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American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Business
BUSN490: Business Administration Independent Study
Credit Hours: 3
Length of Course: 8 Weeks
Prerequisite(s): None

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Course Description (Catalog)

An opportunity for Business Administration students to pursue an independent research project or examine a specific area of Business Administration under the mentorship of a single professor. Course is open to upper division students only. Participation is at the discretion of the faculty member. This course will require students to produce a major research paper of approximately 25-30 pages; there will be no examination. Students will submit a proposal prior to the start of the project, an annotated bibliography, and a final paper at week 8, all of which will count toward the final grade. To be eligible for an independent study, students must be enrolled in a bachelors degree program, must have completed 24 hours at APUS toward their current degree program, and should have already contacted a professor and gained approval for the independent study topic. Once these conditions are met the student should contact his/her student advisor. Once the course is open the student must complete an official online registration for the course.

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Course Scope

This course will explore the field of Business Administration, including the appropriate empirical research to support the position of the research paper. The student should also gain an insight into the terms that apply to various aspects of business administration as they pertain to the specified topics of research.

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Students are encouraged to choose topics which directly relate to their jobs or which relate to areas which are of interest to them in their future careers.

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Course Objectives

A successful student will fulfill the following learning objectives:

1. Identify a key aspect of the business administration field appropriate for in-depth research.
2. Prepare an annotated bibliography in accordance with APA standards.
3. Explain the basic terms identified in the research topic.
4. Explain key principles and best practices in the field of business administration related to the research topic.
5. Evaluate the research topic against key principles and best practices in the field of business administration.
6. Forecast future issues and challenges which are likely to arise in relation to the research topic and recommend actions to address these issues.
7. Create a research paper in correct APA format that includes a title page, abstract, main body of the paper, and references.

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Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. **Online assignments are due by the last day of each week** and include Discussion Board questions (accomplished in groups through a threaded discussion board), examinations and quizzes (graded electronically), and individual assignments (submitted for review by the Faculty Member). Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

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Course Materials

Book Number	Author	Book Title	Publication Info	ISBN
MC497 - 1	American Psychological Association	Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 5 th ed.	American Psychological Association	1557987912

Electronic versions may also be used including web sites.

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Evaluation Procedures

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Course Requirements: Your final grade will be based on the following course requirements and percentages:

Course Requirement	Percent
1. Research Paper Topic	1
2. Annotated Bibliography	10
3. Weekly Status Reports	4
4. First Draft of Research Paper	5
5. Final Draft of Research Paper	80
Total	100

Submit all assignments to your student folder, and make sure you select the correct assignment association.

Assignment Requirements

Research Paper Topic

You must submit your research paper topic for approval as soon as possible after the first day of class, but no later than by the end of week 1. You are encouraged to choose a topic which relates directly to your job or which relates to an area of information technology management which will be of interest to you in your future career.

Annotated Bibliography

You must submit an annotated bibliography by the end of week 2. Your bibliography must include at least 7 primary sources (as a minimum) and least 8-10 additional web based resources, periodicals, interviews, or other resources. Your bibliography must be in APA citation style. Include a short paragraph after each reference, describing the content of the reference and how it pertains to the paper you are writing.

Weekly Status Reports

You must submit four weekly status reports. Your status report should be at least ½ to 1 page long and should include details of the work you have completed towards your final paper. You may include additional information, such as your thesis statement, an outline of your paper, several paragraphs or pages from your paper, etc., for review, if you would like feedback on your paper as it is in progress.

First Draft of Research Paper

You must submit the first draft of your research paper by the end of week 7. To receive credit for this assignment, you must submit a complete paper, not a partially written paper. Points will be deducted for short or incomplete papers. Your first draft will not be graded by the rubric, but helpful feedback will be provided to indicate where you are falling short. You may correct any deficiencies before resubmitting your final draft at the end of the course.

Final Draft of Research Paper

The final draft of your research paper is due at the end of week 8. It must be 25-30 pages (double-spaced), not including title page, abstract, references, appendices, figures or tables. Your research paper must include at least 7 primary sources (as a minimum) and least 8-10 additional web based resources, periodicals, interviews, or other resources. In addition to the required number of pages for the assignment, you must also include a title page, an abstract, and a reference page (bibliography), written in **APA style**.

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Grading Scale

Please see the [student handbook](#) to reference the [University's grading scale](#).

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Course Outline

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Learning Objective(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Assignment(s)</u>
1	Topic Selection	1	APA Manual and References	Research Paper Topic
2	Bibliography	2	APA Manual and References	Annotated Bibliography
3	Research/Writing	3, 4, 5, 6	APA Manual and References	Status Report #1
4	Research/Writing	3, 4, 5, 6	APA Manual and References	Status Report #2
5	Research/Writing	3, 4, 5, 6	APA Manual and References	Status Report #3
6	Research/Writing	3, 4, 5, 6	APA Manual and References	Status Report #4
7	Writing/Editing	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	APA Manual and References	First Submission of Paper
8	Writing/Editing	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	APA Manual and References	Final Submission of Paper

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Policies

Please see the [student handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

WRITING EXPECTATIONS

All written submissions should be submitted in a font and page set-up that is readable and neat. It is recommended that students try to adhere to a consistent format, which is described below.

- Typewritten in double-spaced format with a readable style and font and submitted inside the electronic classroom (unless classroom access is not possible and other arrangements have been approved by the professor).

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- Arial 11 or 12-point font or Times New Roman styles.
- Page margins Top, Bottom, Left Side and Right Side = 1 inch, with reasonable accommodation being made for special situations and online submission variances.

CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLE

Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow APA guidelines. This course will require students to use the citation and reference style established by the American Psychological Association (APA), in which case students should follow the guidelines set forth in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). (2001). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade. Assignments submitted late without a prearranged extension will be subject to a 10% late penalty. **No late assignments will be accepted after the last day of the course.**

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Academic Services

ONLINE LIBRARY RESEARCH CENTER & LEARNING RESOURCES

The Online Library Resource Center is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Center provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to orc@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Turnitin.com:** Turnitin.com is a tool to improve student research skills that also detect plagiarism. Turnitin.com provides resources on developing topics and assignments that encourage and guide students in producing papers that are intellectually honest, original in thought, and clear in expression. This tool helps ensure a culture of adherence to the University's standards for intellectual honesty. Turnitin.com also reviews students' papers for matches with Internet materials and with thousands of student papers in its database, and returns an Originality Report to instructors and/or students.
- **Smarthinking:** Students have access to 10 free hours of tutoring service per year through [Smarthinking](#). Tutoring is available in the following subjects: math (basic math through advanced calculus), science (biology, chemistry, and physics), accounting, statistics, economics, Spanish, writing, grammar, and more. Additional information is located in the Online Research

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Center. From the ORC home page, click on either the “Writing Center” or “Tutoring Center” and then click “Smarthinking.” All login information is available.

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Appendix A – Grading Rubric

All written assignments will be assessed according to this rubric. Note that a score of 0 may be assigned in any category where your work does not meet the criteria for the beginning level.

APUS Assignment Rubric Undergraduate Level 300-400	EXEMPLARY LEVEL 4	ACCOMPLISHED LEVEL 3	DEVELOPING LEVEL 2	BEGINNING LEVEL 1	TOTAL POINTS
FOCUS/THESIS	Student exhibits a defined and clear understanding of the assignment. Thesis is clearly defined and well constructed to help guide the reader throughout the assignment. Student builds upon the thesis of the assignment with well-documented and exceptional supporting facts, figures, and/or statements.	Establishes a good comprehension of topic and in the building of the thesis. Student demonstrates an effective presentation of thesis, with most support statements helping to support the key focus of assignment.	Student exhibits a basic understanding of the intended assignment, but the thesis is not fully supported throughout the assignment. While thesis helps to guide the development of the assignment, the reader may have some difficulty in seeing linkages between thoughts. While student has included a few supporting facts and statements, this has limited the quality of the assignment.	Exhibits a limited understanding of the assignment. Reader is unable to follow the logic used for the thesis and development of key themes. Introduction of thesis is not clearly evident, and reader must look deeper to discover the focus of the writer. Student's writing is weak in the inclusion of supporting facts or statements.	
CONTENT/SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE	Student demonstrates proficient command of the subject matter in the assignment. Assignment shows an impressive level of depth of student's ability to relate course content to practical examples and applications. Student provides comprehensive analysis of details, facts, and concepts in a logical sequence.	Student exhibits above average usage of subject matter in assignment. Student provides above average ability in relating course content in examples given. Details and facts presented provide an adequate presentation of student's current level of subject matter knowledge.	The assignment reveals that the student has a general, fundamental understanding of the course material. Whereas, there are areas of some concerning in the linkages provided between facts and supporting statements. Student generally explains concepts, but only meets the minimum requirements in this area.	Student tries to explain some concepts, but overlooks critical details. Assignment appears vague or incomplete in various segments. Student presents concepts in isolation, and does not perceive to have a logical sequencing of ideas.	
CRITICAL THINKING	Student demonstrates a	Student exhibits a good	Student takes a common,	Student demonstrates	

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SKILLS	higher-level of critical thinking necessary for 300-400 level work. Learner provides a strategic approach in presenting examples of problem solving or critical thinking, while drawing logical conclusions which are not immediately obvious. Student provides well-supported ideas and reflection with a variety of current and/or world views in the assignment. Student presents a genuine intellectual development of ideas throughout assignment.	command of critical thinking skills in the presentation of material and supporting statements. Assignment demonstrates the student's above average use of relating concepts by using a variety of factors. Overall, student provides adequate conclusions, with 2 or fewer errors.	conventional approach in guiding the reader through various linkages and connections presented in assignment. However, student presents a limited perspective on key concepts throughout assignment. Student appears to have problems applying information in a problem-solving manner.	beginning understanding of key concepts, but overlooks critical details. Learner is unable to apply information in a problem-solving fashion. Student presents confusing statements and facts in assignment. No evidence or little semblance of critical thinking skills.	
ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS/FORMAT	Student thoroughly understands and excels in explaining all major points. An original, unique, and/or imaginative approach to overall ideas, concepts, and findings is presented. Overall format of assignment includes an appropriate introduction (or abstract), well-developed paragraphs, and conclusion. Finished assignment demonstrates student's ability to plan and organize research in a logical sequence. Student uses at least of 5-7 references in assignment.	Student explains the majority of points and concepts in the assignment. Learner demonstrates a good skill level in formatting and organizing material in assignment. Student presents an above average level of preparedness, with a few formatting errors. Assignment contains less than 5 resources.	Learner applies some points and concepts incorrectly. Student uses a variety of formatting styles, with some inconsistencies throughout the paper. Assignment does not have a continuous pattern of logical sequencing. Student uses less than 3 sources or references.	Assignment reveals formatting errors and a lack of organization. Student presents an incomplete attempt to provide linkages or explanation of key terms. The lack of appropriate references or source materials demonstrates the student's need for additional help or training in this area. Student needs to review and revise the assignment.	
WRITING CONVENTIONS (GRAMMAR &	Student demonstrates an excellent command of grammar, as well as presents	Student provides an effective display of good writing and grammar. Assignment	Assignment reflects basic writing and grammar, but more than 5 errors. Key	Topics, concepts, and ideas are not coherently discussed or expressed in	

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MECHANICS)	research in a clear and concise writing style. Presents a thorough, extensive understanding of word usage. Student excels in the selection and development of a well-planned research assignment. Assignment is error-free and reflects student's ability to prepare a high-quality academic assignment.	reflects student's ability to select appropriate word usage and present an above average presentation of a given topic or issue. Assignment appears to be well written with no more than 3-5 errors. Student provides a final written product that covers the above-minimal requirements.	terms and concepts are somewhat vague and not completely explained by student. Student uses a basic vocabulary in assignment. Student's writing ability is average, but demonstrates a basic understanding of the subject matter.	assignments. Student's writing style is weak and needs improvement, along with numerous proofreading errors. Assignment lacks clarity, consistency, and correctness. Student needs to review and revise assignment.	
USE OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY/ APPLICATIONS	Student provides a high-caliber, formatted assignment. Learner exhibits excellent use of computer technology in the development of assignment. Quality and appropriateness of stated references demonstrate the student's ability to use technology to conduct applicable research. Given assignment includes appropriate word processing, spreadsheet and/or other computer applications as part of the final product.	Assignment presents an above-average use of formatting skills, with less than 3 errors. Students has a good command of computer applications to format information and/or figures in an appropriate format. Student uses at least two types of computer applications to produce a quality assignment.	Student demonstrates a basic knowledge of computer applications. Appearance of final assignment demonstrates the student's limited ability to format and present data. Resources used in assignment are limited. Student may need to obtain further help in the use of computer applications and Internet research.	Student needs to develop better formatting skills. The student may need to take additional training or obtain help from the Educator Help Desk while preparing an assignment. Research and resources presented in the assignment are limited. Student needs to expand research scope. The number of formatting errors is not acceptable.	
TOTAL POINTS					

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