

**MKTG450: RESEARCH METHODS IN MARKETING**  
**Spring 2009, Sections 72 and 82**

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**MKTG 450: RESEARCH METHODS IN MARKETING**

**Class Schedule for Spring Quarter 2009 will be posted on the course webpage.**  
**\* Preparation Guidelines are available in the course packet and on the course webpage.**

Week 1:

**Topics:**           **Role and Values of Marketing Research**  
                          **Research Designs: Exploratory, Descriptive & Causal Research**

**Read:**             Chapters 1, 3

**Skim:**             Chapter 2  
                          “Cost Conscious Market Research”  
                          “Backward Market Research”

**Due:**              **\* Individual Shopping list for South Delaware Coors, Inc.**

In the first week of class, we will start with an introduction to the course and how it ties in with MKTG 430. We will go over a roadmap to the topics covered in the course, give a general introduction to the field of Marketing Research and the role of Marketing Research in the overall scheme of the Marketing Planning Process. Chapters 1 and 2 in the textbook give a good overview of these concepts. We will then introduce the individual steps in the marketing research process. These steps start with problem formulation and research objectives, followed by research design, data collection and analysis, and finally, conclusion and recommendations. Students will go through these steps on their own when conducting their course field research projects. We will also develop some simple frameworks for quantifying the value of Marketing Research.

Schedules for the other weeks will be posted on the course webpage, and I will give you access to that in the first class.

**MKTG 450: RESEARCH METHODS IN MARKETING**

Syllabus for Spring 2009, Sections 72, 82

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Assistant: Subarna Ranjit at [s-ranjit@kellogg.northwestern.edu](mailto:s-ranjit@kellogg.northwestern.edu)**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 who is responsible for determining the scope and direction of research conducted on his/her behalf. The techniques of research design, data collection and data analysis occupy an important role, and emphasis will be on the interpretation and application of the results rather than 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. Examples of substantive marketing problems that the research methods covered in this course can aid you to address include: market segmentation, estimating market potential, forecasting market demand, developing advertising and pricing policies and designing and positioning new products.

**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.

**Course Materials**

1. Textbook: Feinberg F., T. Kinnear, and J. Taylor, *Modern Marketing Research: Concepts, Methods and Cases*, Thomson Corporation.
2. Software: SPSS Student Version 11.0 or later. A full version of the program is available in the computer lab.
3. MKTG 450 Course packet
4. Lecture slides and other handouts will be distributed in class

The book and software will be available at the Kellogg bookstores. Per my request, the stores will make available both the bundled textbook with the SPSS 17.0 software and unbundled versions.

You can also purchase the 1-year license of SPSS through KIS: [https://elms.e-academy.com/northwestern/index.cfm?loc=estore/soft\\_browse/listing&store=1&name=SPSS%20Graduate%20Pack%2017%2E0&parentID=112](https://elms.e-academy.com/northwestern/index.cfm?loc=estore/soft_browse/listing&store=1&name=SPSS%20Graduate%20Pack%2017%2E0&parentID=112)

Or use the 30-day free trial:

[http://www.spss.com/downloads/Papers.cfm?ProductID=00035&Name=SPSS\\_Base&DLType=Demo](http://www.spss.com/downloads/Papers.cfm?ProductID=00035&Name=SPSS_Base&DLType=Demo)

**Course Pre-requisites**

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

**Laptops and Electronic Devices****General Policy: NO Laptop Use in Class unless instructed otherwise.**

Please leave your laptop inside its case during class unless when I instruct you to use them for in-class data analysis. Please keep off all other electronics (eg. Cell phone, iPod, etc.).

**Class Sessions**

Rather than merely rehashing concepts developed in the text, class sessions will be devoted to probing, extending, and applying the text material. I will assume that students have read the text assignments (both chapters in the textbook and articles in the case packet) before coming to class. Much of the material in this course is somewhat technical in nature, and your learning will be substantially enhanced if you come to class well prepared.

Analysis of cases and problems will form the basis for applying the concepts to real world situations and students are expected to have read and analyzed the cases thoroughly prior to coming to class, either alone or in a group. Students should also be prepared to discuss and present in class the problems that have been assigned for that session. Please follow the guidelines for each case preparations and group assignments.

*Participation in class discussion is extremely important for your learning and each student is expected to contribute.* Please feel free to ask questions and to voice your ideas and opinions. A substantial part of the benefit that you will derive from this course is a function of your willingness to expose your viewpoints and conclusions to the critical judgments of the class, as well as your ability to build upon and critically evaluate the judgments of your classmates.

**Preparing a Case for Class Discussion**

The objective of the use of cases is to illustrate how different marketing research methods have been 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 very thoroughly and be prepared to discuss the questions provided in the guidelines as well as other important marketing research issues addressed in the case. Do the data analyses prior to class and bring your results to class. For some cases, you will be asked to prepare and submit a group presentation file prior to class. Always be prepared to present your results to your colleagues in class.

**Evaluation of Course Work**

Each student will be evaluated on the following basis:

Take-home Assignments	45%
Group Project	40%
Class Participation and Peer Evaluations	15%

Positive contributions to class discussion increase your score. 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. Please consult the Kellogg Student Handbook for class etiquettes.

### Assignments

Group case assignments count toward class participation. There will be 4 individual assignments. The assignments require you to apply the ideas, concepts, and techniques learned in class. Each individual assignment is to be completed on an *individual* basis. The final individual assignment weighs twice as much as the others. I will offer an optional Individual Assignment 5 for those of you who would like to get more practice. If you turn in Assignment 5, I will take the highest four of the five individual assignment grades. **Please submit a Word document or a powerpoint file (for Group Assignments) via the course website** (using the “submit” page) **by 2pm on the due date.** After each successful submission, you will receive a confirmation email from the web-server. Please keep this in your email inbox as a proof that you have submitted the assignment on time. If you do not receive a confirmation e-mail within 20 minutes, you most likely forgot to click the 'submit' button. In this case please submit the assignment again.

Re-grade requests must be submitted within 10 days from when the assignment (i.e., homework and the final project) is returned. Along with the graded assignment, you must attach a letter explaining why you are requesting a re-grade. While I will consider the specific concerns cited in your letter, I will re-grade the entire assignment. Please remember that small changes in your grade on a single assignment typically do not affect your overall course grade.

### Group Project

Students should organize themselves into groups of 3-6 in order to do the group assignments and the group project. Please find group members within your own section.

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. The project will be done in self-selected groups. Each team will find a client and conduct an agreed upon research project. Consider this product as your chance to develop hands-on experience with the tools and frameworks you will learn in the course.

The problem will have to be approved by me. Project approval entails presenting a proposal to the class in weeks 3 or 4 (partly depending on the guest lecture scheduling). 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 will be discouraged. Projects will have to be of a descriptive variety where the research questions are well formulated.

A few project opportunities may be made available by me. I will announce details of these projects in the class. You are not constrained to select your project from this set. I encourage you to find other projects through your contacts.

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 collecting data that their responses will be treated as confidential and 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.

The following are four important deadlines to help you monitor progress in the project:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Week 1   | Group composition  |
| Week 3   | Proposal Presentation. This proposal should have a brief description of the client background, the business problem, research objectives, and how they follow from the business problem. Prepare to present this in class to get peer feedbacks. Plan on a 5-minute presentation each group.                           |
| Week 5   | Self-monitoring: You should already have the research design, sampling approach, and data collection method. You should be drafting the surveys.   |
| Week 10: | All groups will make a <b>15-minute presentation</b> of their project in class. Please upload the presentation file, an Excel file that contains your data and any other supplemental materials (all in a zipped file) by noon on the day of our final class. Your presentation should have the following structure... |

***Presentation Outline***

1. Introduce your client and explain the business problem.
2. Define your research objective.
3. Specify your target audience, sampling method and sample size.
4. Key findings
5. Your recommendation

If you'd like, you could also submit a short version powerpoint for the in-class presentation in addition to a longer version powerpoint for the final report. Usually, students have been submitting just the full version report to be presented.

The final report should contain a technical appendix in powerpoint, word, or latex format, and the report includes the following:

1. An executive summary.
2. Business background.
3. The research strategy. Define the population, sampling frame, and sampling method. If secondary data are used, identify the sources.
4. Describe the findings of your exploratory research. The final version of your questionnaire should be submitted as a soft copy.

5. Report your survey research findings. Discuss the implications of these findings for your client.
6. Finally, indicate how the results of the research can be used ~ what should the client do?
7. Technical Appendix should include: the final version of your questionnaire, statistical methods and formula used in your research, all exhibits, and any further data coding issues/schemes applied or need to be discussed, etc.

Please submit through the course webpage a soft copy of your report, the questionnaire used, and the excel file containing the data that you have collected, with proper labels for each column. There is a good chance that your report (and the data) may be made available to future classes. **Please note that if your client does not wish the contents of the report to be made public, make sure that you put “CONFIDENTIAL” on the front cover of the report.**

Every exhibit, table, figure, etc., should have a title. Exhibits, etc., should be appropriately cross-referenced in the text. Do not make me or your client hunt for some result buried in an unlabeled appendix! When you report means or percentages always indicate the sample size on which the figure is based. Do not include simple graphical display of responses for each item. Your exhibits are tools to reflect insights after you have analyzed the data, and should not be used to report raw means or counts that can be easily described (and understood) in one sentence. Do not expect your readers to go through the data to look for details, formulae or insights; please be explicit in your report.

### **Project Grading Key**

I will be grading the project reports based on the consideration of the following:

- 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

I will post the peer evaluation form regarding the final project and other group works during the course at the appropriate time. Please note that a negative peer evaluation can significantly impact your final grade (e.g., from A to B, B to C, etc.)!

### **Web Surveys**

For those of you who would like to use a web survey, Kellogg offers SurveyZ and Qualtrics that you can freely access. Please look this up on the KIS page. You can certainly feel free to use any other survey webpage that you are familiar with.

### **Peer Evaluation**

I will ask you to evaluate your group members at the end of the quarter. Please evaluate everyone based on their input into the group project and group assignments, and their contribution to overall class learning. All peer-evaluation grades for you will be factored into calculating your project and final course grades.

An online peer evaluation form will be available on the course website under the submit page. Everyone must submit their evaluation by 5pm, Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Student/Instructor Interaction**

If at any point during the course you have any questions regarding the material covered in class or regarding preparation for assignments, cases or the project, please raise them either in class or via email or during office hours. Office hours are available by appointment. **E-mail is the best way to reach me.**

I encourage discussions among students, and I will sign up all the groups on the Blackboard to facilitate your file exchanges.

### **Student Honor Code**

The Kellogg Honor Code is applicable in this class. It is enforced at Kellogg and violations are subject to disciplinary sanctions. Honor Code issues seldom arise because of our Kellogg culture. I do not want such issues to arise in my class.

General ethics and honor code concerns may apply to the specific components of this course as follows:

- Students should not discuss individual assignments with any other students. Group assignment should be discussed and completed within each group of the class.
- It is appropriate to discuss non-graded assignments with anyone in the class
- For all graded assignments, you may not use materials containing related analyses from other sources. This includes, but is not limited to, material from current and former Kellogg students and analyses from the Internet. Similarly, students may not use materials distributed by faculty to previous classes (e.g., a case summary handed out to last year's class).
- I expect you to have a full understanding of any written materials you, or somebody else on behalf of you, submit(s) with your name on it. You must come to this understanding in collaboration with your group and you must be completely familiar with the material and be able to answer questions about the assignment. Substantial contribution by each group member is expected. The act of signing the assignment signifies that you have substantially participated in the preparation of the assignment.

The discussion in this syllabus of the Honor Code, while intended to be as comprehensive as possible, may not cover all applications of the Honor Code. Please contact me if anything is unclear about the honor code as I have expressed it. In addition, the Kellogg Student Honor Code is linked online:

[http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/stu\\_aff/policies/honorcode.htm](http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/stu_aff/policies/honorcode.htm)