

**MSc IN ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
(INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ECONOMICS)**

1ST SEMESTER – AUTUMN SEMESTER 2018 - MODULE DESCRIPTION

Module 3 - Course in Research Methodology (3a)/ Semester Project (3b)

Module 3a: Course in Research Methodology

Research Methodology 1: Meta-theoretical perspective and research design
Teaching ECTS: 5

Location

1. semester, Autumn semester, MSc in Economics and Business Administration
(International Business Economics)

Module Coordinator

Professor John Kuada, kuada@business.aau.dk

Secretariat Assistance

MSc International Business Economics 1.-2 semester:
Helle Kragbæk Nordentoft,
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MSc International Business Economics 3.-4. semester:
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Type and Language

Module Type: Course

The course in Research Methodology is taught outside the two thematic modules and directly supports the semester project work.

Language of Instruction: English

Objectives

Upon completion of the module, the student will be able to:

1. Enhance their knowledge about the philosophical roots of research (and their relevance to theory development) in international business and marketing
2. Develop skills and competencies in:
 - Conducting comprehensive literature review, synthesis and conceptualization
 - Engaging in critical reflections on theories and research design based on philosophy of science.

Academic Content and Conjunction with Other Modules/Semesters

This module is the first part of a two part course in International Business Research Methods.

It provides students with insights into approaches to thematic and systematic literature review and the philosophical/meta-theoretical foundation of students' semester projects and thesis.

The teaching will take the form of lectures, cases and seminars, where appropriate.

Scope and Expected Performance

The taught module and follow up project work is designed to cover 10 ECTS comprising a total of 270 hours of student workload. Students will be required to write a semester project based on knowledge provided in the course. The theoretical perspective of the project will be grounded in concepts, frameworks and theories introduced and discussed in the theoretical courses in Semester 1. The students will take a group oral examination based on the project. The breakdown is as follows:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Hours</i>
<i>Teaching hours & Exercises</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Preparations & Project work</i>	<i>210</i>

Participants

Students enrolled in the MSc International Business Economics programme or MSc International Marketing programme. Other degree students or guest students who wish to participate in the module may apply to the study board.

Prerequisites for participation

The students must be admitted to the Master's Degree Programme in Economics and Business Administration (International Business Economics/International Marketing). This requires a bachelor's degree in Economics and Business Administration (all programmes and combinations) or other degree where commensurate qualifications are obtained.

Module Activities

Detailed outline of activities will be available in Moodle.

The module teaching sessions are divided into two parts:

Part 1: Systematic literature review (6 sessions)

Reading materials will be provided at the beginning of the semester

Sessions

Session 1: Concepts, frameworks and theories

Session 2: Literature review - focus and approach

Session 3: Thematic literature review

Session 4: Systematic literature review

Session 5: Literature review and conceptualization

Session 6: Use of references, arguments, reflections and critique: a descriptive and analytical approach

Part 2: Philosophy of Science and International Business Research (John Kuada)**Textbook**

Kuada, John (2014), *Research Methodology - A Project Guide for University Students* (Frederiksberg, Samfundslitteratur) - Available at the university bookshop

Supplementary Reading:

Kuada, John (2009),

Paradigms in International Business Research - Classifications and Applications (International Business Centre Working Paper Series No. 53)

Sessions

Session 1: Problem formulation and group formation

Readings: Kuada (2012) chapters 1-2

Session 2: Project writing process

Readings: Kuada (2012) chapters 1-2

Session 3: Philosophy of science 1

Readings: Kuada (2012) chapters 3-4

Session 4: Philosophy of science 2

Readings: Kuada (2012) chapters 5-6

Session 5: Applying philosophy of science to international business/marketing research

Readings: Kuada (2009) pages 1 - 29

Examination

This module is examined as part of the exam for module 3b: semester project.

Students will be required to write a semester project in groups and take part in an oral examination based on the project. Thus, the students are not given a separate grade for module 3a, but is part of the overall grade given for the semester project exam.

As a prerequisite to attending the examination in module 3 students are required to have attended the joint group project seminar. This activity is not part of the examinations in module 3, but a requirement for students to be allowed to sit their examination in module 3.

Module 3b: Semester Project

Project within the subject area: Internationalisation and Cross-Cultural Management in a Theoretical and Methodological Perspective including a course in Research Methodology.

The semester project takes its point of reference in the issues addressed in modules 1 and 2, as well as the course in Research Methodology. The course in Research Methodology is taught outside the two thematic modules and directly supports the semester project work.

The project is to be written in groups of maximum 7 students.

Optimal group size is 5 students.

Teaching ECTS: 5 ECTS

Examination ECTS: 10 ECTS

STADS Code: SBH700066C

Location

1. semester, Autumn semester, MSc in Economics and Business Administration
(International Business Economics)

Module Coordinator

Coordinator for Module 3a - Course in Research Methodology:

Professor John Kuada, kuada@business.aau.dk

Coordinator for Module 3b - Semester Project:

Associate Professor Reimer Ivang, ivang@business.aau.dk

Secretariat Assistance

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Type and Language

Module Type: Project Module

Language of Instruction: English

Students are required to write their projects in English and sit their oral examination in English.

Objectives

The objective of module 3b is to provide students with competence and skills into problem formulation, identification and synthesis of literature relevant to the problem, scientific and philosophical reflections on the theories identified and the possible adaptations required to apply them to practical international business decisions.

Upon completion of the module, the student will have acquired the following competences/skills:

- Ability to identify and formulate a business problem relevant to an international company
- Ability to do systematic literature review, leading to a framework for conceptualizing the problem identified
- Ability to describe and discuss the philosophical (theory of science) positions of the theories presented in the reviewed literature
- Prepare designs/research strategy for investigating the problem identified
- Preparing a research report with clear structure and in clear language.
- Propose appropriate solutions to the identified problem(s)

The module will train students in how to utilize academic literature to conceptualize a business problem, i.e. the 1st semester project is focusing on the conducting a literature review and methodology and not on a full scale project including empirical investigations. Students should therefore not contact companies with the purpose of collecting primary data for the project. Contacting companies should only focus on defining problems and if possible exemplifying the developed analytical frames.

Academic Content and Conjunction with other Modules/Semesters

The project will take as its starting point relevant problems in the subject area of international business and the problem will be treated in a purely theoretical-methodical manner, i.e. in a manner that combines theory/method. The purpose is to strengthen students' ability to identify relevant international business issues, undertake theoretical/methodical conceptualization and reflection, with the focus of developing possible solutions.

Scope and Expected Performance

Students are requested to choose an international business issue/problem related to Modules 1 and 2 and subsequently conduct the following tasks:

- (1) a literature review related to the defined issues followed by designing a conceptual framework,
- (2) the presentation and discussion of alternative methodological positions (based on their knowledge of theory of science and methodological design),
- (3) suggestions of possible solutions to the problems/issues identified.

The semester project is prepared in groups and presented in a report of no more than 50 pages (including Tables and Figures excluding References, Appendices, Front Page, Table of Contents). A page is defined as 2400 characters including the spaces between words.

Participants

Students enrolled in the MSc International Business Economics programme. Other degree students or guest students who wish to participate in the module may apply to the study board.

Prerequisites for participation

The students must be admitted to the Master's Degree Programme in Economics and Business Administration (International Business Economics). This requires a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Business Administration (all programmes and combinations) or other degree where commensurate qualifications are obtained.

Module Activities

This is a project writing module.

The semester project offers the students the opportunity to gain deeper insight into international business related issues of the students' own interest. The semester project follows on the work conducted in the previous modules, and therefore the students can decide to go into depth with one topic from the curriculum in module 1 and 2. Students decide on issues to be addressed in the projects, with inspiration from lectures and reading materials during the semester. It is expected that the student individually search for relevant literature that go beyond the curriculum from module 1 and 2.

Literature

Students are required to organize group work and independently seek out relevant literature. The students are allowed to utilize the knowledge and literature from the previous modules, however it is required that they go beyond the curriculum from module 1 and 2. In relation to the exam, the curriculum will be the literature utilized in relation to the project.

Important dates and student related activities are listed below:

Time Line for Semester Project Writing:

Group formation to be uploaded to moodle by: 23/11 2018 at 16.00

Submission of problem formulation - to be uploaded to moodle by: 5/12 2018 at 15.00

Allocation of supervisors: 6/12-2018

First meeting with supervisors: 10/12-2018

Joint group project seminar (with students & supervisors) - IBE: 17/12-2018

Submission of semester project: 6/1 2019 at 10.00

Examinations: 28/1+29/1+30/1 2019

Examination

An external oral group examination based on the project work of max 50 pages per group (*Including Tables and Figures. Excluding References, Appendices, Front Page, Table of Contents*) as well as the syllabi for the course in Research Methodology. A page is defined as 2400 characters including the spaces between words.

As a prerequisite to attending the examination in module 3, students are required to have the following activities approved:

- attendance in scheduled study trips/company visits/seminars/workshops when and if such activities are scheduled
- attendance in the AAU Career seminars/workshops in September
- attendance in the Joint Group Project Seminar in December

These mandatory activities are not part of the examinations in module 3, but requirements for students to be allowed to sit their examination in module 3. Students must provide a doctor's note, if they are not able to take part in these mandatory activities in order to be eligible to sit the examination in module 3.

The oral examination will be conducted on a group basis with an examiner and an external examiner.

Its duration will vary with the number of students in each group. 30 minutes are allotted per student. However, no more than 2 ½ hours will be allotted in total per group meaning that the total examination time for a group of 6 or above also will be 2 ½ hours.

Students are expected to make a presentation of max 9 minutes per student covering central issues that she/he would like to emphasise.

Duration of presentations

- 1 student = max 9 minutes
- 2 students = max 18 minutes
- 3 students = max 27 minutes
- 4 students = max 36 minutes
- 5 students = max 45 minutes
- 6-7 students = max 54 minutes

Assessment:

Assessment is made on the basis of the formulated learning objectives and evaluation criteria described in the curriculum.

Although the project will not be graded separately, the oral examinations will take their point of reference in the project in addition to presentations made by the students during the oral examinations.

Grading according to the Danish 7-point grading scale. The grade has a weight of 10/120.

Visit this link for details on grading:

http://www.en.fak.samf.aau.dk/digitalAssets/108/108739_7trinsskala-uk.pdf

Students will receive their individual grades while the entire group is present in the examination room. However, according to the regulations, students have the right to receive their grades without the rest of the group being present. Students who would like to receive their grades without their fellow group members being present in the examination room, must therefore inform the examiner of this request immediately prior to the commencement of the examination.

The maximum number of students allowed in a group is 7.

Optimal group size is a group of 5 students.

Information on how to conduct group exams can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/2z-K2sA-VpU>