Nominal Group as a Research Instrument…" AJPH, 1972.
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Exercise in Problem Formulation Steps, summary of article by groups
Activity Item	Discussion on sheet, peer evaluation
Session-9	**Grounded Methods of Problem Formulation**
Objectives of the session	In what reality is your research problem grounded? 1. Grounded methods for problem formulation and theory building 2. Case study strategy and methods 3. Problem formulation is a grounded theory building process 4. What are the consequences of your problem statement for theory and practice?
Readings	• Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and methods*, Sixth Edition, Sage, 2017.

	• Shrestha, He, Puranam, & von Krosh, Algorithm Supported Induction for Theory Building, OS 2021 • Eisenhardt, "Building theory from Case Study Research," AMR, 1989. • Glaser & Strauss, "The discovery of grounded theory," 1967, chpts. 1-3 & 5. • Gioia, Qualitative Research Method, ORM, 2012
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Review your problem statement with another student and provide one another feedback.
Action item	Review form
Session-10	**Theory building- I**
Objectives of the session	What is your answer to your research question? 1. Conceiving a theory 2. Constructing the theory 3. Justifying the theory
Pre-Readings	• Weick, "Theory construction as disciplined imagination," *AMR*, 1989. • Poole & Van de Ven, "Using Paradox to Build ... Theories," AMR 1989. • Saetre & Van de Ven, "Generating Theory By Abduction," 2021
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Exercise in Conceiving a Theory
Session-11 & 12	**Theory building- II**
Objectives of the session	Why should anyone believe your answer to your research question? 1. Characteristics of research propositions and hypotheses. 2. Develop a plausible answer to your research question. 3. Develop a "crucial" proposition that juxtaposes two plausible answers. 4. Identify the assumptions: domain, time, space where proposition holds. 5. State a few hypotheses that derive from your proposition.
Pre-Readings	• Bacharach, "Organization theories: Some criteria for evaluation," AMR 1989. • Stinchcombe, "Constructing Social Theories," New York: Harcourt, 1968, chpt. 2, pp 15-56

	• Corley & Gioia, "Building Theory about Theory Building," AMR, 2011.
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Theory report with revisions of problem/question section presentation
Session-13-14	**Research Proposal Presentations**
Objectives of the session	Students present their research proposal in a chosen format. Suggested format- tree-diagrams
Pre-Readings	Ramage & Bean, "Writing Arguments," Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1995
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Research Proposal Presentations
Session-15	**Research Design**
Objectives of the session	Two views of Reality Do you want to study how or why something happens? Variance (causal) and process (narrative) reasoning Assumptions of variance and process theorizing
Pre-Readings	▪ Bruner, Two Modes of Thought, Ch. 2 in *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, 1986. ▪ Mohr, Variance and Process Theories in *Explaining Organizational Behavior*, 1982.
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities,
Exercise	Worksheet for Designing a Variance Research Study Process and Variance Questions and Answers
Session-19-20	**Variance Research Designs**
Objective of the session	Show us the evidence that X causes Y. Variance research question & unit of analysis Causal, contingent, and interacting relationships Randomized, quasi, and non-experimental studies. Sampling and sample size. Causal or path analytic models. Factors threatening internal, external, statistical and construct validities.
Readings	▪ hadish, Cooke & Campbell, Ch. 1–3 in Experimental and Quasi-Exp. Designs, 2002. ▪ Bettis, et al., Creating repeatable cumulative knowledge in strategic management, SMJ, 2016. ▪ Bamberger, P & Miller, C., Exploring emergent and poorly understood phenomena AMD, 2017.

Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities, Article presentation
Exercise	Worksheet for Designing a Variance Research Study
Session-21-22	**Modeling Causality**
Objective of the session	Topics: Theoretical and empirical modeling Formal modeling and computer simulation - a model is a model (Knudsen, Levinthal & Puranam, 2019) - bounded rationality models (Puranam, Stiglitz, Osman & Pillutla, 2015) - NK modeling example (Chen, Kaul & Wu, 2017 Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) models (Dooley, 2021) - empirical modeling of dynamical systems and far-from-equilibrium (FFE) empirical models - empirical modeling example (Cheng & Van de Ven, 1996)
Readings	• Knudsen, Levinthal & Puranam (2019). Editorial: A Model Is a Model. Strategy Science 4 (1):1-3. • Harrison, Carroll & Carley (2007). Simulation modeling in organizational and management research, AMR 32 (4) 1229-1245. • Puranam, Stieglitz, Osman & Pillutla, (2015). Modelling bounded rationality in organizations: Progress and prospects. *Academy of Management Annals*, *9* (1), 337-392. • Dooley. (2021). Conceptualizing Organizational Change through lens of complexity science, Handbook Chapter 20
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities, Article presentation
Exercise	Exercise in Designing a Causal Model
Session-23-24	**Process Research Designs**
Objective of the session	Show us the evidence for your story of how this process unfolded. 1. Process theory questions focus on order and sequence of events. 2. Narrative study designs. 3. Defining and measuring events or incidents. 4. Analyzing temporal patterns in event sequence data.
Readings	▪ Langley et al., Process Studies, AMJ, 2013 ▪ Gaurd et al., Qualitative Approaches for Studying Innovation as Process, 2017 ▪ Supplementary Readings: ▪ Polkinghorne, Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences, chapter 1, chapter 2 & chapter 7, 1988. ▪ Pentland, "Building Process Theory with Narrative," *AMR* 1999.
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities, Article presentation
Exercise	
Session-25	**Constructing Measurement Instruments**

Objective of the session	Measurement is fundamentally a problem of conceptualization. 1. Questionnaires, interviews, archival data, & field notes. 2. Frames of Reference in a measurement instrument. 3. Measurement reliability and validity.
Readings	• Hinkin, "Tutorial on Development of Measures for Use in Survey Questionnaires," ORM 1998. • Mathison, "Why Triangulate?" *Ed Researcher*, 1988. • Meyer, "Visual Data in Org Research," *Org Science*, 1991.
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities, Article presentation
Exercise	Define & Measure a Construct
Session-28	**Communicating Research: Writing and Reviewing**
Objective of the session	Research and writing for whom? …for what? Writing research reports for funding, academic and professional audiences. Presenting research reports at academic and professional conferences. Reviewing and publishing research Who do you wish to impact with your research findings
Readings	• Huff, "Learning to be a good writer," 2002. • Pratt, "…Tips on writing up (and reviewing) qualitative research," AMJ, 2009 • Meyer, "Balls, Strikes, and Collisions on the Base Path," 1995. • Miller & Van de Ven, "Peer review, root canals, and other amazing life events," AMD 2015
Pedagogy	Lecture & Discussion, In-class activities, Article presentation
Exercise	Two pages write up of your synopsis
Session-29-30	**Social Science Scholarship: Research proposal**
Objective of the session	What have we learned?
Readings	NA
Pedagogy	Review & Discussion,
Exercise	Research proposal presentation