COURSE DESCRIPTION

Marketing research is a common currency in modern business practices. Business professionals rely on primary and/or secondary research to make well-informed decisions.

The objective of this course is to provide business professionals a fundamental understanding of marketing research methods that improve managerial decisions. The course focuses on integrating problem formulation, research design, questionnaire construction, sampling, data collection and data analysis to yield the most valuable information. The course also introduces the proper use of statistical applications as well as qualitative methods, with an emphasis on the interpretation and use of results.


Required readings: Selected articles from premier business journals, magazines, and reviews

Suggested readings:

- Wackerly, D., Mendenhall, W., & Scheaffer R. (2002), “*Mathematical Statistics with Applications*”

Software/tools: Excel, SPSS, Qualtrics

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To understand fundamental concepts and processes of marketing research
- To learn how to conduct rigorous research analyzing businesses, markets, and environments
- To improve abilities to assess and to evaluate research findings provided by third-parties

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH

Classes will be a combination of lectures, discussions, exercises, workshops, guest lectures, exams, case studies (video & written), and student presentations. Students are responsible for reading assigned chapters and articles prior to class. Students are expected to participate in the ongoing discussions actively rather than to take notes only. Lecture notes and materials will be posted on the Blackboard.
COURSE ORGANIZATION

Individual Work

- **Exam:** There will be 2 exams throughout the term. The questions will be from any materials covered in class. Not only will students be expected to know the terms and frameworks, but also how to apply them in different business situations. Exams are not cumulative (100 points each); they will cover only the materials presented during that interval of the course.

- **Reflection Paper (RP):** Students are expected to complete 4 reflection papers individually. Each paper is a 1 or 2-page summary or critical analysis of the assigned readings of the week (10 points each).

- **Case Synopsis (CS):** Students will write summaries of 2 Harvard Business School (HBS) cases in a memo format. Detailed instructions will be posted on Blackboard (10 points each).

- **Exercise (EX):** There will be 2 in-class or take-home exercises on research designs, analytics and reports (10 points each).

- **Discussion Leading (DL):** Students will choose or be assigned to a particular subject matter to present to the class (i.e., case study, research report, or critical analysis). Students are expected to “teach” the class as discussion leaders: to present the materials of interest, to distribute handouts, and to lead discussions. Most often students prepare PowerPoint presentations, discussion questions, and outlines (20 points).

Students are required to email the instructor a 1 or 2-page summary and presentation slides with discussion questions prior to the class. Please also provide 1 or 2-sentence answers to the questions for the instructor only (Note: I am not looking for a long essay; I just want you to have something in mind when you pose a question).

- **Participation:** Attendance for this class is mandatory. Please contact the instructor prior to the class if you know you cannot attend. Class participation credit will be awarded on the basis of 1) how well prepared students are in class discussions, and 2) positive/constructive contribution to class discussions (15 points).

Group Project

- **Research Proposal:** Working in groups of 2-3 people, you will create a marketing research proposal to win the business of potential clients. Each team will assume the role of representing one of the top marketing research companies. The research proposal will be prepared in two phases. In phase 1, teams will first conduct some primary and secondary research on a given topic of the current business issues. They will then analyze the situations and identify the important issues in addressing clients’ requests. In phase 2, each team will formulate a specific marketing research program with the goal to meet or exceed the clients’ expectations.

- **Group Presentation:** Each team will make an in-class class presentation of your research. Each team member will actively participate in this presentation that will be evaluated on both content and style. Use outlines or PowerPoint. Dress professionally.

- **Group Evaluation:** At the end of the term students will be asked to rate the performance of the other students that worked with on the group project. Note: Students must complete an evaluation to receive their own group evaluation score.
Grades will follow a breakdown with about 3.33% on either side of the break determining a plus or minus:

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\begin{align*}
A/A- &= 500-450 & B+/B/- &= 449-400 & C+/C/- &= 399-350 & D &= 349-300 & F &= \text{Under 300}
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\]

**ACADEMIC POLICIES**

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to follow regulations and procedures regarding Academic Standards, Cheating, Plagiarism, and the Documentation of Written Work (http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/undergraduate_studies/writing_proficiency/advice_students/). Those who are involved with cheating or plagiarizing will, at the discretion of the instructor, get an F for the course and will have a description of the incident attached to his or her academic records.

**Disabilities:** For those have disabilities and will need accommodations in order to complete course requirements, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services (M-1-401) at (617) 287-7430 (www.rosscenter.umb.edu/).

**COURSE RESOURCES:** All course documents (syllabus, lecture slides, instructions, project outlines, grading keys, etc.) will be posted on Blackboard. The instructor will periodically send out emails about the course (please make sure that you have the email address that you use the most listed on Blackboard).

The library has several databases available for this class, including Business Source Premier and Lexus/Nexus (www.lib.umb.edu/databases/db_browse_subject.cfm).
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>DELIVERABLE</th>
<th>READING</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>C1 -2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>Problem Formulation &amp; Research Process</td>
<td><strong>RP1</strong></td>
<td>C3, A1, A2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Exploratory Research &amp; Qualitative Data</td>
<td><strong>CS1</strong></td>
<td>C4, A3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>Descriptive Research &amp; Causal Designs</td>
<td><strong>RP2</strong></td>
<td>C5 -6, A4, A5</td>
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<td>Data Collection</td>
<td><strong>RP3</strong></td>
<td>C7 -8, A6, A7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>Measurement/Qualtrics</td>
<td><strong>Phase 1</strong></td>
<td>C9 -10</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/20</td>
<td><em>Spring Break</em></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3/27</td>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td><strong>RP4</strong></td>
<td>C11-13, A8</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Data Analysis I/SPSS</td>
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<td>C14 -15</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>Data Analysis II/ SPSS</td>
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<td>C16 -17</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>Data Analysis III/ SPSS</td>
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<td>C18</td>
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<td>4/24</td>
<td>Report &amp; Review</td>
<td><strong>CS2</strong></td>
<td>C19, A9</td>
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<td>5/1</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5/8</td>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td><strong>Phase 2</strong></td>
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*This is a likely schedule as of January 28, 2013. It is subject to change as the term progresses.

**C - chapter, A – article, RP - reflection paper, CS - case synopsis
ARTICLES*


3) “Microsoft Office: Gaining Insight into the Life of a College Student.” Mohanbir Sawhney; Ashuma Ahluwalia; Yuliya Gab; Kevin Gardiner; Alan Huang; Amit Patel; Pallavi Goodman, *Harvard Business School Cases*, June 20, 2012.


*Articles (A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8) are downloadable from Business Source Premier *(http://www.lib.umb.edu/find/databases/search)*. HBS case (A3, A9) can be purchased online via Harvard Business Publishing *(https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/18114150)*