

Advertising & Public Relations Research Methods

Course: JOMC 279.001: Ad/PR Research Methods

Schedule: M/W 2:30–3:45 p.m.

Location: Carroll Hall 033

Dates: Jan. 7–May 5, 2015

Final: Tuesday, May 5, 8–10 a.m.

Professor: Adam Saffer, Ph.D.

Office Location: 378 Carroll Hall

Office Hours: M/W 9–10 a.m. & 12–2 p.m.

Email: Adam.Saffer@unc.edu (preferred)

Skype: Adam.Saffer (online office hours)

Course Description: The key to effective advertising and public relations is research. This course will teach students how to understand, evaluate and conduct communication research. It will provide students with an understanding of the relationship between theory, data collection, analysis, and the communication of these results to clients. The course will also teach students how to design and execute various methodologies used for program assessment and evaluation in advertising and public relations.

The class will work together to answer questions for real-world clients through research methods including literature review, survey, focus groups, interviews, content analysis and social media analytics. At the end of the class, students will have data-driven answers and provide insights to the clients.

Course Design: Students will have five research assignments (four papers and one presentation) and complete three exams. The papers provide an opportunity to improve your writing and analytical skills. The exams will test your knowledge through essays, short answer questions and multiple-choice questions. On the exams, you will also be required to apply basic math skills including means, modes, percentages, percentage change, range, and other basic math tasks.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Become critical consumers of strategic communication research;
- Understand the philosophies of science and processes of social scientific inquiry;
- Understand the basic principles of research;
- Differentiate between qualitative and quantitative research and the conditions in which they are utilized;
- Understand methods of design, measurement, reasoning, and analysis;
- Recognize the limitations in various methodologies and in specific research;
- Discuss ethical considerations of the research process;
- Understand how research helps organizations communicate with diverse publics;
- Demonstrate the ability to organize, execute, and evaluate a communication research program.

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications Principles are a series of competencies students should demonstrate by the time of graduation. A complete list of these competencies is on page 8. No single course can cover all of these principles. This course will build your abilities in these areas:

- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

Textbooks/Readings:*Required:*

Jugenheimer, D.W., Kelly, L.D., Hudson, J.C., & Bradley, S.D. (2014). Advertising and public relations research (2nd ed.). Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

*Available on Amazon on \$57.26 | ISBN: 978-0765624185

Suggested:

American Psychological Association. (2009). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

*Available on Amazon on \$28.42 | ISBN: 978-1433805615

**Other readings will be posted to Sakai. Please check the Sakai site frequently.

Coursework/APPLES Client Work: This course uses the services of APPLES Service-Learning Program to provide you with an opportunity to work with a real-world client. This is a valuable experience that provides you with professional experience you should discuss in interviews for internships and jobs. Your team will work directly with the client to address their communication needs. As part of your client work, you are expected to check-in with the client regularly and meet with me to discuss your team's progress. More details will be provided throughout the semester. You can use this [APPLES time sheet](#) to track your hours.

Formatting and Writing Expectations: When submitting your assignments, I will tell you on the assignment sheet how I would like you to format the document. Follow these formatting requirements for all assignments. Documents not meeting these standards will not be accepted and are considered late until corrected.

Font	Size	Page Margins	Page Numbers	Name	Submissions	Lines
Times New Roman	12	1 inch all sides	All text pages	Header	Sakai	Double Spaced

Attendance/Absences: You will sign-in/check-in each class period. If you have four unexcused absences, your overall grade will be reduced a letter grade (or 10%). As a professional courtesy, let me know when you will miss class. Excused absences will be recognized for NCAA or similar events. If you believe your absence should be excused for a relevant event or religious holiday, please send an email detailing the event and why you will miss class. Absences as a result of family death or health issues will be addressed based on the circumstance. Should you miss a prolonged period of the course, you will be directed to the Registrar's Office for handling the compensation process.

Late Work: Late assignments will receive an automatic 10% per day deduction. If you must miss class on a day when a written assignment is due, you must submit your assignment through Sakai on time. You are responsible for bringing the hard copy of the assignment, assignment sheet and support materials when requested. This policy is necessary so I can return graded assignments in a reasonable amount of time. I will not accept any assignment one week after the due date. The one-week mark is calculated one week from the beginning of class period (2:30 p.m.) on the date that the assignment is due.

Honor Code: All work submitted for this course must be your work. All sources used for information must be properly cited. Students should adhere to the University's Honor Code: honor.unc.edu. You can find a link to this site on Sakai. You will need to visit this website the first week of class and complete the [student module](#). The ideas and content within your materials must be original and not copied from others. In our industry, we are expected to be original and creative all of the time. All written content submitted for this course will be processed by plagiarism detection software. My policy is to investigate all documents having greater than 15% of content from other sources as measured by TurnItIn.com. Documents that appear to have content from other than the author will be turned over to the University.

Diversity: The University of North Carolina does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Harassment: We all have the right to our opinions. In the classroom, everyone should feel comfortable expressing his or her opinions. We do not need to agree but we do need to respect others' thoughts. The University does not tolerate harassment. Please support your classmates' and others' right to worship, act, look and think, in their own way.

Originality is valued in our industry; we should always appreciate everyone's originality. Harassment is a violation of the Honor Code, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964), and Title IX. If you are harassed or feel threatened, please bring it to my attention at an appropriate time or contact the Dean of Students (dos@unc.edu, 919-966-4042).

Special Needs Policy: If you need accommodations based upon a disability, under the terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, please email me your needs by the end of the first week of classes. This includes physical needs as well as less apparent needs such as testing anxiety. If you need information about disabilities, please visit the Learning Center website at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu/ldadhd-services/>

Technology Policy: Please turn off your cell phone and all other communication devices/applications when you are in class. Your phone distracts you and others. In your internships and jobs, you are expected to put your phones away. The same goes for this classroom.

You are free to use your laptops to take notes, search the web for class related information, and participate in class activities. Your use of the technology in the classroom is a privilege; please use it accordingly.

Email and Communication: I check email regularly every day between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. I cannot guarantee an immediate response but will guarantee a response within 24 to 48 hours Monday through Friday. You should treat emails to the client or me as professional correspondence. All communication should include your name, your class, and a professionally worded message.

Working in Teams: Public relations work is often team oriented, so many class assignments will be team based, as well. You will be assigned a team by the second week of class. Your team will work together to analyze content, collect surveys, organize a focus group, and other research tasks. Group members will write a team contract and you can fire any group member who violates the contract. Students fired from a group will do all of the data collection on their own.

Teams are expected to (a) develop ground rules in a contract and function as a unit; (b) participate in project activity and observe deadlines; and (c) meet with the instructor every two weeks to review progress;

As an individual member of a team, you are expected to:

- Join a project team and fully participate. This means there must be evidence that each team member has contributed to all facets of the project (design, data collection and entry, transcription, etc.).
- Attend all team meetings and all class meetings;
- Keep updated on group work and maintain project documents;
- Noncontributing individuals: The evaluation of an individual's contribution comes from two sources: the instructors and peers. During the course of the semester, if any one of these sources judges an individual's contribution as negligible or belligerent, that individual will be "fired" from the team using this procedure.
 - a) Have a team meeting to discuss the problem. Inform the instructor of the meeting as well as the results.
 - b) If the problem persists, set up a time to meet with the instructor.

****** If a member of the team breaks the contract, then the team must send me a memo stating that they intend to fire the person. We will once more meet with the offending team member. Unless the student can prove serious extenuating circumstances for their actions/inaction, they will be fired.

****** Note: in special circumstances the process to fire a team member can and will be expedited. The other team members will assume his or her responsibilities on the project. At the end of the semester, each group member will be evaluated.

School Closure: In public relations we plan for the worst. There is always a chance that there will be a permanent school closure for health reasons. If school closes before the official semester ends, then your grade will be based on the work completed to date.

Grading: Your final grade will be calculated using the University's grading scale: A, B, C, D, F with the plus or minus option for each letter grades A–D. I follow the University's grading standards found here: bit.ly/1rGoz0U. Here are tailored descriptions of the grade levels:

- **A**—Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The A grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study. To achieve this grade, students should not miss class; students should read and critically engage ALL of the assigned readings (textbook chapters and articles); complete assignments on time with the correct format, appropriate style, and with few grammatical errors; demonstrate their OUTSTANDING abilities; and stay informed on current events.
- **B**—Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study. To achieve this grade, students may miss two classes; read the assigned readings (textbook chapters and articles); complete assignments on time with proficient formatting, styling, and editing; and stay informed on current events.
- **C**—A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that while not yet showing any unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development. To achieve this grade, students may miss two or three classes; read some of the assigned readings (textbook chapters and articles); complete assignments but not on time with formatting, styling, and editing errors; and follow current events occasionally.
- **D**—A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The D grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised to pursue another discipline or try again later. To receive this grade, students miss more than three classes; occasionally read the assigned readings (textbook chapters and articles); does not complete assignments or does so with partially proficient formatting, styling, and editing errors; and does not follow current events.
- **F**—For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content.

****Students with a grade below a C minus in this course will need to retake the course.**

Grade Questions: If you have concerns about a grade, please inform me of this concern via email. I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Please outline your concern(s) and provide evidence to support your claim. You have two weeks to challenge a grade after it has been posted on Sakai (this does not apply to grades posted during finals).

Assignments and Grading Criteria: All assignments are individual grades. You will work in groups on data collection but all grades are based on your individual performance. I am happy to look at your papers, answer questions about assignments, and even go over your notes in preparation for an exam. The deadline for getting feedback on your paper is one week before it is due. This will require you to write the paper in advance (always a good practice) and come to my office one week ahead of the deadline. Your grade is based on:

Grades	%	Points
Participation/Engagement	20%	200
Research Assignments (5 Total)	50%	500
Exams I–III (format and content TBA)	30%	300
Total (not including extra credit)	100%	1,000

Exams (10% or 100 points each, 30% or 300 points total)

There will be three in-class exams that include multiple-choice, true/false and short answer questions from the lectures, class readings, and current events. A study guide will be provided to you one week prior to the exam. Please remind me if you wish to have a study guide. If your goal is to do well on exams, you must thoroughly read the assigned chapters, take notes on the assigned readings, and review the lecture notes.

Participation/Engagement (20% of total grade, 200 points)

You will have several opportunities to participate in the course and earn the 200 points available for participation.

- You will receive 150 points for discussing the lectures, research methodologies, examples, etc. in the discussion forum on Sakai. There will be 15 discussion forum topics worth 10 points each. If you would like to receive the full 10 points for each discussion forum topic, you should be very thorough in your post and reply to other students' posts. There will be more details provided for each discussion forum topic.
- You will receive 25 points if you participate in a research study. All students are required to participate in a study. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement. 1) Participate in three hours of academic research studies in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. You will be able to sign up online to participate in these studies. 2) Write three two page summaries and critiques of academic research articles. Each review counts for one hour of research participation, and you may combine participation in the studies with article reviews to fulfill the research requirement. To receive credit your summary must summarize an article that was published in the last two years in the *Journal of Advertising*, *Public Relations Review*, or *Journal of Public Relations Research*. List, at the top of the page of each summary: the author(s) of the article, the publication date, the article title, and the journal title.
- You will receive 25 points if you actively participate in class, respond to emails, and engage your other classmates during in-class activities.

Research Assignments (50% of total grade, 500 points)

There are five research assignments described below. The assignments are designed to expose you to multiple methodologies while also teaching you present research findings in a professional manner.

***The below assignment descriptions are subject to change.*

Content Analysis and SWOT Analysis (10% of total grade, 100 points)

This assignment will familiarize you with the client and conducting research. Your SWOT analysis will include the client's history, mission, vision, and situation analysis. The SWOT analysis will include research on the client's previous communication efforts, analysis of other similar organizations, research of target audience/public, and review any previous publications/media hits. The publications/media hits for the client and similar organizations will be used to complete a content analysis. This write-up will be approximately five to seven pages. More details will be provided.

Literature Review and Quantitative Results Write-up (10% of total grade, 100 points)

This assignment blends academic research and data collection/reporting. You will write a literature review and report the findings from your group's survey. To write the literature review, you will have to search library databases for your topic. This topic will reflect the research that you do on the client. For instance, the client may need to raise awareness, increase donations, expand their volunteer base, or change behaviors with their target public. You will summarize seven peer reviewed journal articles, three periodical (non-peer reviewed) publications, and four "other" sources that address your research topic(s). Then you will summarize your method for conducting the survey. Finally, you will report the results of your survey. This write-up will be approximately ten pages. More details will be provided.

Qualitative Results Write-up (10% of total grade, 100 points)

The goal of this assignment is to allow you to explore questions that were not answered with the survey. Individually you will make participant observations of and conduct interviews with the target audience/public. As a group, you will facilitate a focus group. This write-up will be approximately 5 to 7 pages. More details will be provided.

Final Report (10% of total grade, 100 points)

You will take your previous three write-ups and put them together in a final report. The final report will be approximately 7 to 10 pages. You will submit a final report individually and your group will also submit a final report that can be shared with the client. More details will be provided.

Presentation of Results (10% of total grade, 100 points)

Each group will give a presentation of their findings. These will be approximately 10-minute presentations depending on how many groups and clients we have for the semester. More details will be provided.

DATE	DAY	TOPIC/READING	ASSIGNMENT DUE
1/7	1	Overview Introductions Syllabus Client	
SECONDARY AND ONLINE RESEARCH UNIT			
1/12	2	Basics of Research The Research Process Intro to Secondary Research <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 1–4, 35	Secondary Research Assignment MRI Account
1/14	3	Secondary Research <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 5–8	Groups Assigned
1/19		No Class—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
1/21	4	Library Resources Lecture w/ Librarian Stephanie Willen-Brown	Receive Content Analysis Write-up Assignment
QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH UNIT			
1/26	5	Content Analysis Lecture <i>Readings:</i> Chapter 11, See Sakai	Group Contracts Due
1/28	6	Introduction to Quantitative Research <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 16 & 23	Receive Quantitative Write-up Assignment Sheet
2/2	7	Surveys <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 16 & 18	Content Analysis Write-up Due By Friday
2/4	8	Designing Survey Questions <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 19–21	
2/9	9	Sampling <i>Readings:</i> Chapter 17	Draft Survey Questions and Sampling Plan Due
2/11	10	Finalizing Group Surveys	Receive Study Guide
2/16	11	Work Day-Field Surveys	Collect Survey Data
2/18	12	Exam I	
2/23	13	Analyzing Data <i>Readings:</i> Chapters 22, 30, 32, & 33	<i>Attend: Reed Surratt Lecture with BBDO CEO, Andrew Robertson</i>
2/25	14	Ethics & Research Writing Up Findings <i>Readings:</i> Chapter 37	

DATE	DAY	TOPIC/READING	ASSIGNMENT DUE
3/2	15	Experimental Research <i>Readings: Chapters 24–27</i>	
3/4	16	Debrief of Quantitative Unit Last Minute Questions on Write-up	Quantitative Research Write-Up Due Friday
3/9–13		Spring Break	Spring Break
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH UNIT			
3/16	17	Introduction to Qualitative Research <i>Readings: Chapters 9 & 14</i>	Receive Qualitative Write-up Assignment Sheet
3/18	18	Participant Observations <i>Readings: Chapter 13</i>	
3/23	19	Interviewing <i>Readings: Chapter 12; See Sakai</i>	Submit Memo on Participant Observation Plan
3/25	20	Focus Groups <i>Readings: Chapter 10; See Sakai</i>	
3/30	21	Group meetings with Prof. Saffer	Submit Focus Group Discussion Questions Receive Final Report Assignment Sheet
4/1	22	Work Day-Qualitative Data	Conduct Interview or Focus Groups
4/6	23	Work Day-Qualitative Data	Conduct Interview or Focus Groups Receive Study Guide
4/8	24	Writing Up Qualitative Quantitative Findings <i>Readings: Chapters 15 & 29</i>	
4/13	25	Exam II	Exam II
4/15	26	Debrief of Quantitative Unit Last Minute Questions on Write-up <i>Readings: Chapter 36</i>	Qualitative Research Write-Up Due Friday
4/20	28	Class Wrap-up Final Group Work Time	
4/22	29	Final Report Due	Final Report Due
4/27	30	Group presentations to clients	Group presentations to clients
5/5	31	Final Cumulative Exam at 8-10 a.m.	Final Exam

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications Competencies Complete List

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.