SYLLABUS
Research methods, ethics and academic integrity
University year 2025-2026

1. Information regarding the programme

1.1. Higher education institution	Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca
1.2. Faculty	Faculty of Political, Administrative, and Communication Sciences
1.3. Department	Department of Public Administration and Management
1.4. Field of study	Administrative Sciences
1.5. Study cycle	Doctorate
1.6. Study programme/Qualification	Doctoral School of Administration and Public Policy
1.7. Form of education	Full-time education

2. Information regarding the discipline

2.1. Name of the discipline	Research methods, ethics and academic integrity		Discipline code: SCDAPP1		
2.2. Course coordinator		Prof. univ. dr. Cherecheş Răzvan Mircea			
2.3. Seminar coordinator		Prof. univ. dr. Cherecheş Răzvan Mircea			
2.4 Year of study	I	2.5 Semester	I	2.6. Type of evaluation C	2.7 Discipline regime DS

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activities)

3.1 Număr de ore pe săptămână	3	Of which: 3.2 curs	2	3.3 seminar/laboratory	1
3.1 Hours per week	42	Of which: 3.5 curs	28	3.6 seminar/laboratory	14
3.4 Total hours in the curriculum					
Allocation of study time:					175
Study supported by textbooks, other course materials, recommended bibliography and personal student notes					64
Additional learning activities in the library, on specialized online platforms and in the field					63
Preparation of seminars / laboratory classes, topics, papers, portfolios and essays					48
Tutoring					5
Examinations					0

Other activities: -	
3.7 Total individual study hours	161
3.8 Total hours per semester	175
3.9 Number of ECTS credits	7

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

4.1. curriculum	Not applicable
4.2. competencies	Not applicable

5. Conditions (if necessary)

5.1. for the course	Not applicable
5.2. for the seminar /lab activities	Not applicable

Facultatea de Științe Politice,
Administrative și ale Comunicării
Str. Traian Moșoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poștal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

6. Competencies

6.1 Specific competencies acquired

Key competencies	• Designing and implementing social research • Collecting and managing data • Critically analyzing and interpreting data • Presenting and communicating research findings • Using technology in research and communication
Transversal competencies	• Use of social research tools • Ability to design and implement a research project • Ability to collect data • Ability to analyze and interpret data
Professional/essential competencies	• Development of critical thinking • Public speaking and presentation skills • Analysis and synthesis • Data presentation • Use of technology

6.2 Learning outcomes

Knowledge	Upon completion of the course, doctoral students will be able to: • explain the epistemological and methodological foundations of research in social and administrative sciences; • describe and differentiate between the main types of research design (exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, experimental); • analyze the relationship between theory, hypotheses, concepts, variables, and measurement methods; • explain the principles and stages of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis; • interpret the concepts of validity, reliability, and methodological rigor; • critically analyze the ethical implications of social research, including the protection of human subjects and data; • understand the role of digital technologies and artificial intelligence-based tools in supporting the research process (documentation, analysis, interpretation).

Facultatea de Științe Politice,
Administrative și ale Comunicării
Str. Traian Moșoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poștal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

Skills	Upon completion of the course, doctoral students will be able to: • formulate relevant research questions and coherent hypotheses appropriate to the purpose and context of the study; • design a rigorous research plan tailored to the topic and doctoral level; • select and apply appropriate data collection methods (qualitative and quantitative); • analyze and interpret empirical data using computer and statistical tools; • critically use digital tools and AI-based applications to support data analysis and scientific documentation; • critically evaluate their own research and published studies from a methodological quality perspective; • synthesize and communicate research results in a rigorous academic form.
Responsibility and autonomy:	Upon completion of the course, doctoral students will be able to: • exercise independent methodological judgment in choosing and justifying research design; • take responsibility for the accuracy, transparency, and reproducibility of the research process; • responsibly integrate the use of artificial intelligence tools, respecting the principles of research ethics and academic integrity; • clearly distinguish their own contribution from that generated or assisted by digital tools and AI; • anticipate and manage the ethical risks associated with the use of data, algorithms, and emerging technologies; • self-regulate the research process through critical reflection on methodological limitations; • base research decisions that support the scientific quality of the doctoral thesis.

7. Objectives of the discipline

7.1 General objective of the discipline	This course is a continuation of the course of social research methods or similar that has been taken by students at the undergraduate and / or master's level and will cover four topics: the basics of social sciences, research design, data collection, and data analysis. In discussing each topic, we will also consider the ethical implications of social research. Social research is a set of practical knowledge and skills. Therefore, our approach will be a practical one from the very beginning.
7.2 Specific objective of the discipline	By the end of the semester, students should: 1. Formulate good research questions and design appropriate research. 2. Collect your own data using a variety of methods. 3. Analyze both qualitative and quantitative data using a computer 4. Critically evaluate one's own research and that of other scientists.

Facultatea de Științe Politice,
Administrative și ale Comunicării
Str. Traian Moșoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poștal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

8. Content

8.1 Course	Teaching methods	Remarks
1. Introduction	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Why social research methods? What is social science? What is a research design?
2. Generation of theories and hypotheses, identification and selection of cases	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Hypotheses Theory How do we choose a research topic?
3. Conceptualization and measurement	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Variables Concepts and measurement Measurement levels Units of analysis Validity and fidelity
4. Data collection	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Why do we need data? Data collection methods Sampling
5. Experiments and experimental thinking	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Types of experiments Internal and external validity Threats to validity Validity check
6. Qualitative methods	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Qualitative vs. quantitative The unstructured interview and semistructured Focus group Natural observation
7. Observing behavior	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Structural observation
8. Document analysis	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Interpretive analysis Discourse analysis Content analysis
9. Documentation	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Data sources Data quality
10. Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Encode Summarization Generating conclusions Testing theories Classification and reduction of data
11-14. Ethics of scientific research	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Protection of human subjects Informed consent Data protection

References:
Acharyya, R. & Bhattacharya, N. (eds.), 2020. Research Methodology for Social Sciences. (Routledge).
Babbie, Earl, Practica cercetării sociale, Iași: Polirom, 2010.
Chelcea, Septimiu, Metodologia cercetării sociologice. Metode cantitative și calitative, București: Editura Economică, 2001.

Facultatea de Ştiinţe Politice,
Administrative şi ale Comunicării
Str. Traian Moşoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poştal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

King, Ronald F., Strategia cercetării, Iaşi: Polirom, 2005.
Jiha, A. Social Research Methodology. (Routledge), 2024.
Rotariu, Traian (coordonator), Gabriel Bădescu, Irina Culic, Elemer Mezei, Cornelia Mureşan, Metode statistice aplicate în ştiinţele sociale, Iaşi: Polirom, 2000.
Flick, U., 2025. Introducing Research Methodology: Thinking Your Way Through Your Research Project. 4th edition. SAGE Publications.
Kumar, R., 2021/2024. Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners. (Textbook).
Şandor, Sorin Dan, Metode de cercetare in stiintele sociale, Bucureşti: Tritonic, 2013.
Bairagi, V & Munot, M.V., Research Methodology: A Practical and Scientific Approach, 2024/2025.
van Thiel, Sandra, Research Methods in Public Administration and Public Management : An Introduction, Routledge, 2014.

8.2 Seminar / laboratory	Teaching methods	Remarks
1. Introduction	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Why social research methods? What is social science? What is a research design?
2. Generation of theories and hypotheses, identification and selection of cases	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Hypotheses Theory How do we choose a research topic?
3. Conceptualization and measurement	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Variables Concepts and measurement Measurement levels Units of analysis Validity and fidelity
4. Data collection	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Why do we need data? Data collection methods Sampling
5. Experiments and experimental thinking	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Types of experiments Internal and external validity Threats to validity Validity check
6. Qualitative methods	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Qualitative vs. quantitative The unstructured interview and semistructured Focus group Natural observation
7. Observing behavior	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Structural observation
8. Document analysis	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Interpretive analysis Discourse analysis Content analysis

Facultatea de Ştiinţe Politice,
Administrative şi ale Comunicării
Str. Traian Moşoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poştal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

9. Documentation	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Data sources Data quality
10. Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Encode Summarization Generating conclusions Testing theories Classification and reduction of data
11-14. Ethics of scientific research	Presentation, discussion, case studies, exercises	Protection of human subjects Informed consent Data protection

References:
Acharyya, R. & Bhattacharya, N. (eds.), 2020. Research Methodology for Social Sciences. (Routledge).
Babbie, Earl, Practica cercetării sociale, Iaşi: Polirom, 2010.
Chelcea, Septimiu, Metodologia cercetării sociologice. Metode cantitative şi calitative, Bucureşti: Editura Economică, 2001.
King, Ronald F., Strategia cercetării, Iaşi: Polirom, 2005.
Jiha, A. Social Research Methodology. (Routledge), 2024.
Rotariu, Traian (coordonator), Gabriel Bădescu, Irina Culic, Elemer Mezei, Cornelia Mureşan, Metode statistice aplicate în ştiinţele sociale, Iaşi: Polirom, 2000.
Flick, U., 2025. Introducing Research Methodology: Thinking Your Way Through Your Research Project. 4th edition. SAGE Publications.
Kumar, R., 2021/2024. Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners. (Textbook).
Şandor, Sorin Dan, Metode de cercetare in stiintele sociale, Bucureşti: Tritonic, 2013.
Bairagi, V & Munot, M.V., Research Methodology: A Practical and Scientific Approach, 2024/2025.

9. Corroborating the content of the discipline with the expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers within the field of the program

The course of research methods is adequate to the requirements related to the development of the research skills required of doctoral students, skills that will be used for the elaboration of the doctoral thesis.

10. Evaluation

Activity type	10.1 Evaluation criteria	10.2 Evaluation methods	10.3 Percentage of final grade
10.4 Course	Final project consisting in the realization of a mini-research related to the proposal presented at the admission to the doctoral school, with emphasis on the design of the research	The written paper is evaluated on the basis of a scale; students must also make the oral presentation of the paper, in the presentation being pointed out aspects related to the quality of the presentation	70%

**Facultatea de Ştiinţe Politice,
Administrative şi ale Comunicării**
Str. Traian Moşoiu nr. 71
Cluj-Napoca, cod poştal RO 400132
Tel.: 0264 43-15-05
Fax: 0264 40-60-54
Email: contact@fspac.ro
Site: fspac.ubbcluj.ro

10.5 Seminar/ laboratory	Annotated and annotated portfolio of articles, with emphasis on discussing the methodological aspects that can be taken over in one's own research	There is a scale based on which the portfolio of articles is evaluated, mainly the extent to which the identified articles comply with the requirements of the teacher - adequacy to their own research topic, mixed methodology, diverse geographical coverage of cases, etc.	30%
10.6 Minimum standard of performance			
The student must obtain the "promoted" qualificative			

11. Labels ODD (Sustainable Development Goals)

Date:
October 2025

Signature of course coordinator

Prof. univ. dr. Chereches Răzvan

Mircea

Signature of course coordinator

Prof. univ. dr. Chereches Răzvan

Mircea