Discipline: Literature Reviews (Cross-Disciplinary)

1. Language

English

2. Title

Introduction to Literature Reviews

3. Lecturers

Prof. Dr. Martin Hiebl (Johannes Kepler University Linz)

Prof. Dr. Sven Kunisch (Aarhus University)

4. Date and location

March 31 and June 9, 2027: 2 days online

July 28 and 29, 2027: 2 days in presence in Linz, Austria

5. Course description

5.1 Abstract and learning objectives

A literature review is part of any research project, including a PhD dissertation. While published literature reviews in management and organization studies (MOS) have long lacked rigor and little methodological advice has been available, the past few years have seen a swift increase in both the rigor of published reviews and methodological literature on conducting reviews.

Literature reviews span a wide range of methods, including qualitative and quantitative approaches (meta-analysis and bibliometric analysis). At the same time, various fields within MOS show some idiosyncrasies when it comes to conducting literature reviews.

This course exposes participants to the 'world of possibilities' in literature reviews in various fields. The seminar enables PhD students to understand basic purposes and approaches of different types of literature reviews and to apply them properly to their own individual research topics.

Specifically, after completion of the course, participants should be able to:

- Plan and conduct a literature review as part of a research project (i.e., a form of scientific inquiry).
- Consider a wide range of purposes for conducting a literature review (and making different knowledge contributions).
- Consider various approaches for search and selection as well as for analysis and synthesis.

- Discuss considerations for purpose-method fit as well as aspects of rigor and impact of literature reviews.
- Present their own methodology and discuss relevant methodological considerations related to their literature review as part of a research project.

Participants also prepare a first draft of a literature review based on well-grounded review methods, which could be developed into a research paper for their PhD dissertation.

5.2 Content

Two days of this course will be conducted online and two days will be spent in class.

Day I of the course is dedicated to providing the participants with input regarding the basic purposes and types of literature reviews and knowledge contributions that can be generated from them. We will also delve into the different aspects of the systematicity of literature reviews and discuss specific strategies for searching for relevant literature. We invite participants to share their own plans for literature reviews and we will assign individual feedback sessions with participants. Participants are then asked to provide a short overview of their literature reviews in a pre-defined format (max. 5 pages of text plus 2 pages of references each). Based on these short overviews, individual feedback sessions will be scheduled for Day II of the course, which will take place approximately four weeks after Day I.

The final two days of the course will be held in class. Each participant will have the chance to give a 15 min presentation of their planned literature review and receive additional feedback from participants and faculty. Prior to the in-class sessions, each participant will receive the updated overview papers of two other participants for peer review and will provide brief feedback (approx. 2 mins per reviewer) in class. The participant presentations will be grouped by the lecturers in thematic groups of 3-4 presentations. Along with these groups of presentations, the lecturers will provide additional insights into specific aspects of conducting and publishing literature reviews.

Participants must be prepared for each session. That is, they are expected to have carefully read and engaged with each reading assignment prior to class. This includes reading the essential material, which is a combination of classic articles on certain review methods and more recent articles that conduct a rigorous and impactful literature review.

5.3 Schedule (including start and end time)

Time	Place	Duration	Topics
March 31, 2027	**Online**	**09:00-17:00 (8 hours)**	1. Welcome and introduction to review research 2. Types of literature reviews and knowledge contributions (integrative, problematising and critical reviews) 3. Review process: a. Systematicity incl. search strategies b. Qualitative approaches: qualitative analysis, coding and synthesis c. Quantitative approaches: meta-analysis, bibliometric analysis 4. Discussion of participants' own literature reviews and assignment of feedback appointments
June 9, 2027	**Online**	**09:00-17:00 (8 hours)**	Individual Q&A sessions between participants and lecturers
July 28 and 29, 2027	**Linz, Austria**	**2 days: 09:00-17:00 (2 x 8 hours)**	Participants provide short presentations of their review papers in predefined format (approx. 15 mins each presentation time plus discussion) In addition to participant presentations, lecturers provide input regarding the following topics: 1. Presenting insights and publishing 2. The role of AI in literature reviews 3. Writing and publishing the research paper: Possible outlets / trends and tips and tricks

5.4 Course format

The course format is interactive so that exchanges between the lecturers and participants as well as amongst the participants can take place. The lecturers will draw on their own experiences as authors and reviewers of literature reviews as to illustrate what it means to conduct several sorts of literature reviews. Participants will be encouraged to actively participate in classroom discussions as well as share their plans for their own literature reviews, and there will be room to discuss questions and potential challenges regarding conducting and publishing literature reviews.

6. Preparation and literature

6.1 Prerequisites

Participants should have a strong interest in conducting a state-of-the-art literature review, and have ideally already identified a topic for such a review. Typically, participants will be at the beginning or in the middle of their doctoral studies.

6.2 Essential reading material

Adams, R. J., Smart, P. & Huff, A. S. (2017). Shades of grey: Guidelines for working with the grey literature in systematic reviews for management and organizational studies. International Journal of Management Reviews, 19(4), 432-454. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12102

Alvesson, M. & Sandberg, J. (2020). The problematizing review: A counterpoint to Elsbach and van Knippenberg's argument for integrative reviews. Journal of Management Studies, 57(6), 1290-1304. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12582

Breslin, D. & Gatrell, C. (2023). Theorizing through literature reviews: The miner-prospector continuum. Organizational Research Methods, 26(1), 139-167. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120943288

Cronin, M. A., & George, E. (2026). Topics worth reviewing, and why YOU should review them. Academy of Management Annals, 20(2), 451-454. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2026.0175

Hiebl, M. R. W. (2023). Sample selection in systematic literature reviews of management research. Organizational Research Methods, 26(2), 229-261. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120986851

Hoon, C. (2013). Meta-synthesis of qualitative case studies: An approach to theory building. Organizational Research Methods, 16(4), 522-556. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428113484969

Kunisch, S., Denyer, D., Bartunek, J. M., Menz, M. & Cardinal, L. B. (2023). Review research as scientific inquiry. Organizational Research Methods, 26(1), 3-45. https://doi.org/10.1177/10944281221127292

Post, C., Sarala, R., Gatrell, C. & Prescott, J. E. (2020). Advancing theory with review articles. Journal of Management Studies, 57(2), 351-376. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12549

Simsek, Z., Fox, B. & Heavey, C. (2023). Systematicity in organizational research literature reviews: A framework and assessment, 26(2), 292-321. Organizational Research Methods. https://doi.org/10.1177/10944281211008652

Steel, P., Beugelsdijk, S. & Aguinis, H. (2021). The anatomy of an award-winning meta-analysis: Recommendations for authors, reviewers, and readers of meta-analytic reviews. Journal of International Business Studies, 52(1), 23-44. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-020-00385-z

Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. British Journal of Management, 14(3), 207-222. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.00375

Zupic, I. & Čater, T. (2015). Bibliometric methods in management and organization. Organizational Research Methods, 18(3), 429-472. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428114562629

6.3 Additional reading material

Please see appendix.

6.4 To prepare

- Read essential material.
- Identify a topic and make initial methodological considerations for an own literature review.

7. Administration

7.1 Max. number of participants

20 participants.

7.2 Assignments

- Short overview paper on the participants' own literature reviews with the following sections (max. 5 pages of total text, plus 2 pages of references, plus unlimited pages of potential appendices):
    1. Motivation (1-2 pages)
    2. Core review method (including reasoning why this method is appropriate – 1 page)
    3. Core results (1-2 pages)
    4. Expected contributions to the literature (1 page)
    5. References (max. 2 pages)
    6. Appendix (unlimited pages)
- Updated version of the short overview paper, incorporating the feedback received in the individual Q&A sessions, to be submitted prior to the in-class sessions in Linz.
- Peer review: Each participant will receive the updated overview papers of two other participants and act as a peer reviewer for these papers. Peer reviewers are expected to engage carefully with the papers and to provide brief, constructive feedback in class following the respective presentations (approx. 2 mins per reviewer), e.g., on the motivation, the fit between review purpose and method, the rigor of the review process, and the expected contributions.
- Presentation of the participants' literature reviews in class (approx. 15 mins)

7.3 Exam

Short overview paper, presentation, and peer review of two other participants' overview papers.

7.4 Credits

The course corresponds to a scope of 6 LP/ECTS.

8. Working hours

Working hours	Hours
Preparations	75
Active participation	25
Preparation for exam	60
Exam	20
Total	**180**

Appendix: Additional reading material

Introduction to literature reviews:

Booth, A., Sutton, A., Clowes, M. & James, M. M.-S. (2021). Systematic approaches to a successful literature review. Sage.

Higgins, J. P., Thomas, J., Chandler, J., Cumpston, M., Li, T., Page, M. J. & Welch, V. A. (Eds.). (2019). Cochrane handbook for systematic reviews of interventions (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Jesson, J. K., Matheson, L. & Lacey, F. M. (2011). Doing your literature review: Traditional and systematic techniques. Sage.

Light, R. J. & Pillemer, D. B. (1984). Summing up: The science of reviewing research. Harvard University Press.

McMahan, P. & McFarland, D. A. (2021). Creative destruction: The structural consequences of scientific curation. American Sociological Review, 86(2), 341-376. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122421996323

Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. Journal of Business Research, 104(November), 333-339. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039

Overview of types of literature reviews and knowledge contributions (theory, conceptual and evidence):

Durach, C. F., Kembro, J. H. & Wieland, A. (2021). How to advance theory through literature reviews in logistics and supply chain management. International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management, 51(10), 1090-1107. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPDLM-11-2020-0381

Grant, M. J. & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: An analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. Health Information & Libraries Journal, 26(2), 91-108. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2009.00848.x

Krlev, G., Hannigan, T., & Spicer, A. (2025). What makes a good review article? Empirical evidence from management and organization research. Academy of Management Annals, 19(1), 376-403. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2021.0051

Meerpohl, J. J., Herrle, F., Antes, G. & von Elm, E. (2012). Scientific value of systematic reviews: Survey of editors of core clinical journals. PLOS ONE, 7(5), 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0035732

Munn, Z., Peters, M.D.J., Stern, C., Tufanaru, C., Mcarthur, A. & Aromataris, E. (2018). Systematic review or scoping review? Guidance for authors when choosing between a systematic or scoping review approach. BMC Medical Research Methodology, 18, 143. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0611-x

Paré, G., Trudel, M.-C., Jaana, M. & Kitsiou, S. (2015). Synthesizing information systems knowledge: A typology of literature reviews. Information & Management, 52(2), 183-199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2014.08.008

Rousseau, D. M., Manning, J. & Denyer, D. (2008). Evidence in management and organizational science: Assembling the field's full weight of scientific knowledge through syntheses. Academy of Management Annals, 2, 475-515. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520802211651

Specific types of reviews – The integrative review:

Chen, V. Z. & Hitt, M. A. (2021). Knowledge synthesis for scientific management: Practical integration for complexity versus scientific fragmentation for simplicity. Journal of Management Inquiry, 30(2), 177-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492619862051

Cho, Y. (2022). Comparing integrative and systematic literature reviews. Human Resource Development Review, 21(2), 147-151. https://doi.org/10.1177/15344843221089053

Cronin, M. A., & George, E. (2023). The why and how of the integrative review. Organizational Research Methods, 26(1), 168-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120935507

Durand, R., Grant, R. M. & Madsen, T. L. (2017). The expanding domain of strategic management research and the quest for integration. Strategic Management Journal, 38(1), 4-16. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.2607

Elsbach, K. D. & van Knippenberg, D. (2020). Creating high-impact literature reviews: An argument for 'integrative reviews'. Journal of Management Studies, 57(6), 1277-1289. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12581

Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. Human Resource Development Review, 4(3), 356-367. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278283

Torraco, R. J. (2016). Writing integrative literature reviews: Using the past and present to explore the future. Human Resource Development Review, 15(4), 404-428. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484316671606

Systematicity:

Cooper, H. & Hedges, L. V. (2009). Research synthesis as a scientific process. In H. Cooper, L. V. Hedges & J. C. Valentine (Eds.), The handbook of research synthesis and meta-analysis (2nd ed.). Russell Sage Foundation.

Liberati, A., Altman, D. G., Tetzlaff, J. Mulrow, C., Gøtzsche, P. C., Ioannidis, J. P. A., Clarke, M., Devereaux, P.J., Kleijnen, Jos & Moher, D. (2009). The PRISMA statement for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses of studies that evaluate health care interventions: Explanation and elaboration. Annals of Internal Medicine, 151(4), W-65-W-94. https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-151-4-200908180-00136

Siddaway, A. P., Wood, A. M. & Hedges, L. V. (2019). How to do a systematic review: A best practice guide for conducting and reporting narrative reviews, meta-analyses, and meta-syntheses. Annual Review of Psychology, 70, 747-770. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010418-102803

Simsek, Z., Fox, B., & Heavey, C. (2023). Systematicity in organizational research literature reviews: A framework and assessment. Organizational Research Methods, 26(2), 292-321. https://doi.org/10.1177/10944281211008652

Simsek, Z., Fox, B. C., Heavey, C., & Liu, S. (2025). Methodological Rigor in Management Research Reviews. Journal of Management, *51*(1), 103-131. https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063241237222

Sample selection and search:

Bordignon, F. (2021). Dataset of search queries to map scientific publications to the UN sustainable development goals. Data in Brief, 34, 106731. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2021.106731

Christensen, M. C., Todić, J. & McMahon, S. M. (2021). Bridging the grey gap: Conducting grey literature reviews for ethical social work practice and research. Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research, 13(3), 609-635. https://doi.org/10.1086/717731

Gusenbauer, M., & Gauster, S. P. (2025). How to search for literature in systematic reviews and meta-analyses: A comprehensive step-by-step guide. Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 212, 123833. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123833

Gusenbauer, M., & Haddaway, N. R. (2020). Which academic search systems are suitable for systematic reviews or meta-analyses? Evaluating retrieval qualities of Google Scholar, PubMed, and 26 other resources. Research Synthesis Methods, 11(2), 181-217. https://doi.org/10.1002/jrsm.1378

Haddaway, N. R., Page, M. J., Pritchard, C. C. & McGuinness, L. A. (2022). Prisma2020: An R package and shiny app for producing PRISMA 2020-compliant flow diagrams, with interactivity for optimised digital transparency and open synthesis. Campbell Systematic Reviews, 18(2), e1230. https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1230

Analysis and synthesis (qualitatively oriented):

Hiebl, M. R. W. (2023). Literature reviews of qualitative accounting research: Challenges and opportunities. Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management, 20(3), 309-336. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRAM-12-2021-0222

O'Kane, P., Ott, D. L., Smith, A. D. & Brown, T. C. (2023). Understanding computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software as a tool to enhance systematic literature reviews in human resource development. Human Resource Development Review, 22(2), 291-307. https://doi.org/10.1177/15344843221144668

Rivard, S. (2024). Unpacking the process of conceptual leaping in the conduct of literature reviews. Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 33(1), 101822. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2024.101822

Webster, J. & Watson, R. T. (2002). Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review. MIS Quarterly, 26(2), xiii-xxiii. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4132319

Analysis and synthesis (quantitatively oriented):

Antons, D., Breidbach, C. F., Joshi, A. M. & Salge, T. O. (2023). Computational literature reviews: Method, algorithms, and roadmap. Organizational Research Methods, 26(1), 107-138. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428121991230

Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N. & Lim, W. M. (2021). How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: An overview and guidelines. Journal of Business Research, 133, 285-296. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.04.070

Hannigan, T. R., Haan, R. F. J., Vakili, K., Tchalian, H., Glaser, V. L., Wang, M. S., Kaplan, S. & Jennings, P. D. (2019). Topic modeling in management research: Rendering new theory from textual data. Academy of Management Annals, 13(2), 586-632. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2017.0099

Villiger, J., Schweiger, S. A. & Baldauf, A. (2022). Making the invisible visible: Guidelines for the coding process in meta-analyses 25(4), 716-740. Organizational Research Methods. https://doi.org/10.1177/10944281211046312

The role of AI in literature reviews:

Cao, C., Arora, R., Cento, P., Manta, K., Farahani, E., Cecere, M., . . . Bobrovitz, N. (2025). Automation of systematic reviews with large language models. medRxiv. https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.06.13.25329541

Gatrell, C., Muzio, D., Post, C., & Wickert, C. (2024). Here, there and everywhere: On the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) in management research and the peer-review process. Journal of Management Studies, 61(3), 739-751. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.13045

Dwivedi, Y. K., Kshetri, N., Hughes, L., Slade, E. L., Jeyaraj, A., Kar, A. K., . . . Wright, R. (2023). Opinion paper: "So what if ChatGPT wrote it?" multidisciplinary perspectives on opportunities, challenges and implications of generative conversational AI for research, practice and policy. International Journal of Information Management, 71, 102642. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102642

Pan, S. L., Nishant, R., Tuunanen, T., & Nah, F. F.-H. (2023). Literature review in the generative AI era - how to make a compelling contribution. Journal of Strategic Information Systems, 32(3), 101788. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2023.101788

Kulkarni, M., Mantere, S., Vaara, E., van den Broek, E., Pachidi, S., Glaser, V. L., . . . Greenwood, M. (2024). The future of research in an artificial intelligence-driven world. Journal of Management Inquiry. https://doi.org/10.1177/10564926231219622

Susarla, A., Gopal, R., Thatcher, J. B., & Sarker, S. (2023). The Janus effect of generative AI: Charting the path for responsible conduct of scholarly activities in information systems. Information Systems Research, 34(2), 399-408. https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.2023.ed.v34.n2

Thau, S., & Katila, R. (2025). Large language models as tools for integrative reviews. Academy of Management Annals, 19(2), 435-439. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2025.0138

Verma, M., & Yuvaraj, M. (2023). AI-based literature reviews: A topic modeling approach. SRELS Journal of Information Management, 97-104. https://doi.org/10.17821/srels/2023/v60i2/170967

Wagner, G., Lukyanenko, R., & Paré, G. (2022). Artificial intelligence and the conduct of literature reviews. Journal of Information Technology, 37(2), 209-226. https://doi.org/10.1177/02683962211048201

Editorials on literature reviews:

Arora, P., Bapuji, H., Kunisch, S., & Louche, C. (in press). Turning the prism to expand the spectrum: Literature reviews in contested domains. Business & Society. https://doi.org/10.1177/00076503261480783

Bauer, T. N. (2009). The journal of management review issue: Celebrating 35 years. Journal of Management, 35(6), 1297-1301. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309346842

Breslin, D., Callahan, J. & Iszatt-White, M. (2021). Future-proofing IJMR as a leading management journal: Reach, relevance and reputation. International Journal of Management Reviews, 23(4), 431-442. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12275

Breslin, D., Gatrell, C. & Bailey, K. (2020). Developing insights through reviews: Reflecting on the 20th anniversary of the international journal of management reviews. International Journal of Management Reviews, 22(1), 3-9. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12219

Cooper, C. L. & Pearson, A. (1999). Editorial. International Journal of Management Reviews, 1(1), iii. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2370.00007_1_1

Elsbach, K. D. & van Knippenberg, D. (2018). The Academy of Management Annals: Looking back, looking forward. Academy of Management Annals, 12(1), 1-4. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0167

Fan, D., Breslin, D., Iszatt-White, M. & Callahan, J. (2022). Advancing literature review methodology through rigour, generativity, scope and transparency. International Journal of Management Reviews, 24(2). https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12291

Gatrell, C. & Breslin, D. (2017). Editors' statement. International Journal of Management Reviews, 19(1), 3-3. https://doi.org/doi:10.1111/ijmr.12133

Kunisch, S., zu Knyphausen-Aufsess, D., Bapuji, H., Aguinis, H., Bansal, T., Tsui, A. S., & Pinto, J. (2023). Using review articles to address societal grand challenges. International Journal of Management Reviews, 25(2), 240-250. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12335

Parmigiani, A. & King, E. (2019). Successfully proposing and composing review papers. Journal of Management, 45(8), 3083-3090. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206319874875

Short, J. (2009). The art of writing a review article. Journal of Management, 35(6), 1312-1317. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309337489

Wortman, M. S. (1976). Editorial comment. Academy of Management Review, 1(1), 4-4. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1976.19369636

Useful websites:

- Annual reviews: https://www.annualreviews.org
- American Journal Experts (AJE): https://www.aje.com/arc/what-is-a-scoping-review/
- Campbell collaboration (in business and management): https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/
- Center for Evidence-Based Management (CEBMa): https://cebma.org/
- Cochrane collaboration: https://www.cochrane.org/
- Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA): http://www.prisma-statement.org/
- University library websites:
  - https://library.au.dk/en/researchers/systematic-reviews#c181168
  - https://libguides.bc.edu/litreview
  - https://libguides.bc.edu/litreview/tutorials

- https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/literature-reviews/
- https://guides.library.harvard.edu/meta-analysis
- https://libraryguides.missouri.edu/c.php?g=28397&p=5945933