

MKTG 450: RESEARCH METHODS IN MARKETING
Syllabus for Spring 2011, Sections 61 and 62

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**** ATTENDANCE IN THE FIRST CLASS IS MANDATORY ****

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE WEEK 10:

THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON MEMORIAL DAY, MONDAY 5/30; A MAKE-UP CLASS
WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6/1, 8:30AM (SEC. 61) AND 10:30AM (SEC 62)

Nature and Purpose of the Course

The broad objective of the course is to provide a fundamental understanding of marketing research methods employed by well-managed firms. The course is aimed at the manager who is the ultimate user of the research and thus is responsible for determining the scope and direction of research conducted. In the course, we will cover the types of research design, techniques of data collection and data analysis. Emphasis will be on the interpretation and use of results rather than on the mathematical derivations. The course focuses on helping managers recognize the role of systematic information gathering and analysis in making marketing decisions, and develop an appreciation for the potential contributions and limitations of marketing research data.

Content and Organization

The course is broadly structured to follow the steps in the marketing research process. The topics include problem definition, research design (exploratory, descriptive and causal), data collection methods, questionnaire design and attitude measurement, sampling schemes, and data analysis. Emphasis will be given to both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of marketing research.

Required Material

1. Textbook: Feinberg F., T. Kinnear, and J. Taylor, Modern Marketing Research: Concepts, Methods and Cases, Thomson Corporation. A reduced-price online-only version is also available.
2. Software: Stata (<http://kellogg.northwestern.edu/researchcomputing/sec/stata-support.htm>).
3. MKTG 450 Course packet (lecture slides and supplemental materials will be distributed in class and/or via Blackboard)

Course Pre-requisites

1. Marketing Management Core Course (MKTG 430)
2. Decision Sciences and Statistics Core Course (DECS 434)

Class Sessions

Rather than merely rehashing concepts developed in the textbook, class sessions will be devoted to extending and applying the concepts. I will assume that all of you have completed the reading assignments (both chapters in the textbook and articles in the case packet) before coming to class. If

you all come to class well prepared, we will be able to spend time on class exercises that simulate real world problems. You should be prepared to discuss and present in class the readings and/or problems that have been assigned for that session.

- **Cold Calling:** Cold calling will be used in class.
- **Attendance:** If you are unable to attend class you are responsible for catching up on the material covered or announcements made in class on that day.
- **No Laptops:** Please leave your laptop in its case during class unless otherwise noted.
- **No Mobile Phones:** Remember to switch off your cell phone before class.

Preparing a Case for Class Discussion

The objective of the use of cases is to illustrate how different marketing research methods can be applied to solve real world problems. The emphasis will be on the appropriateness and use of the research methodologies and techniques, as well as on the larger strategic issues.

In preparing a case for class discussion, read through the case thoroughly. Do the data analyses and bring your results to class. Questions in the guideline are there only to guide your thinking. Be prepared to discuss the important marketing research issues addressed in the case and to present your results in class.

Grading

Grades will be computed as follows:

Class Commitment	5%
Individual Assignments	40%
Group Assignment #1	5%
Group Assignment #2	10%
Group Project	40%

Class Commitment

Positive contributions to class discussion increase your score. During class you should be willing to expose your viewpoints and conclusions to the critical judgment of the class and demonstrate your ability to evaluate and build upon the opinions of your classmates. Further, you can demonstrate your commitment by emailing me any marketing research examples from the media and/or your own industry experience that you feel may enhance the learning of the class. Attending class and not speaking has neither a positive nor a negative impact on your participation grade. Failing to attend significant portions of a class session, poor preparation, and detrimental participation (including being disrespectful to any class members) decrease your participation score. If you have to miss a class, you have to make up the materials with your group members.

Individual Assignments

There will be five individual take-home assignments. These assignments will be made available online and require you to apply the marketing research concepts covered in class. These assignments must be completed on an individual basis. I will take the highest four of the five grades.

Please submit each individual assignment by uploading it to Blackboard on the due date, prior to the designated cut off time (4 pm). Late assignments will not be accepted. Each individual assignment should be submitted as a **single Microsoft Word document** with the filename being your full name (as designated by the University registrar), your section number, and the assignment designation using underscores as separators. For example: MichalMaimaran_61_Assignment1.docx

Group Assignment

There will be two graded group assignments. Please submit each group assignment by uploading it to Blackboard on the due date, prior to the designated cut off time (8 am). The filename of each group assignment should be your group name, your section number, and the assignment name. For example: TeamTeam_61_CoorsCase.ppt

Group Project

The objective of the research project is to provide you with some experience in applying the concepts and methods of marketing research to a real marketing research problem. Please organize yourselves into groups of 5-6 in order to do the group assignments and the group project. Please find group members within your own section.

Please get approval of your research problem before you invest major time and resources in your project. Project approval entails submitting a project proposal in week 3 and meeting with me during weeks 3 and 4. You may schedule an earlier meeting if you have your proposal ready. You have considerable freedom to follow your interests, although it is expected that the problem be relevant to marketing and that it will require a field research strategy that involves primary data gathering. All other things being equal, a project concerned with a realistic problem will be looked upon more favorably than one that deals with a trivial or contrived problem. Purely exploratory type projects with only qualitative data will not meet the course requirement. Projects will have to be of a descriptive variety where the research questions are well formulated.

Quite a few project opportunities are available from the Kellogg student project database (see: http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/Corporate_Visitors/Student_Connections/Student_Project_Opportunities.aspx). I strongly encourage you to go through the database. However, you are not constrained to select your project from this set. Please feel free to find other projects through your contacts. More information will be given in class.

An important point to keep in mind is that respondents in the survey should have the right to remain anonymous. This means that the data collected in the survey must be stored in a manner such that individuals' identities cannot be linked to their responses. Respondents must be assured before you collect data that their responses will be treated as confidential and will be anonymously analyzed. Under no circumstances should you give to your sponsor or anyone else your completed questionnaires, names and contact information of people you have interviewed, or other material that may reveal the identity of your respondents without their prior explicit approval.

Web Surveys

For those of you who would like to use a web survey, Kellogg offers Qualtrics that you can freely access (see: <https://kis.kellogg.northwestern.edu/Pages/ServiceResearchAndDataCollection.aspx>).

Group project deadlines:

Due: Group composition	week 1
Due: Research proposal; Group Meetings to receive project approval	week 3
Self-monitoring: You should already have the research design, sampling approach, and data collection method. You should be drafting the surveys	week 5
Optional: Submit progress report and survey draft for feedback	
Due: Final Report and Final Presentation	week 10

Research Proposal

The proposal should cover the research purpose, research objectives, hypotheses, plans for data collection and analysis, and explain how the client will benefit from your research. A template for the proposal will be made available online.

Final Report & Final Presentation

The final report and final presentation should focus on how the client can use the results of the research for decision-making & strategy. A template for both the report and presentation will be made available online.

Grading Key

The group project will be evaluated based on the Final Report and Final Presentation. Projects will be graded based on the consideration of the following issues:

- Specification of research objectives – is the problem well defined? Is there consistency between problem definition and specification of research objectives?
- Identification of research design, choice of sampling plan, questionnaire design, and choice of survey method – are they appropriate given your objective?
- Analysis and interpretation of data – does it address your research objective?
- Recommendation – How do your research findings address the business problem? Are your recommendations supported by your data? Are they insightful (and useful) to your client?
- Assessed relative difficulty of the project
- Overall presentation of the report

Peer Evaluation

A peer evaluation form will be made available online. The final grade is adjusted up to 10% for peer evaluation. A negative peer evaluation can thus have a significant impact on your final grade (e.g., from A to B or B to C).

Student/Instructor Interaction

If at any point during the course you have any questions regarding the materials covered in class or regarding preparation for assignments or cases, please raise them either in class so others may also benefit, or via email, or in person during office hours. If the scheduled office hours are inconvenient to you, please email me to make an appointment to meet.

Honor Code

Students are expected to respect the Kellogg Honor Code and Code of Student Etiquette at all times, including, but not limited to, truthfully representing fact and self at all times and not seeking an unfair advantage over other students. For complete reference of the Kellogg Honor Code see:

http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/stu_aff/policies/honorcode.htm