
Title of the course

- **230101 Research Planning: Literature Review and Academic Writing**

Organizing center/area leading the course

Deusto International Research School (DIRS) – PhD program in Business and Territorial Competitiveness, Innovation and Sustainability

Training category

AF7. Methodology and research techniques

Professor/Coordinator of the training course

Coordinator: Dr. [Jon Mikel Zabala-Iturriagagoitia](#)

Priority group

1st year PhD students

Competences

The contents of this module will mainly contribute to the acquisition of the following competences:

- CB11: systematic comprehension of a research area and control of the skills and research methods connected with such area.
- CB12: capacity to conceive, design or create, put in practice and adopt a relevant and creative process of research.
- CB13: capacity to contribute to the widening of the knowledge frontier through original research.
- CB14: capacity to perform a critical analysis and an assessment and synthesis of new and complex ideas.
- CB16: capacity to stimulate, within academic and professional contexts, the scientific, technological, social, artistic or cultural progress within a knowledge-based society.

It will also strengthen the following personal skills:

- CA02: identify the crucial research questions that have to be responded as a means to solve a complex issue.
- CA05: integrate different knowledge bases, cope with complexity and formulate appropriate judgments with limited information.
- CA06: critique and intellectual defense of prospected solutions.

Expected learning results

At the end of the course and the related learning process, the student is expected to:

- Identify the different types of PhD dissertations and their pros and cons.
- Get familiar with the different stages in the PhD process and their requirements.
- Manage the different approaches to the review of the literature.
- Identify research gaps and characterize the different schools of thought within each theory.
- Formulate research questions in an appropriate and coherent form.
- Connect the research questions with the most appropriate research methodology.
- Position the research question in a particular stream of literature to which it aims to contribute.
- Discuss critically the best approach to the discussion of the research problem.

The student should also learn how to:

- Utilize the most appropriate databases that help him/her to identify former relevant researches.
- Evaluate critically the sources of information.
- Recognize the quality of the scientific publications.
- Manage the relevant bibliography effectively.
- Present the content and contribution of the research in a synthetic and systematic way.
- Be able to interpret the comments provided during the review process.
- Be able to orally present their research and interpret the feedback provided.
- Discuss and provide feedback to the scholarly contributions made by others.

Contents

Session 1: Introduction

- What is a PhD.
- Stages in the PhD process: relevance of planning.
- What (not) to expect from a PhD supervisor.
- Competences required to become a PhD.
- Types of PhD dissertations.
- Potential outlines and contents of PhD dissertations.
- Dissemination of research results.
- Academic networking and the international dimension of research.

Session 2: Identifying the target journals and seminal contributions

- Most appropriate academic databases.
- Searching for references in the main databases.
- Determining the "label" to be used. Naming academic authors.
- Evaluate critically the sources of information: journal scope and impact factors

- Identify seminal contributions: quality and impact of the scientific publications.
- Manage the bibliography effectively.

Session 3: Approaches to the review of the literature

- Main approaches towards a literature review.
- Stages in a systematic review of the literature.
- How to read an academic paper.
- Identify research gaps.
- Identify relevant research questions.
- Characterize the different schools of thought within each theory.
- Formulate research questions and hypotheses.
- Identify the methodology that suits with the research question.

Session 4: Key concepts for the literature review

- What is theory.
- Difference between theoretical framework and conceptual framework.
- Difference between concept and construct.
- Identifying the limitations of your research and further research.
- Establish the methodological orientation of the research project in a research plan.
- Present the content and contribution of the research in a synthetic and systematic way.
- Discuss and provide feedback to the scholarly contributions made by others.

Session 5: Academic writing

- Checklist prior to paper submission and paper resubmission.
- Letter to the editor (submission and resubmission).
- Structure of an academic manuscript.
- Choosing the most appropriate co-authors and their contribution (role) in the paper (potential research visits).
- Elevator pitch: defining the research plan to defend by the end of the semester.

Level of the course

Introductory

Methodology

All subjects are analyzed from both a theoretical and empirical perspective with the goal of achieving the key objective of any doctoral course, i.e. help the student acquiring advanced knowledge as well as encourage him/her to identify the research topics that he/she will analyze in the course of the PhD thesis. With the objective of deepening the knowledge on the subject, the doctoral student reads, analyzes and

prepares a set of recommended readings that may be discussed individually or in groups during some of the sessions.

Once finalized the lectures, the doctoral student elaborates a written report/paper on one of the topics discussed in class. This involves the systematic review and reporting of the literature on a specific research issue. In this document (3-5 pages), the student gives proof of the acquired knowledge of concepts and scientific works that are presented in the seminar. The usual contents of this assignment are:

- Main idea of their thesis, and research question they are interested in addressing (1/2 page)
- Theories, frameworks and key concepts the thesis may rely upon (1 page)
- Methodologies/approaches to be applied for the empirical analysis (1 page)
- Work package flow for the PhD proposal (1/2 page)

The contents discussed above are expected to be instrumental in providing the PhD candidate with the required capacities in order to frame their research plans, which all PhD candidates will have to present by May 2023¹.

Language of instruction

English

Mode of instruction

In-class and virtual attendance

Number of places

PhD students: Número máximo de doctorandos si procede

Assessment

Attendance to class is required, and active, smart participation (both asking key questions and presenting valuable comments) is rewarded. The student is expected to attend to the 70% of teaching time as a minimum. In addition, he/she is also expected to participate actively. He/she is required to produce a good research document at the end of the module (1 month later in date to be agreed) that pulls together an effective and critical review of the relevant literature on a selected research topic.

¹ As stated in the PhD programme, before the end of the 1st year, all PhD candidates need to write and present a research plan where the following items are discussed: rationale for the study, goals, theoretical framework, hypotheses, methodology, resources required, temporal planning and relevant literature.

The final student's mark will include the following elements:

- Written account of the work to be accomplished during their PhD process: 70%.
- Active participation in class: 30%.

Number of hours

30 hours

San Sebastian Campus

- Month when the course begins: November 2023
- Time: 14:00-20:00
- Dates:

Monday, 13 November 2023 (14:00-20:00)

Tuesday, 14 November 2023 (14:00-20:00)

Wednesday, 15 November 2023 (14:00-20:00)

Thursday, 16 November 2023 (14:00-20:00)