

Credibility and Rigor in Management Research



SYLLABUS

VU Amsterdam Summer School

20-24 July 2026

Any general questions for the Summer School support team? Contact amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl.



Course Details

Title	Credibility and Rigor in Management Research
Coordinator(s)	Jost Sieweke
Other lecturers	Agnes Bäker, Rafael Wilms
Form(s) of tuition	On campus,
Approximate contact hours	30
Approximate self-study hours	26

Teaching staff (in order of appearance)

Jost Sieweke, Agnes Bäker, Rafael Wilms

Course description

The summer school offers an intensive one-week program designed to equip PhD students and early career scholars with the knowledge, tools, and mindset required to conduct credible and rigorous management research. Across five days, participants explore the roots of the credibility crisis in management research and the social sciences in general, learn how to apply open science practices, master research designs that support robust causal inference, and develop their own credibility-focused research proposals.

This summer school responds to a growing demand from both scholars and scientific journals for greater transparency and rigor in management research. Through a combination of expert lectures, interactive workshops, and group projects, participants will learn to critically assess existing studies, implement credibility-enhancing practices in their own work, and position themselves at the forefront of a movement reshaping the future of management scholarship.

Learning objectives

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

Learning objective 1: Understand and navigate the key credibility challenges facing management research and their implications for theory, practice, and publication.

Learning objective 2: Apply principles of open science, including preregistration, data and code transparency, and replication, to strengthen the trustworthiness of their own work.

Learning objective 3: Design research for robustness and causal inference, incorporating appropriate methodological choices and sensitivity analyses.

Learning objective 4: Critically evaluate research with respect to transparency, rigor, and reproducibility.

Learning objective 5: Plan and execute replication studies as a tool for theory testing and knowledge accumulation in management research.

Assignments and Assessment

Students will work on three individual assignments:

- Assignment 1 (1/3 of overall grade): Pre-registration Draft – Participants write a 1–2 page pre-registration outline for their own study (or a hypothetical replication). The pre-registration must include the research question, hypotheses, method, and planned analyses.
- Assignment 2 (1/3 of overall grade): Credibility Critique – Participants provide a critique of a published study focusing on credibility challenges, transparency, and reproducibility.
- Assignment 3 (1/3 of overall grade): Replication Concept – Participants outline a replication plan (maximum 2 pages) for an existing study focusing on rationale, design, and what credibility issues it would address.

Provisional reading list

- Antonakis, J. (2017). On doing better science: From thrill of discovery to policy implications. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 28(1), 5-21.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.01.006>
- Antonakis, J., Bendahan, S., Jacquart, P., & Lalive, R. (2010). On making causal claims: A review and recommendations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21, 1086-1120.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.10.010>
- Briker, R., & Gerpott, F. H. (2024). Publishing registered reports in management and applied psychology: Common beliefs and best practices. *Organizational Research Methods*, 27(4), 588-620.
- Byington, E. K., & Felps, W. (2017). Solutions to the credibility crisis in management science. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 16(1), 142-162.
- Obenauer, W. G. (2024). Designing, executing, and publishing replication research: Best practices for successfully taking replication ideas from conceptualization to publication. *Journal of Management Scientific Reports*, 2(1), 3-26.

- Sieweke, J., Hentschel, T., Gazdag, B. A., & Henningsen, L. (2025). The business case for demographic diversity in strategic leadership teams: A systematic and critical review of the causal evidence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 36(1), 101843.

Course Schedule

Monday, July 20

Understanding the Credibility Crisis

10:00-10:30: Welcome to the course,

10:30-12:00: Key Note “The credibility revolution – and why management is (still) vulnerable”

12:00-13:00: Lunch Break

13:00-15:00: Workshop: Questionable Research Practices: The red team challenge

15:00-15:30: Debrief

Tuesday, July 21

Transparency and Open Science

09:00-10:00: Lecture: Pre-registrations and registered reports

10:15-12:00: Workshop: Setting up a research project (pre-registration and registered reports)

12:00-13:00: Lunch Break

Wednesday, July 22

Research Design for Credible Inference

09:00-10:00: Causal inference in management research

10:15-12:30: Workshop: Quasi-Experiments in Management Research

Thursday, July 23

Replicathon

09:00-17:00: Replication Project

Friday, July 24

Credibility and Career

09:00-10:00: Building a career around credible research

10:15-12:00: Workshop: My credible research project

12:00-13:00: Lunch Break

13:00-14:30: Meet-the-Editor Panel: “Publishing credible research”

14:30-15:00: Goodbye

