

# MA Research Methods

## Gabriella Reuss, Zsolt Almási

*Time:* 12.30-14.00; 14.14-15.45

*Location:* Room 103

*Aim of the course:*

Obtaining experience in mechanisms and methods of research, from brainstorming to forming a research question, gathering information and ultimately writing up a chapter (2500 words) of your future thesis paper.

### 1. Introduction: Getting started (Research as lifestyle) – 11 February (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Bullet Journal: The Method, the System (<https://bulletjournal.com/>), Ryder Carroll: “How to declutter your mind -- keep a journal”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ym6OYelD5fA&v=1>
- Research: a dialogue with others
- Tim Harford: “How to unleash your natural creativity”  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/tim\\_harford\\_a\\_powerful\\_way\\_to\\_unleash\\_your\\_natural\\_creativity](https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_harford_a_powerful_way_to_unleash_your_natural_creativity)
- *The Craft of Research* Ch I. pp. 9-32

*Home Assignment:*

- Read *The Craft of Research* pp. 35-75. 149-184. Prepare 3 questions or observations that you can make use of as a researcher. Also points that you disagree with. Prepare a KAHOOT! game (<https://kahoot.com/>).
- Gather techniques that you have used or may use for brainstorming ideas.
- Figure out a topic for a future chapter of your Thesis Paper.

### 2. Choosing a Topic – 18 February (Gabriella Reuss)

*Discussion:*

- What is it you like and dislike in the reading?
- From topic to question to problem. What is going to be your novelty (method, approach, subject, problem)?
- Disclaimer and LitReview

*Home Assignment:*

- Gather information about technology that can be useful for research: Google Keep, Documents, Zotero, Dropbox, Microsoft OneNote etc.
- Clarify the method/approach/problem you would like to present/solve with the chapter. And make a claim.
- Introduce your method of archiving / sharing information

### 3. Archiving and Sharing information – 25 February (Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Digital technology in archiving, introducing Google Keep, Documents, Zotero, Dropbox, Microsoft: advantages and disadvantages.
- Your claim. Identification of the target audience, and the genre with which you can address your audience.

*Home Assignment:*

- Read: *The Craft of Research* pp. 75-108 Prepare 3 questions or observations that you can make use of as a researcher. Also points that you disagree with.
- Create at least 2 accounts you have found useful (Zotero, Dropbox, Google, Microsoft accounts).

### 4. 4 March – No class, at home though you have to write up a 2000-word long 0.0 version of the paper with a clear statement of intention contextualized with the LitReview.

### 5. Gathering Information (types of sources, search engines, databases, brainstorming) – 11 March (Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Putting together ways of gathering information, discussion of the 2000-word long writings.

*Home Assignment:*

- Recall the ways you make notes.
- Write a 500-word long paper about the advantages of your method of taking notes.
- Finalize bibliography in Zotero.

### 6. Taking Notes – 18 March (Gabiella Reuss)

*Discussion:*

- Papers about your methods of note taking.
- Start taking notes.
- Crime board

*Home Assignment:*

- Read *The Craft of Research* pp. 119-149. Prepare 3 questions or observations that you can make use of as a researcher. Also points that you disagree with. KAHOOT.
- Write a 300-word long paper about the problem you intend to solve, and the novelty of either the problem or the solution or the method, approach and share it with the rest of the group.
- Develop your Bibliography with Zotero

## 7. Narrowing Down the Topic – 25 March (Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Evaluating the papers and bibliographies together.

*Home Assignment:*

- Read *The Craft of Research* pp. 185-205. Prepare a checklist that you can use for evaluating a paper.
- Write up the first, scholarly draft: 3000 words and share it with the rest of the class as a Google document and respond to two other papers.

## 8. First Draft – 1 April (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Respond to the first draft of two other papers, suggest ways to clarify the structure with a checklist.
- Develop your own first draft according to the suggestions.

*Home Assignment:*

- Read *The Craft of Research* pp. 208-238. Prepare a checklist that you can use for evaluating a paper.
- Write up a second scholarly draft and share it with the rest of the class as a Google document and respond to two other papers.

## 9. Second Scholarly Draft – 8 April (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Respond to three other second drafts, suggest ways to develop it with a checklist.
- Develop your paper according to the suggestions.

*Home Assignment*

- Write up the final version of your paper and share it with the rest of the class as a Google document and respond to two other papers.
- Read: *The Craft of Research* pp 263-283. Prepare a checklist that you can use for evaluating a paper.

## 10. Final Version – 29 April (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)

*Discussion:*

- Respond to the final version of two other papers, suggest ways to clarify the structure with a checklist.
- Develop your own paper according to the suggestions.

*Home Assignment:*

- Develop the final version of paper and share it with the rest of the class as a Google document.
- Prepare a checklist for evaluating a paper and share it with the rest of the class as a Google document.

**11. Peer Evaluation of Papers – 6 May (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)**

*Discussion:* Read, comment on and evaluate two papers.

**12. Conclusion – 13 May (Gabriella Reuss – Zsolt Almási)**

*Discussion:* Evaluation of the course

***Requirements and evaluation:***

The grade for the class will be based on the Home Assignments, the in-class participation and the quality of the final version of the argumentative, research paper. Missing four or more classes or plagiarism results in failing the entire course.

***Reading List:***

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Reserach*. 2nd ed. Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2003.