



Marketing 560A & U – Research for Marketing Decisions
Professor MacLachlan

Balmer 307
Monday 6:15-9:30

Course Syllabus
Winter 2005

“I don’t know how you are supposed to make intelligent decisions without facts.”

–William Dillard

Office and Hours

Mackenzie 363 (soon moving to 357); Monday 5-6 pm (unless change announced) or by appointment, phone: 206-543-4562, email: macl@u.washington.edu.

Course Objectives

Marketing research provides important evidence on which many managerial decisions are based. Correctly done, marketing research can provide valuable insights concerning markets and customers. Among other things, marketing research can define marketing opportunities, evaluate marketing actions, and monitor marketing performance. In your management careers you will be required to evaluate the worth of marketing research information as you make decisions. Thus, it is necessary for you to be able to distinguish good from bad research and to guide high quality research efforts of others. This course teaches how to evaluate research as well as how to do it. Hence our major objectives are to acquaint you with all phases of the research process, emphasizing the minimization of errors that can creep in, and to gain first-hand experience with an actual marketing research project.

Course Approach

Each class session will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and some time to work on the class project. To make these effective, students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings and cases, as well as to make progress on the project. Project teams should arrange times to meet with their group and/or instructor regularly outside of class hours. This is a skills-oriented class, so much of the learning occurs in the process of conducting the team research project.

Text

Gilbert A. Churchill, Jr. and Dawn Iacobucci, *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations*, 9th Edition (Dryden), 2004 (hereafter designated **CI**).

Julie Pallant, *SPSS Survival Manual* (Open University Press/McGraw Hill Education), 2001, ISBN 0 335 20890 8 (**merely suggested**).

Please be sure to read materials and prepare cases by the days assigned.

Evaluation

Your final grade will be determined on class participation and by your performance on a number of quizzes, a data analysis assignment, a final exam, and a team research project.

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|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| Class participation | 6% | 30 points |
| Quizzes (5) | 30% | 150 |
| Data analysis assignment | 6% | 30 |
| Team project | 48% | 240 |
| Final Exam | <u>10%</u> | <u>50</u> |
| Total | 100% | 500 points |

At the completion of the project, you will be asked to evaluate your own performance and that of others on your team. Although there is no regular formal evaluation for class participation (the 6% allocation is only approximate), **class attendance is mandatory** and I reserve the right to modify grades somewhat based on in-class performance (please make every effort to come on time, since late arrivals are disruptive).

Team Project

This is a substantial undertaking, requiring that you meet outside the class throughout the quarter with a group of classmates with the purpose of designing, conducting and reporting on an original marketing research project.

Team membership. Teams will be composed of 4 to 5 people. You may select yourselves into teams so long as you do so by the end of the first class session. At the end of the first session I will ask for team memberships and assign remaining people into teams on a somewhat random basis.

Project topics. We will discuss project possibilities in class. You are free to generate your own project ideas, but they must be cleared with me before you invest substantial time on them. The important criteria are that (1) the project is do-able in the time frame you have and (2) it will provide you with a realistic research experience. To the latter point, the project should involve original data collection, through some kind of survey or experiment, and have a real client.

Project perspective. Your team will act in the role of a marketing research supplier working for a client. Clients can be for-profit or not-for-profit organizations here in the Seattle area. There must be an actual person or persons acting as your client(s) with whom you negotiate the details of the research. Before the actual research is undertaken, teams must prepare a project proposal that is approved by the instructor and client. Also, before fielding a study, the research instrument (e.g., survey questionnaire) must be approved by the Marketing Department chairman in accordance with the University's Human Subjects Review procedure (a form will be provided).

Project deadlines and evaluation:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| Select project organization | Jan 10 | -- | -- |
| Preliminary research proposal | Jan 24 | 10% | 20 points |
| Draft questionnaire | Feb 7 | 10% | 20 |
| Report | Mar 9(?) | <u>80%</u> | <u>200</u> |
| Project grade | | 100% | 240 points |

Work on the project. This project is an integral part of the course. Please treat it as a serious and time consuming exercise. Your first challenge will be to organize yourselves so that you can work

effectively as a team. This will take a little time because of your various personalities. Please try to be tolerant of each others' attitudes and needs. You must get going quickly!

Select a topic early and get together with the client to ascertain his/her problem. Work on refining the problem into something researchable, given your constraints of time, etc.

Meet the deadlines given above. They are critical.

You are encouraged to discuss your projects with me at any time during my office hours or by special appointment. Also, you should bring out questions regarding your projects during class sessions when we are discussing relevant related material. I urge you to do this, as it may make the class sessions more meaningful.

Presentation of results. You will make an **oral** presentation of your research results to the class. This allows all class members to learn from each of the various projects. The presentations themselves will not be graded, but I would appreciate your making them as informative as you can in the limited time you will have (10-15 minutes for presentation including Q&A). Powerpoint presentations are the typical mode. You are welcome to invite your client to hear the class presentations. Otherwise, you should arrange to make a verbal presentation to your client outside class time.

The **written** project report should be as professional as you can make it, including letter of transmittal to your client, executive summary, and appropriate appendices. More detail is available on the class website regarding the project report and how it will be evaluated.

Class Schedule and Assignments

On the class schedule are specific topics and assignments to be prepared by class time. From time to time there may be revisions to the schedule. These revisions and other course materials may be found on the Blackboard website, <http://uwbs.blackboard.com>.

Other

The course TA will be marketing doctoral student, **Ed Healey (edhealey@u.washington.edu)**. He will be available to help you, especially with statistical software (e.g., SPSS) and web-survey software. Ed's office hours: **MWF 12-1:15 p.m. and by appointment, Balmer 51.**