

# MEJO 379: Advertising and Public Relations Research Methods

**Instructor:** Paige Ladisic

**Meeting Times:** 9:45 to 11 a.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays

**Classroom:** Carroll 58 / [ZOOM LINK](#) (password: THEO)

**Email:** [ladisic@email.unc.edu](mailto:ladisic@email.unc.edu)

**Phone:** 910-448-2003 (cell; texting is encouraged after 5 p.m.)

**Office hours and location:** By appointment only at this time. Kindly use my Calendly link to set up an appointment: [bit.ly/paige379officehours](https://bit.ly/paige379officehours)

**Final Exam:** Saturday, November 21

*Note: As 379 is a required course for MEJO students, a grade of at least a "C" is required to avoid needing to retake the course.*

## COURSE OVERVIEW

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

### Learning Objectives

After the student has completed this course, they should be able to:

- Describe quantitative and qualitative research methods in the area of public relations and advertising
- Differentiate the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods
- Apply qualitative and quantitative research methods and appropriate data collection, numerical concepts, and statistical procedures
- Determine research methods that are the most appropriate to answer specific client needs
- Design research, develop research instruments, and collect data using these methods
- Analyze and synthesize data obtained by these research methods
- Apply research findings to address real-world issues and client problems
- Examine publics/consumers and organizations/issues through primary and secondary research

## TEXTBOOK

Jugenheimer, D.W., Bradley, S.D., Kelly, L.D., & Hudson, J.C. (2014). *Advertising and Public Relations Research, 2nd Edition*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

**AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH THE PARK LIBRARY FOR FREE!**

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Attendance Policies**

- **Face-to-Face Hybrid:** This course will be conducted via live lecture each day. Lectures will be presented in-class and on Zoom, for those who need to attend class remotely. This course will be *synchronous*.
- **Attendance:** Attendance in this course is defined as: Presence in the physical classroom or the Zoom classroom when I take attendance at the beginning of class. The lectures will be recorded but watching the recorded lectures after the fact will not qualify as attending class.
  - For your reference, University's attendance policy can be found [here](#).
- **Missed Work:** If you cannot attend class in-person OR via Zoom, please connect with a classmate to see what you missed or watch the recorded lecture.
- **Participation:** Missing more than 5 classes will result in a reduction of your participation grade by 2 points for every additional absence.
- **Tardiness:** Please do your best to be on time. If you have to choose between being late to class or attending via Zoom, choose the latter and avoid interrupting me and your classmates.

### **Classroom Policies**

- **Technology:** Make good decisions when it comes to distractions during lectures, both in-person and via Zoom.
- **Zoom attendance:** Whenever possible, please keep your camera on but your microphone muted.
- **Guest speakers and presentations:** Be respectful of our guest speakers and your classmates. Talking amongst yourselves, using cell phones or otherwise being disrespectful will result in immediate dismissal from the class.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** I am fully committed to fostering a safe environment for all students at the Hussman School and enforcing all University policies.

### **Health and Safety Policies**

- **Distance:** Please keep a minimum of 6 feet of distance between you and your classmates at all time.
- **Masks:** Masks are required at all times. I'll wear one, you'll wear one.
- **Group work:** Please practice safe distance when meeting in groups, both inside and outside of class. Meet outside or remotely whenever possible. If meeting in person, wear a mask.

- **Physical work:** No physical copies of work will be accepted this semester. Please use Sakai or email to submit work.
- **Attendance:** Do not attend class if you are sick, might be sick or have been around someone who is sick. Please attend class via Zoom. We will have contingency plans in place for anyone who is sick on the day of a class presentation.
  - NOTE: It is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner (within 24 hours) if you are experiencing any internet, technology or other issues that fall outside of university guidelines that might cause you miss an online session.
- **Privacy:** No one is required to reveal any personal health information or defend their decisions to attend class remotely / avoid group meetings. If you have an issue in this area, please come to me immediately.

## Communication

- **Contact information:** Email me at [ladisic@email.unc.edu](mailto:ladisic@email.unc.edu) with *non-urgent needs*. If you have an *urgent* need, please send me a text at 910-448-2003! This is the best way to get in touch with me, and I really prefer texting, anyway.
- **Office hours:** I want to be accessible to you. So, you can set up a time to meet with me in-person or via Zoom here: [bit.ly/paige379officehours](https://bit.ly/paige379officehours)
- **Class updates:** I will use email to communicate changes and updates to the entire class. Assignments, due dates and lecture plans are subject to change.

## Assignments and Grading Policies

- **Submission guidelines:** Work should be submitted in PDF form on Sakai or via email. No other specifications.
- **Client-ready work:** I won't take off points for individual grammar, spelling and AP style mistakes, but I do expect work to be client-ready and professional. Laziness and carelessness are not acceptable.
- **Late work:** Late assignments will lose 10 points right off the bat, with an additional 2 points subtracted for every additional day it is late. If you need more time, come and talk to me! Don't wait until the day it's due to ask for help.
- **Group work:** A majority of the projects in this class will be completed in groups. You will have time to work with your group on almost all projects in class, but sometimes, you may need to meet outside of class. Please be safe and reasonable with each other when this is necessary.
- **Grading:** Your grade is subjective to my expectations and standards. My expectations are high, and I expect you to think critically and go above and beyond. If you did not produce excellent work, you will not receive an A.
- **Grade concerns and questions:** If you have concerns about a grade, please inform me via email. I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Please outline your concerns and provide evidence to support your claim. NOTE: I do not discuss grades

over email. So, after you contact me about a grade I will set-up a time to meet with me in person (online or the phone) so we can discuss the grade.

- **Extra credit:** It's unlikely you will receive any extra credit opportunities in this course. In the rare and unlikely event that they occur, they will be class wide, so please don't ask for individual extra credit assignments.

## **Classroom Collegiality & Diversity Policy**

The University is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive academic community and prohibiting discrimination and harassment. Please review the University policy statements on diversity and inclusivity, and prohibited harassment and discrimination, both in The Undergraduate Bulletin 2014-2015 at <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. Please know that I am fully committed to fostering and enforcing these policies.

## **UNC-CH Honor Code**

The Honor Code (<https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>) forms a bond of trust among students, faculty, and administrators. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill operates under a system of self-governance, as students are responsible for governing themselves. As such, our University is transformed into a powerful community of inquiry and learning. The Honor Code embodies the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, and governs the performance of all academic work a student conducts at the University. Acceptance of an offer of admission to Carolina presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in our century-old tradition of honor and integrity.

## **Accreditation**

The Hussman School of Journalism and Media's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here:

<http://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas.

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on:

- 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;
- 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.

## Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Resources & Services site at <https://ars.unc.edu/>.

## Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined on the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office's webpage (<https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/>). UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and 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's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

## Updates and Resources

Please reach out to Chris Hill, who's in charge of our Hussman Triage Hub, if you will need assistance with high-speed internet access, computing, basics on how to receive online instruction, and strategies for being an online student. His contact information is: (CHJ@unc.edu or 919-962-0025).

The best source of information about COVID-19 and UNC is the UNC Coronavirus [website](#). For health-related concerns, please contact [Campus Health](#) or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#).

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. **In-class assignments and reading quizzes (10%):** Periodically, we will work on assignments in class, like the SWOT analysis assignment or the in-class focus group, to master important course content. There will also be 5 reading quizzes (on Sakai).
2. **Research plan (10%):** Your group will put together a *written research plan* as well as a *presentation* for the class. This will include an outline of your group's plans for the semester ahead, from problem statement to research questions to hypothesize. *One submission per group.*

3. **Background research (10%):** Explore your problem statement deeper through background research. This project will require you to find appropriate secondary data (i.e., existing data) and other background information related to your problem. *One submission per group.*
4. **Qualitative research (20%):** This phase of the project is divided into three assignments:
  - a. *Interview report:* This report will require each group member to interview three people for a minimum of 15 minutes each to get their thoughts on your problem. You will need to submit your interview questions, your interview recordings and your findings from your interviews in a report form. *Individual submissions.*
  - b. *Focus group report:* This project will require you to plan for and host a focus group as a team. You will need to submit your focus group discussion guide, notes from the focus group and your findings. *One submission per group.*
  - c. *Qualitative data group presentation:* This presentation should summarize your group's findings from the IDIs and focus group.
5. **Empirical research (10%):** In this phase of the project, you will conduct quantitative research via a survey.
  - a. *Survey report:* You will develop a survey that will apply to your problem. Use findings from your earlier projects to help inform question development. The survey will be an online survey administered by Qualtrics. Your group will then analyze the data and submit the findings. *One submission per group.*
  - b. *Quantitative data group presentation:* This presentation should summarize your survey methodology and your findings.
6. **Final Exam (20%):** Multiple choice and T/F exam to review readings and key concepts throughout the semester.
7. **Participation (5%):** This will include your collective score on peer evaluations, in addition to your end-of-year self-evaluation.
8. **Research participation (5%):** Students in all sections of MEJO 379 are required to complete three hours of research over the course of the semester. There are two ways you can fulfill this requirement: 1) participate in three hours of academic research studies in the School of Media and Journalism or 2) write three two-page summaries and critiques of academic research articles. Find more about research participation below.

## **Research Participation Requirement**

Students in sections of MEJO 379 are required to complete three hours of research over the course of the semester. There are two ways you can fulfill the research requirement.

First, you can participate in three hours of academic research studies in the Hussman School of Journalism and Media. Participating in studies is a valuable way for you to receive firsthand experience with research. If you are enrolled in another class that has a research requirement, it may also satisfy the research requirement for this course. If you have questions about the

subject pool participation, please contact Professor Joe Bob Hester (joe.bob.hester@unc.edu). You must fulfill your participation in a research study by **November 10, 2020**.

Second, you can write three two-page summaries and critiques of academic research articles. Each review counts for one hour of research participation, so you can combine participation in the studies with article reviews to fulfill the research requirement. You may summarize any research article published in the past two years in the following journals: Journal of Advertising, Journal of Public Relations Research, Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, Public Relations Review, or Mass Communication and Society. You must identify the author, date, article title, and journal title on each of your summaries. Article summaries are due **November 10, 2020**.

Grading for research participation requirement 50 points (5%)

- 5% = Completing all 3 studies/3 two-page article reviews
- 3.33% = Completing 2 studies/2 two-page articles reviews
- 1.66% = Completing 1 study/1 two-page article review
- 0.83% = Completing .5 study/1 one-page article review

### Summary of Grading

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| In-class assignments and reading quizzes                                   | 10%         |
| Research plan (research plan + group presentation)                         | 10%         |
| Background research  | 10%         |
| Qualitative research (interview report, focus group report + presentation) | 20%         |
| Empirical research (survey report + presentation)                          | 20%         |
| Final Exam   | 20%         |
| Participation (in-class and peer evaluations)                              | 5%          |
| Research participation   | 5%          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

### Grading Scale

| PERCENT  | GRADE | DESCRIPTION                      |
|----------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 93-100   | A     | Outstanding. Mastery attainment. |
| 90-92.99 | A-    |                                  |

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|----------|----|--|
| 88-89.99 | B+ |  |
| 83-87.99 | B  | Strong performance; Solid attainment                                       |
| 80-82.99 | B- |  |
| 78-79.99 | C+ | Average performance; Basic attainment of the subject has been demonstrated |
| 73-77.99 | C  |  |
| 70-72.99 | C- |  |
| 68-69.99 | D+ |  |
| 60-67.99 | D  | Passing performance; Marginal attainment                                   |
| <59.99   | F  | Failed performance; Unacceptable attainment                                |

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: This schedule is dependent upon an uninterrupted fall semester. Due dates and lecture plans are subject to change.

| DATE  | TOPIC OF DISCUSSION  | ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Day 1<br/>Tuesday,<br/>August 11</b>       | <b>Welcome to MEJO 379</b>   |  |
| <b>Day 2<br/><br/>Thursday,<br/>August 13</b> | <b>Introduction to Research</b><br><br><i>Introduction to the research plan assignment. Groups will be assigned today.</i>   | Ch. 1-2  |
| <b>Day 3<br/><br/>Tuesday,<br/>August 18</b>  | <b>Introduction to Research, Continued</b>   | Ch. 3-4  |
| <b>Day 4<br/><br/>Thursday,<br/>August 20</b> | <b>Guest Speaker: Stephanie Brown of Park Library</b><br><br><i>Resources for MEJO 379 students:</i><br><a href="http://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo379">http://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo379</a><br><br>Our guest speaker will speak via Zoom. You can attend this class session via Zoom or in our | Research assignment should be completed before class.<br><br>DUE by 11:59 p.m.:<br>Reading quiz on Ch. 1-4 |



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|   | classroom. I will take attendance at the beginning of class.   |   |
| <b>Day 5</b><br><b>Tuesday,</b><br><b>August 25</b>   | <b>Introduction to Secondary Research</b><br><br><i>Introduction to background research assignment.</i>  | Ch. 5-8   |
| <b>Day 6</b><br><b>Thursday,</b><br><b>August 27</b>  | <b>WORK DAY</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finish research plans.</li> <li>● Prepare for research plan presentations.</li> <li>● Begin work on background research assignment.</li> </ul> | DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br>Research plan (one submission per group)  |
| <b>Day 7 &amp; 8</b><br><b>Tuesday,</b><br><b>September 1 &amp;</b><br><b>Thursday,</b><br><b>September 3</b> | <b>Group presentations: Research Plan</b>  | DUE at 11:59 p.m. on<br>Thursday: Peer evaluations for Research Plan<br><br>DUE at 11:59 p.m. on<br>Thursday: Reading quiz on Ch. 5-8 |
| <b>Day 9</b><br><b>Tuesday,</b><br><b>September 8</b>   | <b>Introduction to Qualitative Research &amp; Research Ethics</b><br><br><i>Introduction to in-depth interview assignment.</i>   | Ch. 9, 37   |
| <b>Day 10</b><br><b>Thursday,</b><br><b>September 10</b>  | <b>WORK DAY</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In-class assignment: Interview practice</li> <li>● Complete secondary research report</li> </ul>   | DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br>Background research report (individual submissions)   |
| <b>Day 11</b><br><b>Tuesday,</b><br><b>September 15</b>   | <b>In-Depth Interviews</b>   | Ch. 12, 20  |
| <b>Day 12</b><br><b>Thursday,</b><br><b>September 17</b>  | <b>Guest Speaker: Mary Tyler March, Editor at WAMU</b>   |   |
| <b>Day 13</b><br><b>Tuesday,</b><br><b>September 22</b>   | <b>Focus Groups</b><br><br><i>Introduction to focus group assignment.</i>  | Ch. 10  |

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| <p><b>Day 14</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, September 24</b></p>                                  | <p><b>WORK DAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete interview report</li> <li>• Begin work on planning for focus group</li> <li>• Prepare for in-class focus group</li> </ul> | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br/>In-depth interview report (individual submissions)</p> |
| <p><b>Day 15</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, September 29</b></p>                                   | <p><b>Other Qualitative Methods</b></p>  | <p>Ch. 13-15</p>   |
| <p><b>Day 16</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, October 1</b></p>                                     | <p><b>WORK DAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class assignment: Focus group practice</li> <li>• Continue work on focus group report</li> </ul>                                | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br/>Reading quiz on Ch. 10, 12-15, 20</p>                  |
| <p><b>Day 17</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, October 6</b></p>                                      | <p><b>Introduction to Quantitative Research</b></p> <p><i>Introduction to survey report assignment.</i></p>  | <p>Ch. 11, 16, 23</p>  |
| <p><b>Day 18</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, October 8</b></p>                                     | <p><b>WORK DAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete focus group report</li> <li>• Prepare for qualitative research presentations</li> </ul>                                   | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br/>Focus group report (one submission per group)</p>      |
| <p><b>Day 19 &amp; 20</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, October 13 &amp; Thursday, October 15</b></p> | <p><b>Group presentation: Qualitative Research</b></p>   | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday: Peer evaluations for Qualitative Research</p>  |
| <p><b>Day 21</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, October 20</b></p>                                     | <p><b>Survey Research, continued</b></p>   | <p>Ch. 17-19, 21</p>   |
| <p><b>Day 22</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, October 22</b></p>                                    | <p><b>WORK DAY</b></p> <p>Surveys should be launched by the end of class.</p>  | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m.:<br/>Reading quiz on Ch. 11, 16-19, 21, 23</p>              |
| <p><b>Day 23</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, October 27</b></p>                                     | <p><b>Experimental Research</b></p>  | <p>Ch. 24-27</p>   |

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|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Day 24</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, October 29</b></p>                                      | <p><b>Data Tabulation</b></p>   | <p>Ch. 22, 29–33</p> <p><i>Your survey should be closed by the end of today.</i></p>  |
| <p><b>Day 25</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, November 3</b></p>                                       | <p><b>WORK DAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete your survey reports.</li> <li>• Prepare for survey presentations.</li> </ul> | <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m.: Survey reports (one submission per group)</p>   |
| <p><b>Day 26</b></p> <p><b>Thursday, November 5</b></p>                                      | <p><b>What comes next?</b></p> <p>You've been freed! Well, almost.</p>  | <p>Ch. 36</p>   |
| <p><b>Day 27 &amp; 28</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, November 10 &amp; Thursday, November 12</b></p> | <p><b>Group Presentations: Survey Research</b></p>  | <p>DUE at the end of class on Tuesday: Research participation</p> <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday: Peer evaluations for Survey Research</p> <p>DUE at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday: Reading quiz on Ch. 22, 24–27, 29–33, 36</p> |
| <p><b>Day 29</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, November 17</b></p>                                      | <p><b>Final Exam Prep</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>Saturday, November 21 at 8 a.m.</b></p>  | <p><b>Final Exam</b></p>  |   |