



Introduction to Research Design in Accounting, Business, and Management

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Aims of the course:

The course aims to introduce Phd students to the main research design issues in the accounting, business, and management fields.

Learning outcomes and competences:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be introduced:

- to the main criteria of doing research in top-tier international journals in the field
- on how to choose a theoretical framework for their research study
- on how to choose a research method for their research study
- on how to critically assess an academic paper.

Assessment methods:

Students are required to write a critical review of an assigned paper.

Course contents and Syllabus:

Lecture 1 Andrea Melis 9 th March 2026 h. 9.00-11.00 Room CM 13 – Campus Aresu	Doing research in top-tier international journals: main criteria and qualitative characteristics
Lecture 2 Alessandro Mura 16 th March 2026 h. 09:00-11:00	How to choose a theory and research method, using an empirical quantitative approach
Lecture 3 Patrizio Monfardini 24 th March 2026 h.09:00-11:00 Room 8 – Campus Sant'ignazio	How to choose a theory and research method, using an empirical qualitative approach
Lecture 4 Alessandro Spano 31 st March 2026 h.10:00-12:00	How to choose a theory and a research method in an emerging field

Room 8 – Campus Sant’ignazio	
Lecture 5 Luigi Rombi 8th April 2026 h.10:00-12:00	How to choose a theory and research method, using an empirical quantitative approach
Lecture 6 Simone Aresu 16th April 2026 h.10:00-12:00	How to change the theory, method and findings during the review process: <i>dos and don'ts</i>
Lecture 7 Elke Loeffler 4th May 2026 h.10:00-12:00 Room 8 – Campus Sant’ignazio	Shaping research proposals in public management to maximise their likely future impact on the literature and on practice
Lecture 8 Elke Loeffler 6th May 2026 h.10:00-12:00 Room 8 – Campus Sant’ignazio	Co-producing and co-creating public value
Lecture 9 Andrea Melis 12th May 2026 h. 9:00-10:00 Room tbc – Campus Aresu	How to evaluate an academic paper: an editor's perspective.

Reading list

Lecture 1

- Melis, A. (2025). Beyond methodological monism: embracing pluralism in governance research. *Journal of Management and Governance*, 29(1), 1-9.
- Melis, A. (2026). Institutional context matters: identifying the ‘right’ setting is the first empirical choice. *Journal of Management and Governance*, 30(1), 1–10

Lecture 2

- Mura, A., Piras F., Valentincic, A. (2025). When voluntary reporting choices are credible: the case of upward revaluations in private firms. *Accounting and Business Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00014788.2025.2529296>
- Ohlson J. (2011) On successful research. *European Accounting review*, (20)1, 7-26

Lecture 3

- Aresu S., Monfardini P., (2023). Oppressed by consumerism: The emancipatory role of household accounting. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, vol. 96, doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2022.102552.

Lecture 4

- Cocco, S., Spano, A. and Bellò, B. (2025), "Information use and preferences: Insights from Italian regional politicians", *Public Money and Management*, published online 22 October 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2025.2575484>

- Racis, S., Spano, A. and Latti, G. (2025), "Process reengineering and public value creation: using process mining in courts", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 482-506. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-02-2024-0049>

- Stoney C., Asquith A., Kipper K., McNeill J., Martin J. and Spano A., (2023), Policy-making, policy-taking, and policy-shaping: Local government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 1, N. 22, pp.1-22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12585>.

Lecture 5

- Melis, A., & Rombi, L. (2021). Country-, firm-, and director-level risk and responsibilities and independent director compensation. *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 29(3), 222-251

Lecture 6

- Melis, A., Aresu, S., Cai, Y., & Kaspereit, T. (2025). Russian business leaders speaking out on the Ukraine invasion as a litmus test of a firm's ESG. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*.

Lectures 7-8

- Tony Bovaird and Elke Loeffler (eds.)(2024), *Public Management and Governance*, 4th edition, Routledge: London and New York,

- Elke Loeffler (2021), *Co-production of Public Services and Outcomes*, Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55509-2>

- Elke Loeffler and Tony Bovaird (eds.) (2021), *The Palgrave Handbook of Co-production of Public Services and Outcomes*, Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-53705-0>.

Lecture 9

Melis, A., & Nawaz, T. (2024). The impact of CEOs' personal traits on organisational performance: evidence from faith-based charity organisations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 190(4), 919-939.