

**MAN 710: Research Seminar Public & Nonprofit Management**

*Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management*

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## 1 Course Description

This course will introduce students to different approaches relevant to planning and implementing research in the fields of public and nonprofit management. Based on a process model for empirical research, students will study how to conduct qualitative and quantitative investigations, and to read and write scientific papers. In addition, they will have to apply this knowledge in an empirical research project. At the end of this course, students will have the skills for doing academic work on their own, and thus, to write a qualitative- and quantitative-empirical master thesis at the *Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management*.

## 2 Learning Goals

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

- describe given research gaps, especially related to own research projects,
- define research goals and research questions,
- search, interpret, evaluate and select academic literature,
- select appropriate research methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) for various research questions,
- write a qualitative and/or quantitative research paper.

In this seminar, the key competence of academic, scientific research shall be acquired.

## 3 Prerequisites

To attend this course, students must have no formal prerequisites.

## 4 Organizational Matters

Registration Please write an email to Maren Rottler ([maren.rottler@uni-mannheim.de](mailto:maren.rottler@uni-mannheim.de)) until **22 February 2021, noon**, and indicate your **preference for the applied research method: qualitative or quantitative**.

Students studying in the **M.Sc. Program Culture and Business** have to personally hand in the form "Antrag auf Übertragung (Export) der Masterarbeitsbetreuung", signed by Mr. Hempen until **22 February 2020**. Without this form, the registration cannot be processed.

You will receive an acceptance email by 24 February 2021.

Dates Please get the details from the timetable at the end of the syllabus.

Examination Seminar paper – part 1 (due 26 March 2021, noon, via ILIAS)  
Seminar paper – part 2 (due: 28 May 2021, noon, via ILIAS)

Course materials ILIAS

Credits 6 ECTS (135 hours á 60 minutes)

- Attendance in the seminar = approx. 1 ECTS (22.5 hours)
- Preparation for the seminar = approx. 1 ECTS (22.5 hours)
- Seminar paper (part 1 and 2) = approx. 4 ECTS (90 hours)

## 5 Contact Details

Lecturer Maren Rottler  
E-Mail [maren.rottler@uni-mannheim.de](mailto:maren.rottler@uni-mannheim.de)  
Office hours Please make an appointment via email

## 6 Grading

Seminar paper (part 1)	25%
Seminar paper (part 2)	75%
Total	100%

## 7 Course Requirements

### 7.1 General requirements

This course is highly interactive and thus based on critical conversations among students. Discussions will be based on conceptual and empirical academic papers and methods literature. We will critically reflect on research designs and methods and have workshops in which the theoretical knowledge will be applied. Course participants – apart from being interested in the subject per se – should be highly motivated to conduct empirical research. A strong commitment to active participation in discussions in the team sessions is expected. Even though knowledge of empirical research methods will help to accomplish this seminar, it is not required.

To successfully pass the seminar, students have to attend the sessions as scheduled in the syllabus and the “Portal2”. They are allowed to miss two blocks of 90 minutes each. Please indicate your absence via email. Students must not miss the sessions in which the results of their work will be discussed as scheduled.

### 7.2 Seminar topic

In this year’s research seminar, students will jointly work on a timely research project conducted at the Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management. The research project examines how the Covid-19 pandemic impacts organizations (nonprofit organizations, social enterprises and/or small businesses) who turn to the online crowd seeking funds for their mission and their organizational survival.

To apply multiple viewpoints and address different research gaps, both qualitative and quantitative research designs will be applied. In particular, students will have to work on one particular research

topic following the overarching research question: *How does the Covid-19 pandemic affect the application of crowdfunding /the role of crowdfunding for nonprofit organizations, social businesses, and/or small businesses?*

A selection of research topics to choose from will be provided at the beginning of the seminar. Own topics can be developed as well.

For example:

What organizations turn to reward-based crowdfunding in a time of crisis and why?

Which campaigns are most successful and why?

Are there particular “pandemic” narratives in text and video emerging? What types of pandemic conform rewards and exchanges are offered by organizations to win over potential supporters?

How does the overall competition for funds change on one particular reward-based crowdfunding platform?

What happens after a campaign was successful or unsuccessful? How does the crowdfunding campaign outcome affect the organization, its financial health, strategic decisions and overall performance?

Current data from a reward-based crowdfunding platform will be provided to students. It covers the campaign characteristics (e.g. funding goal, campaign description, number of rewards) and performance data (e.g. funds received, number of supporters). Additional information relevant for the selected research question can be manually extracted by students. Furthermore, contact data to conduct interviews is also available. Students can choose from different levels of analysis: It is possible to investigate the activities of one reward-based crowdfunding platform, or focus and compare projects based on categories ranging from sustainability, innovation and technology, social welfare or health to sports and arts. Also, a single organization can be selected and analyzed in a single case study, or few organizations in form of a comparative case study.

### 7.3 Examination Requirements

Students will conduct their own research endeavor consisting of either a quantitative or a qualitative empirical seminar paper. The data for the quantitative empirical seminar papers will be provided as raw file. Students will collect the data for the qualitative empirical seminar papers through telephone interviews. Each student will conduct his or her own data analysis.

*Seminar paper (part 1):* Students will write a short proposal consisting of an introduction, theoretical background, and methods to be applied (parts 1–3 of an academic paper). Students have to follow the guidelines for academic work, as published on the website of the *Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management*. Evaluation criteria are (1) formal aspects, (2) content, (3) scientific language, and (4) reasoning. The proposal grade is 25% of the final grade. The proposal is due on March, 26<sup>th</sup> 2021, noon (per upload in the respective ILIAS-folder). The length of the proposal should be between 5 pages (including figures and tables, excluding title page, references). Students will get feedback on their proposal by the lecturer. They are expected to use this feedback to improve their final seminar paper (part 2).

*Seminar paper (part 2):* Based on the written proposal, students have to write-up the results of their empirical work (either quantitative or qualitative) in a comprehensive seminar paper (15 pages including figures and tables, excluding title page, references, appendices). For this purpose, they have to include the feedback provided on the proposal, refine the methodology section, and add sections on their data analysis, findings, discussion and conclusion. Evaluation criteria are the same as those for seminar paper part 1. Guidelines for scientific work as published on the website of the *Chair for Public and Nonprofit Management*, must be followed. Deadline for the final paper is May, 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, noon (one digital copy).

## 8 References

### 8.1 Seminar topic

- Dai, H., & Zhang, D. J. (2019). Prosocial Goal Pursuit in Crowdfunding: Evidence from Kickstarter. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(3), 498–517. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243718821697>
- Hitt, M. A., Arregle, J.-L., & Holmes, R. M. (2020). Strategic Management Theory in a Post - Pandemic and Non - Ergodic World. *Journal of Management Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12646>
- Kim, M., & Mason, D. P. (2020). Are You Ready: Financial Management, Operating Reserves, and the Immediate Impact of COVID-19 on Nonprofits. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 49(6), 1191–1209. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764020964584>
- Moleskis, M., Alegre, I., & Canela, M. A. (2019). Crowdfunding Entrepreneurial or Humanitarian Needs? The Influence of Signals and Biases on Decisions. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 48(3), 552–571. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764018802367>
- Mollick, E. (2014). The dynamics of crowdfunding: An exploratory study. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 29(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2013.06.005>
- Stanko, M. A., & Henard, D. H. (2017). Toward a better understanding of crowdfunding, openness and the consequences for innovation. *Research Policy*, 46(4), 784–798. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2017.02.003>

### 8.2 Quantitative research methods

- Hair, J. F. (Hrsg.). (2014). *Multivariate data analysis*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2001). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Van Thiel, S. (2014). *Research methods in public administration and public management: An introduction*. Routledge.

### 8.3 Qualitative research methods

- Eriksson, P., & Kovalainen, A. (2008). *Qualitative Methods in Business Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (Hrsg.). (2014). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5. ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

## 9. Timetable

Date	Time	Format	Session type	Content
Mo, 01.03.2021	B4	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session I	Admin, getting to know each other, getting to know research focus, presenting research topics
Fr, 05.03.2021	noon	Theme preferences, ILIAS	Submission	
Mo, 08.03.2021	B4, B5	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session II	Research gaps, literature streams and theory, research questions
Mo, 08.03.2021 – Mo, 22.03.2021		Asynchronous	Input (Self-study)	Theory, Hypothesis development Overview; qualitative – quantitative; single case studies Data collection
ongoing		Asynchronous	Work on own topic	Developing theoretical-conceptual framework
Mo, 22.03.2021	B4, B5	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session II	Presenting outline of own topic, peer feedback Getting into data collection
Fr, 26.03.2021	noon	examination portfolio, ILIAS	Submission	Seminar paper part 1
Mo, 12.04.2021	B1, B2, B4, B5	Zoom (individual links)	Individual feedback rounds on part one of seminar work	
ongoing		Asynchronous	Work on own topic	Individual data collection
Mo, 19.04.2021	B4, B5	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session III	Presenting status quo of data collection
Mo, 19.04.2021 – Mo, 03.05.2021		Asynchronous	Input (Self-study)	Data preparation, Data analysis (qualitative – quantitative)
ongoing		Asynchronous	Work on own topic	Individual data preparation and analysis
Mo, 03.05.2021	B4, B5	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session IV	Presenting status quo of data analysis Discussion of open questions in data analysis process
Mo, 03.05.2021 – Mo, 10.05.2021		Asynchronous	Input (Self-study)	,Writing-Up‘
Mo, 10.05.2021	B4, B5	Synchronous (Zoom)	Team session V	Getting started on writing results down Closing seminar
ongoing		Asynchronous	Work on own topic	Finalizing analysis and ,Writing-Up‘ of the seminar paper
Fr, 28.05.2021	noon	examination portfolio, ILIAS	Submission	Seminar paper