A COURSE SYLLABUS – DOCTORAL SCHOOL

REGARDING THE QUALIFICATION CYCLE FROM 2025 TO 2029

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT COURSE	
Course title	**Research methodology**
Name of the unit running the course	Rzeszów University Doctoral School
Type of course *(obligatory, optional)*	Compulsory course
Year and semester of studies	I year, semesters: I-II
Discipline	**Political science and administration**
Language of Course	Polish
Name of Course coordinator	**Anna Kołomycew**
Name of Course instructor	**Anna Kołomycew**
Prerequisites	Prerequisites for the Research Methodology include: a) a completed master's degree in social sciences and/or humanities (preferably in political science and administration) proving knowledge, skills, and social competences at level 7 of the Polish Qualifications Framework, b) fluency in a foreign language (English) to at least B2 level; c) an understanding of theories and concepts relevant to the social sciences, with particular emphasis on political science and administration; d) the knowledge and competence necessary to independently design, prepare, and conduct empirical research (quantitative and qualitative).

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE
(100-200 words)

The Research Methodology course aims to prepare doctoral students to independently design, plan, organize, and conduct research in accordance with ethical principles and methodological requirements. Doctoral students will deepen their knowledge of theory, theoretical approaches, and paradigms relevant to the social sciences, with particular emphasis on political science and administration. Key concepts include models of democracy, political systems theory, different types of governance, the institutional approach (neo-institutionalism), and public policy theories. An essential element of the course will be the ability to identify and articulate research problems, formulate hypotheses grounded in theoretical frameworks, formulate research questions, and operationalize key concepts in political science and administration. Doctoral students will also develop their knowledge and skills in conducting quantitative and qualitative research, especially in selecting cases (and/or research samples), preparing research tools, and adhering to ethical principles in conducting empirical research. An integral part of the course involves learning about tools for organizing and analyzing research material (qualitative research) – MAQDA and QDA Data Miner. By the end of the course, doctoral students will be able to prepare a research project, analyze research results based on the studied theories, formulate conclusions, and present research results in scientific publications and conference presentations.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND METHODS OF EVALUATING LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcome	The description of the learning outcome defined for the course	Reference to learning outcomes for qualifications at Level 8 of the Polish Qualification	Learning Format (Lectures, classes,...)	Method of assessment of learning outcomes (e.g. test, oral exam, written exam, project,...)

		Framework (PRK) (symbol)		
Knowledge: (no.)	***knows and understands***			
P8S_WG3	The doctoral student knows, understands, and applies specialist terminology used in the national and international scientific and professional environments in the discipline of political science and administration, as well as in related social science disciplines.	**P8S_WG**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam
P8S_WG4	The doctoral student demonstrates a solid knowledge of social research methodology, particularly as applied to political science and administration. In addition, they are familiar with the rules, possibilities, and limitations of using research methods and techniques from other disciplines in political science and administration. The doctoral student understands the need to use different methods, understands the principles of applying mixed-methods, and recognizes the need for triangulation to obtain reliable, credible, and objective results.	**P8S_WG**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam
P8S_WK3	The doctoral students are aware that disseminating research and its practical application are essential to advancing the public, social, and economic domains. PhD students learn to disseminate research findings in practice and understand the need to prepare publications for the general public.	**P8S_WK**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam
Skills: (no.)	***is able to***			
P8S_UW1	Doctoral students are able to apply interdisciplinary skills to identify and resolve research issues. Based on established theories and concepts, they are able to formulate research problems, research objectives, and hypotheses/theses, and	**P8S_UW**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam

	select appropriate research methodologies and techniques. Doctoral students are prepared to apply innovative research approaches, methods, and techniques to their research. Based on the results, they can draw conclusions, critically analyze research materials, and solve research problems.			
P8S_UK1	Doctoral students are equipped with the skills and competencies to participate actively in national and international scientific events (conferences, seminars, project team meetings). They can discuss the studied phenomenon in a concise, precise, and substantive manner, present the methodology and the research process, and share the findings.	**P8S_UK**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam
P8S_UO1	Doctoral students can engage in research and project teams, as well as participate in scientific events. They acquire competencies and skills, including language and organizational, to perform different functions within research/project teams, both national and international.	**P8S_UO**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam
Social competence: (no.)	***is ready to***			
P8S_KR1	Doctoral students are prepared to support and strengthen the ethics of the scientific community. They can plan and conduct research independently, reliably, and responsibly, taking responsibility for the results.	**P8S_KR**	seminar	discussion, research project, exam

LEARNING FORMAT – NUMBER OF HOURS

Semester (no.)	Lectures	Seminars	Lab classes	Placements	other	ECTS
I	-	-	-	-	**30**	**3**
II	-	-	-	-	**30**	**3**
					60	**6**

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

E.G, LECTURE: A PROBLEM-SOLVING LECTURE/A LECTURE SUPPORTED BY A MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION/ DISTANCE LEARNING CLASSES: TEXT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION/PROJECT WORK (RESEARCH PROJECT, IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT, PRACTICAL PROJECT)/ GROUP WORK (PROBLEM SOLVING, CASE STUDY, DISCUSSION)/DIDACTIC GAMES/ DISTANCE LEARNING LABORATORY CLASSES: DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING EXPERIMENTS)

- academic discussion, based on the relevant literature during classes
- multimedia presentations
- case study analysis
- research project

COURSE CONTENT

Semester I:

1. The essence of scientific research in social sciences
2. The specificity of social research
3. The specificity of research in political science and administration
4. The leading paradigms in social sciences
5. Ethical issues in social research
6. The political dimension of social research
7. Select theories in social sciences and political sciences (models of democracy, institutionalism, systems theory, concepts of governance, public policy theories)
8. Interpretative and normative approaches
9. Research plan – aims of the research, research dimensions (subjective, objective, temporal)
10. Planning a research project
11. Conceptualisation and operationalisation in social research
12. Sampling – methods of sampling, ethical issues
13. Quantitative research – advantages and disadvantages, design of research tools (survey questionnaire), specifics and types of surveys/polls
14. Qualitative research – advantages and disadvantages
15. Qualitative research tools – questionnaire and interview scenario

Semester II:

1. Individual interviews – types, procedure, respondent selection techniques
2. Focus group interviews – specifics, procedure, limitations, and difficulties, the role of the moderator
3. Interview transcription – anonymization, archiving, recording transcription tools
4. Triangulation of methods and mixed research
5. Organization and coding of interview content
6. Data analysis in qualitative research – use of analysis software
7. Narrative and comparative analysis
8. Research reports
9. Scientific databases – preparation of data and research material for dissemination
10. Case study – reasons for its use in research
11. Case study analysis
12. Research design – selecting research methods and techniques during the research project preparation stage (research objectives, research team, budget, limitations, research risks)
13. Dissemination of research results – scientific conferences
14. Dissemination of research results – scientific publications
15. Participatory research – the potential of research involving respondents, using innovative methods based on co-creation

COURSE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The Research Methodology course is delivered in the first and second semesters. The first semester ends with a grader assessment, while the second semester ends with a final examination (with a grade). The course is delivered through interaction with a supervisor.

Conditions for passing the course after the first semester:
a) participation in classes
b) presentation of the concept of pilot research prepared for the planned scientific paper
c) presentation of the concept for a grant application.

In order to pass the exam in Research Methodology after the second semester, doctoral students must obtain at least 51% of the points in the final exam (oral).

During the final exam, PhD students answer 3 questions selected from a set of relevant topics. Each question is assessed according to the following criteria:
1. Content accuracy, including the ability to justify and provide examples (0-15)
2. Operationalization of key concepts, terminology range (0-10)
3. Structure and logic of answers (0–5)

Scoring system:
0–15 points (0–50%) - 2.0 - unsatisfactory – fail – the doctoral student shows no progress in scientific research, does not expand their knowledge, does not study the required reading, does not participate in substantive discussions, does not fulfill their scientific obligations;

16–18 points (51–60%) - 3.0 - satisfactory - doctoral students show minimal progress in scientific research, expand their knowledge, study basic literature, discuss a limited range of substantive knowledge, and fulfill basic scientific duties;

19–21 points (61–70%) - 3.5 - satisfactory plus – doctoral students show progress in scientific research, expand their knowledge, study basic literature, participate substantively in discussions, fulfill their scientific duties;

22–24 points (71–80%) - 4.0 - good – doctoral students show significant progress in scientific research, expand knowledge, study basic and supplementary literature, participate actively in discussions, fulfill all scientific duties;

25–27 points (81–90%) - 4.5 - good plus – doctoral students show significant progress in scientific research, systematically expand their knowledge, study basic and supplementary literature, participate substantively in discussions, fulfill all scientific obligations;

28–30 points (91–100%) - 5.0 - very good – doctoral students show significant progress in scientific research, systematically expand their knowledge, study basic and supplementary literature, as well as literature beyond the required scope, participate substantively in discussions, and fulfill all scientific obligations.

TOTAL DOCTORAL STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES
– NUMBER OF HOURS AND ECTS CREDITS

Activity	**2 x 30 hours – 60 hours**
Scheduled course contact hours	**4**

Other contact hours involving the instructor (duty hours, examinations)	**116 hours**
Non-contact hours – student`s own work (preparation for classes or examinations, project, etc.)	**180**
Total number of hours	**6**
Total number of ECTS credits	**2 x 30 hours – 60 hours**

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	
Compulsory literature:	Babbie, E.R. Badania społeczne w praktyce, PWN, Warszawa 2024. Gibbs, G. (2011). Analizowanie danych jakościowych, PWN, Warszawa. Lofland, J. Snow, D.A., Anderson, L., Lofland L.H. (2009). Analiza układów społecznych. Przewodnik metodologiczny po badaniach jakościowych, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa. Maison, D. (2022). Jakościowe metody badań społecznych. Podejście aplikacyjne, PWN, Warszawa. Olejnik, I., Kaczmarek, M., Springer, A. (2022). Badania jakościowe. Metody i zastosowanie. Wydanie III, CeDeWu, Warszawa. Sena, B. (2024). The Case Study in Social Research: History, Methods and Applications. Routledge. Teorie i metody w naukach politycznych, red. D Marsh, G. Stoker, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2006. Yin, R. (2024). Studium przypadku w badaniach naukowych. Projektowanie, metody i zastosowania. Wydanie II, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków.
Complementary literature:	Bhattacherjee, A. (2019). Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices (Revised ed.). University of Southern Queensland, https://usq.pressbooks.pub/socialscienceresearch/ Boas, T. C. (2024). Who Participates in Focus Groups? Diagnosing Self-Selection. PS: Political Science & Politics, 57(3), 384–389. doi:10.1017/S104909652400009X Cyr, J. (2017). The Unique Utility of Focus Groups for Mixed-Methods Research. PS: Political Science & Politics, 50(4), 1038–1042. doi:10.1017/S104909651700124X Franco, J., Lee, C., Vue, K., Bozonelos, D., Omae, M., & Cauchon, S. (2020). Introduction to Political Science Research Methods (1st ed.). Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, https://ipsrm.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/SP22-IPSRM-02.pdf Hurst, A. (2023). Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Helpful Guide for Undergraduates and Graduate Students in the Social Sciences. Oregon State University Ecampus, https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/ Sheppard, V. (2020). Research Methods for the Social Sciences: An Introduction. BCcampus, https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/1589 Stanley, L. (2016). Using focus groups in political science and international relations. Politics, 36(3), 236-249. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395715624120 Hay, C. (2017). Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction. Palgrave Macmillan. Goodin, R. E. (Ed.). (2009). The Oxford Handbook of Political Science. Oxford University Press. Lowndes, V., Marsh, D., & Stoker, G. (eds.) (2018). Theory and Methods in Political Science. Palgrave Macmillan. Peters, B.G. (2019). Institutional Theory in Political Science, Fourth Edition: The New Institutionalism, Edward Elgar.

.....
Date and signature of the Course instructor

.....
Approved by the Head of the Department or an authorised person