

Course Outline

Course number	RBC225
Course title	Advanced Research Methods
Credit points	3 ECTS (2 CP)
Total hours	80
Lecture hours	30
Course level	Bachelor
Prerequisites	None

COURSE RESPONSIBLE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Laura Ratniece (Laura.Ratniece@rgsl.edu.lv)	PhD	Assistant professor

COURSE TEACHERS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Laura Ratniece	PhD	Assistant professor
Marika Laizāne - Jurkāne	Dr.sc.pol.	Visiting lecturer
Inga Jēkabsone	Dr.sc.admin.	Visiting lecturer

COURSE ABSTRACT

The advanced research methods course supplements the content of the research methods course (taken during the Y1). This course provides the relevant theoretical knowledge and also practical elements that will aid the students in conducting independent research. One of the main aims of the course is to prepare students for writing a bachelor thesis.

As the lectures and seminars are combined, there will be practical exercises at each class. Students are expected to be active.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course has the following main objectives:

Knowledge:

1. Students have revised the necessary theoretical knowledge for conducting a doctrinal research.
2. Students are aware of the main approaches to a legal research and understand them.
3. The students are aware of the most important issues related to a comparative research and an interdisciplinary research.
4. Students have learnt to identify key mistakes in an academic paper.

Skills:

1. Students have improved legal research skills.
2. Students have improved argumentation skills.

- Students have improved writing skills.

Competences:

- Students are able to formulate a topic of a research paper and set one or more research questions.
- Students can explain the role of an introduction and a conclusion in an academic research. Students are able to identify the most important elements of an introduction and a conclusion.
- Students are able to explain the most important elements of a doctrinal research. Students are able to conduct a doctrinal research in a level that complies with the requirements for an LLB degree.
- Students are able to justify choices related to comparative research.
- Students are able to discuss various possibilities how to integrate an interdisciplinary aspect in their research.
- Students have trained an ability to notice typical mistakes in an academic research and correct them.

GRADING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Mid-term test (in-class, closed-book).	30%
Take-home assignment.	20%
Exam (in-class, closed-book).	50%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In order to pass the course, a student has to take the mid-term test, submit the take home assignment, and pass the exam. The final grade of the course will be the average grade of the mid-term test, take home assignment, and the exam (based on the 30%-20%-50% proportion). If a student does not submit the take home assignment and / or does not participate in the mid-term test¹, the student receives a grade "0" for the respective component. If a student receives a negative grade for a mid-term test and/or take-home assignment, it is not possible to re-take these components. If a student fails the final exam or if the final grade of the course is negative, a student is entitled to take a re-exam. However, the re-exam grade will still count only 50% towards the final grade. If after the re-exam the final grade is still negative, unfortunately the student has to re-take the course.

COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	Main subjects	Planned hours
1	Practical issues related to the course and to the bachelor thesis.	4
2	Approaches to a legal research. Legal research methods.	18
2	Interdisciplinary research.	8

by heart. The questions will have an open-ended nature.

¹ If a student does not participate in the mid-term test due to justifiable reasons (including suspicions of being infected with COVID-19 due to which a student is not able to come to RGSL), a student will have a chance to do a substitute task.