Marketing Research Techniques and Applications  
Marketing 351, Section 002, Fall 2013

Wednesdays – 7:20 -10:00 UH 1201

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Office phone: 703/993-4207  
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Website: We will use Blackboard 9.1 for this class. This can be accessed via mymasonportal.gmu.edu. If you are properly registered for this class you should be able to click on the “courses” tab and find a listing for this class

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3 – 4 p.m. (Appointments are always recommended.)


DESCRIPTION OF COURSE AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide an overview of marketing research and its use in making effective marketing decisions. The primary emphasis is on providing you with the skills to effectively utilize marketing research, and to understand how research aids in the development of sound marketing strategy. The course will discuss the various ways data are collected and the methods used to analyze it. At the end of this course you should be able to design and conduct a focus group to explore a marketing problem and design and conduct a small scale survey to collect data to assist in a marketing decision. Ethical questions involved in the collection and use of data for marketing purposes will also be discussed.

**Learning Goals for this Course**

1. Students will understand the theory and application of survey research techniques as they are used in the marketing research field today.

2. Students will understand the theory and application of qualitative research techniques as they are used in the marketing research field.
3. Students will understand the theory and application of experimental research techniques as used in the marketing research field.

4. Students will understand the theory and application of measurement techniques as used in the marketing research field.

5. Students will understand the practical problems of designing and executing a research study for a client in the contemporary marketing research industry.

6. Students will be aware of contemporary issues in the Marketing Research industry.

My expectations of you:

- You are capable of functioning as an independent learner, i.e. you can read the textbook, learn from it and will ask questions about the things you don’t understand.

- You are capable of being a team player and are able to work out disagreements among fellow teammates.

- You are capable of balancing the demands of work, personal life and multiple courses.

- You respect the GMU Honor Code and will abide by it. (http://www.gmu.edu/depts/unilife/honorcode.html)

- You will do the assigned reading in advance of class.

- You will be able to devote 5 to 7 hours per week to reading and preparing for this class.

Attendance

Life happens and only you can decide whether you should come to class on a particular week. However, you will not be able to get an A or B in this course without attending class regularly. Much of the material on the course exams will come from class lectures and discussions. You can only do well on the exams by attending class regularly.

Class organization – Learning teams

This class will be organized into learning teams. You will be part of a team of approximately five people who will work together the whole term, on in-class quizzes and a report to the class on a marketing topic.

During the first weeks of the semester your team will meet at least once outside of class to get acquainted and complete a short written assignment (Team Charter) that will be posted on the class website. At the time of the final exam you will be asked to fill out a peer evaluation form to assess the contribution your teammates have made to your group effort. The points for peer evaluation will be based on the data from this form.
After we form teams I will assign each team seats and from that I will prepare a seating chart. I will record class participation on the seating chart so if you are not in your regular seat you may not get full participation points. I will post the seating chart on the class website.

Teams will be assigned on September 4. You cannot choose your teammates.

Quizzes

This class will have five quizzes during the term. Each quiz will be taken twice – once as an individual and once as a team. You will receive two scores for each quiz, one for your individual performance and one for your team grade. You will be graded on the four highest quiz grades; thus if you attend every quiz class you can drop your lowest grade. If you are absent (for any reason) on the day of a quiz that will constitute your dropped grade.

Grading Points

The term grade in this class will be based on the following items totaling 1,000 points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams:</td>
<td>570 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term –</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam –</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (best 4 of 5)</td>
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<td>Individual scores 80 pts</td>
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<td>Team scores 40 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects:</td>
<td>385 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment I (Team Charter)-------------------</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment II (Problem definition)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment III (Focus group paper)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment IV (Team presentations and paper)</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Evaluation</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>(This will be done as part of the final exam.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>1,000 pts</td>
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</tbody>
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Grading scale:

A ----- 900 points and above
B ----- 800 – 899 points
C ------ 700 – 799 points
D ----- 600 – 699 points
F ----- 599 and below

Note: There will be no plus or minus grades given. I do not curve.
## Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Activity/Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/28/13</td>
<td>Introduction to course How to get a good grade in this course. What is Marketing</td>
<td>Chapter 1, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/04/13</td>
<td>Why we need Marketing Research</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Teams formed Quiz I (Chapters 1, 2 and 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11/13</td>
<td>Defining the problem Secondary Research and Data Mining</td>
<td>Chapter 5, Chapter 7 “How Companies Learn Your Secrets” “On the Web’s Cutting Edge”</td>
<td>Quiz II (Chapters 5 and 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/18/13</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Focus Group Video</td>
<td>Chapter 6 “Professional Focus Group Member”</td>
<td>Assignment I, Team Charter, due in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/25/13</td>
<td>Focus Group Video, continued</td>
<td>Assignment II, Topic and Problem Statement, to be emailed to instructor by 6 p.m. September 22. Teams meet with professor to discuss problem statement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/02/13</td>
<td>Survey Research</td>
<td>Chapter 8, 9</td>
<td>Guest speaker</td>
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<td>10/09/13</td>
<td>Observation Experimental Research</td>
<td>Chapter 10 “Naked Truth Meets Market Research” Chapter 11, 11A</td>
<td>Taste test Quiz III (Chapters 6, 8, 9 and 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16/13</td>
<td>Test Markets</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>(Note that focus groups should be conducted October 16-23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/23/29</td>
<td>Communicating Research Results</td>
<td>Chapter 25</td>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30/13</td>
<td>Measurement Attitude Measurement</td>
<td>Chapter 13, Chapter 14</td>
<td>Assignment III (Focus Group Paper) due in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/13</td>
<td>Questionnaire Design</td>
<td>Chapter 15, 15 A</td>
<td>Assignment III (Focus Group Paper) due in class. Quiz IV (Chapters 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13/13</td>
<td>Basic data coding and analysis, Sampling</td>
<td>Chapter 20, Chapter 16, 17</td>
<td>Bring 3 copies of your draft of your survey questionnaire to class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fieldwork Ethics in Market Research

Chapter 19
Chapter 4, pp 87-100

Revise and Edit survey questionnaire
Quiz V (Chapters 16, 17 (general terms), 19 and pp 87-100

11/27/13 Thanksgiving break

12/03/13 Team Presentations

12/10/13 7:30-10:15 Final Exam

Communication: I have found that the most useful way to communicate with me is via email. All email should be from your GMU email address and messages should include your course and section. Please sign your emails. When students respond to an email I have sent to the entire class by simply hitting “reply” I get an email that is difficult to identify.

Class assignments: Information on the team assignments (and associated reading) will be posted on the class website. Over the course of the semester your team will consider a single marketing problem using the various tools of marketing research. I believe you will have a better experience if you pick a problem for your team that deals with life on campus or a nearby business that does a significant portion of its business with students. You should consider several things in selecting your team problem: 1) There must be an identifiable client you can meet with. 2) Your task is to solve a business problem of that client, not make things better in some way for fellow students.

Qualtrics: The survey portion of your project will be conducted using questionnaire design software called Qualtrics. A student license for this subscription comes with your textbook. During the first few weeks of the course you should set up your Qualtrics account and go through the two-hour tutorial on the program (http://www.qualtrics.com/university/researchsuite/). There will be a question on the mid-term exam regarding Qualtrics.

Exam philosophy: I have found that the scanning machines sometimes mis-grade erasures; therefore I strongly recommend that you always have an extra form and never turn in a card with an erasure. I will not give credit for an answer that has been scored incorrectly because of an erasure.

You should expect three kinds of questions on exams:

1. Questions to determine if you have read assigned material. This applies particularly to articles posted for class discussion.

2. Vocabulary – Do you understand the meaning of terms and concepts? There is a list of such terms at the end of each chapter. Expect to see many of them on exams.

3. Concept understanding – Can you apply a concept to a particular set of facts? These can be difficult questions. Sometimes more than one answer will be somewhat appropriate. Remember that you are always looking for the single best answer.

Notes: There will be at least one question on the mid-term exam taken from the syllabus.
Sometimes you will be tested on material that has not been discussed in class. If you do not understand concepts that are assigned but not discussed in class, be sure to ask questions about them.

**Class participation:** The first requirement for class participation points is that you attend class. However, class participation points are not automatic, i.e. attending class is necessary but attendance and answering a few questions will not earn full participation points. Points will be subtracted from participation grades if students chat, text message, read newspapers or otherwise disrupt the class.

I know that everyone has a life and that you have to make choices about your time. But we have a lot of material to cover in 14 weeks and class time is precious. If you are unable to attend class or choose not to come, you do not need to notify me. I don’t give excused absences. It is much easier to deal with special situations before they occur than afterwards. Please come to me during the first two weeks of class to discuss any problems you have regarding sports teams, religious holidays or school related activities.

If you feel you will have difficulty participating in class because of cultural or personal reasons, please come to see me early in the semester. I will not excuse you from the participation requirement, but I will try to help you meet it as painlessly as possible.

If you miss a class, please don’t stop me before or after the next class and ask, “Did I miss anything?” Yes, you missed a class worth of material and you should see one of your teammates to get copies of his or her notes.

**Classes start and end on time:** Out of courtesy to your peers, students are expected to be in class on time and to remain for the entire class period. Multiple late arrivals are not acceptable. Arriving late or leaving early will negatively affect your grade.

**A word of caution:** While there should be plenty of time to do your survey and write your final paper before the deadline, my experience has been that many student teams put off the survey work until the last minute and then scramble furiously to finish the paper and presentation. Often this does not leave sufficient time for the revising, rewriting and proofreading that are required for an A paper. But I can’t change human nature. I can suggest that you do everything you can to keep your schedule clear for the last three weeks of the semester. My experience is that students who are not fully available for the project during this period are unable to contribute fully to the team results.

**Other items:** There are notes posted on the class website regarding team policies and writing tips. From time to time I may post additional notes on the website. All of these items are to be considered a part of this syllabus.

**Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

**Keep copies:** Please keep an electronic copy of anything you submit for this class. Several hundred papers cross my desk each semester and once or twice I have misplaced one. Please have a back-up available should that occur.
Announcements and schedule changes: Because life happens (guest speakers cancel, classes are cancelled because of bad weather, I get sick, etc.) it may sometimes be necessary to make changes in the course calendar. I will announce any changes via an email to the class from Blackboard. Read your email.

Religious holidays, sports, forensics and school related activities: If you expect to be absent during the semester for any of these reasons, please notify me during the first two weeks of the semester. Note that the University distinguishes between holidays which various religions classify as non-work days and those that permit work on the holiday. To view the official list of recognized holidays go to http://ulife.gmu.edu/religious_calendar.php.

Electronic devices: No cell phones or laptop computers may be turned on except during breaks. (This means no texting during class.) Cell phones should be kept in backpacks or purses.

Writing assignments: All writing for this course should be double-spaced and should include the name of the writer (or team members) and the course section on the first page. Please do not submit any written work in folders or binders. Please put the section and team number (if applicable) on all assignments. An assignment that does not include your section number will automatically be docked two points. Please date all assignments and number the pages.

About Jobs: From time to time I come across articles or information that I think would be interesting to those of you seriously expecting to get a job in business. I’ve created an area on Blackboard called “Getting a Job” and I will post them there. One of the most useful is a note entitled “Reading the Trade Press.”

Extra credit: Teams that choose to do a second focus group will receive 20 points of extra credit. From time to time I may announce a bonus extra credit assignment. These are usually announced in class and are not communicated via email or Blackboard. No extra credit assignments will be available after the course has been completed.
“I see you’ve flown around the world in a plane, and settled revolutions in Spain. Around a golf course you’re under par. Metro-Goldwyn has asked you to star. Very impressive, I must admit, but we’re looking for someone with marketing experience.”