

Advertising & Public Relations Research Methods

MEJO 379, Fall 2021

Class: Tuesday/Thursday 3:30-4:45pm, Carroll 33

Instructor: Sophia Noor Kiser
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Office hours: By appointment, Carroll 364 (my office)

Course prerequisite: You must have passed Principles of Ad/PR to take this course.

Course objectives:

- Understand quantitative and qualitative research options in the area of strategic communication (PR and advertising)
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods
- Select methods that are most appropriate to answer specific client needs
- Plan and conduct research using these methods
- Analyze data obtained by these research methods and apply findings to real-world issues
- Expand knowledge of publics/consumers/organizations/issues through primary and secondary research

University Stuff

ACEJMC Core Competencies: The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that irrespective of their specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. This course is particularly relevant to the following competencies:

- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
- Think critically, creatively, and independently
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts

Full list of competencies: <http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

Attendance, University Policy: No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

- Authorized University activities
- Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)
- Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

Class Policy: We are (still) in a pandemic. I will be operating in the following mindset regarding attendance and grading, expressed succinctly by your student body president, @lamarrichards, on Twitter:

“I say this wholeheartedly, if you are a faculty member or TA at @UNC, please extend compassion and grace to students that will continue to navigate the effects of a global pandemic and the effects of ineffective leadership on all levels.

There will be times where students are exhibiting symptoms and have to quarantine or isolate until the test results are back, possibly longer. This could lead to students missing up to 10+ days of class (based on CDC guidance), so there may be missed assignments or classes.

Please be understanding as my peers and I are watching what is supposed to be “the best years of our lives” pass us by during this pandemic. Please offer flexibility and make your attendance policies less stringent. And also pls consider recording any/all lectures and post them!

Just as equally, peers I am asking that you extend grace and compassion to the faculty members and TAs that will be teaching us every single day, trust me they are navigating the same pandemic and have the same fears. It is our job to be understanding with them as well.

The only way we get through this is together! Stay healthy, be vigilant, and get vaccinated!”

For my part, I will do my best to make resources available online so you can catch up on your own time. I trust that you are all hardworking and honest. For your part, effort is more important than results—if you need an extension, extra help, or have other concerns, please just ask.

Honor Code: I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor’s responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Syllabus Changes: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

ARS: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs, and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

* If you have ongoing or acute mental health issues that affect your attendance and participation, please let me know and we will figure out a way to help you with the course.

Title IX: Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at <https://safe.unc.edu>.

Policy on Nondiscrimination: The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office, or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

Diversity Statement: I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on prohibiting harassment and discrimination. In summary, 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. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

Mask Use: All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering their mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community -- your classmates and me -- as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the Office of Student Conduct. At that point, you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception. For additional information, see <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/>.

Class Stuff

Readings: We will rely primarily on the textbook *Advertising and Public Relations Research by Jugenheimer and Associates* (see citation below). It is available FOR FREE as an e-book via our library system. You can also buy one if you prefer a hard copy. In addition, there will be readings outside of the text that will be made available on Sakai under Resources.

Jugenheimer, D.W., Bradley, S.D., Kelly, L.D., & Hudson, J.C. (2015). *Advertising and Public Relations Research*, 2nd edition. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

E-book: <http://www.tandfebooks.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/isbn/9781315716565>

Sakai: I will use Sakai to post syllabus updates, announcements, slides (posted after class), assignments, and other important information. The UNC Sakai service can be found at <http://sakai.unc.edu>. Updates will be frequent, so check back often. You are responsible for any course changes that may be made on Sakai,

including changes to the syllabus or assignments. I will also aim to send out weekly reminders with due dates and other class happenings.

Grading

This class is structured around an ongoing client-based group project. Some are individual assignments whereas others are group assignments. This arrangement allows for collaboration and teamwork while also promoting individual learning, individual accountability, and individualized grades. You will be assigned to a group in the second week of class, based on the surveys you turn in after the first day. Your group will then select the brand or organization that you will focus on for the semester.

Grading rubrics and project requirements will be issued when each part of the overall assignment is assigned. This helps students know exactly what they're being graded on for each specific assignment. There are three phases of research assignments:

- 1) Secondary Data (Background research project)
- 2) Primary Data: Qualitative (Focus group, in-depth interview, participant observation/ethnography)
- 3) Primary Data: Quantitative (Survey, experiment)

Your Final Project includes a synthesis of all the above assignments with additional components.

Summary of Graded Items:

1) Secondary data/background research (10 points): This project will require your group to find appropriate secondary data (i.e., existing data) and other background information related to your problem or brand. Your group will create a written report that will be turned in on Sakai. You will need to coordinate with each other and share individual findings so that all group members see the "big picture." ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP

2) Focus group (10 points): Your group will conduct a 30-minute focus group in class. Groups will take turns facilitating and serving as participants. When it is your group's turn to facilitate, one of you will act as a moderator while the others will serve as note-takers and participants. You will be joined by members of another group. After 30 minutes, teams will switch, with the other group serving as facilitators and your group serving as participants. Your group will turn in an analysis of the findings from the focus group conducted by your group. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP

3) In-depth interviews (10 points): This project will require you to interview two of your classmates to get their thoughts on your product or problem. You will need to submit your interview questions and your findings from your interview. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION

4) Participant observation and ethnography (10 points): This project will require you to take field notes around campus on your observations of people/situations around a problem that you define. You will then write up your field notes and share them with your peers. You will write up an analysis of your own notes and of the ethnography process. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION

5) Survey (10 points): Your group will develop a survey that will apply to your problem. Use findings from your earlier projects to help inform question development. Your classmates will take your survey using Qualtrics or Google Forms. Grades will be based on the group-submitted report. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP

6) Split run experiment (10 points): This project will require your group to come up with two versions of an ad, PSA, persuasive message, visual, or another stimulus that would apply to your client/issue. Your group can choose to run the experiment (good practice) or write up your process of developing the experiment materials and what you may expect to find with different results. Further instructions will be provided. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP

7) Final project (10 points) and presentation (10 points): The final group project is a culmination of your previous assignments. You can use the data already collected for your problem or client, but it is expected that the final project will be an improved and consolidated version of what you have already turned in and researched. All groups will present their projects to the class at the end of the semester. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP

8) Peer evaluations mid-semester (5 points) and end of the semester (5 points): Your teammates will be evaluating your contributions to the group, and the average of these scores across your teammates will constitute your grade. Mid-semester evaluations are a good opportunity to revisit group work expectations to ensure effective work for the remainder of the class.

10) Exam (10 points): The exam will cover class and textbook material. Instructions will be provided.

Assignment	Type	Points
Secondary data/background research	Group	10
Focus group	Group	10
Interviews	Individual	10
Participant observation/ethnography	Individual	10

Survey	Group	10
Experiment	Group	10
Final project (written & presentation)	Group	20
Peer evals (mid-semester and end; 5 points each)	Individual	10
Exam	Individual	10
TOTAL		100

Letter grade	Range of points Scores falling in between point ranges will be rounded to the nearest whole number.	Interpretation
A A-	95-100 90-94	Highest level of attainment
B+ B B-	87-89 83-86 80-82	High level of attainment
C+ C C-	77-79 73-76 70-72	An adequate level of attainment
D+ D	67-69 63-66	Minimal passing level of attainment
F	Below 63	Failed, unacceptable performance

Late assignments: I will aim to be flexible here. If you need to submit something late, please communicate with me honestly about why you may need an extension.

Extra credit: In the rare and unlikely event that extra credit opportunities occur, they will be class-wide, so please don't ask for individual extra credit assignments.

Course Schedule

This schedule represents a good faith effort to outline our work over the course of the semester. However, as we have all learned over the past 18 months, things can change quickly. I will be in communication with you if any of these changes, and we can discuss it as a class.

DATE	TOPIC	DUE
Aug 19	Welcome + introduction	
Aug 24	Need for research, key concepts Career Services presentation	Ch. 1-2
Aug 26	Lecture: Planning, using, and designing research, introduce background research assignment Group work: Team assignments, select client, set ground rules, etc.	Ch. 3-4
Aug 31	Lecture: Using library resources GUEST LECTURE: Park Library director Stephanie Willen Brown	
Sept 2	Lecture: Intro to secondary research, SWOT analysis Group work: Discuss needs for background research on client	Ch. 5 SWOT analysis reading under Resources/Readings
Sept 7	Lecture: Syndicated, online, and other resources Group work: Continue working on secondary research reports	Ch. 6-8
Sept 9	Lecture: Intro to qualitative research methods, research ethics	Ch. 9, 37 Submit secondary research reports (one per group, due by the start of class)
Sept 14	Lecture: Focus groups, handling qualitative data	Ch. 10, 15
Sept 16	IN-CLASS DATA COLLECTION: Conduct your focus groups	
Sept 21	Lecture: Interviews Group work: Prep for interview	Ch. 12-13, 20
Sept 23	IN-CLASS DATA COLLECTION: Take turns conducting interviews and being interviewed	
Sept 28	Lecture: Ethnographic observation/ wrap up of qual methods Group work: Prep for observations	Readings on Sakai Submit focus group assignment

Sept 30	DATA COLLECTION: Observations around campus or other locations	
Oct 5	Lecture: Content analysis	Submit interview assignment
Oct 7	Lecture: Survey research, sampling	Ch. 16-17
Oct 12	Lecture: Measurement instruments, question-wording Group work: Brainstorm survey questions	Ch. 18-19 Submit observation assignment
Oct 14	Group workday to develop surveys	Submit peer evaluations
Oct 19	Lecture: Obtaining accurate responses Group work: Developing your survey	Ch. 21 Bring the survey questions you have been developing as a group; submit preview link by end of class.
Oct 21	No class - Fall break	
Oct 26	Group work: Finalizing survey	Submit link to finalized launched survey link (one per group) by end of class; I will post links to all. Take all surveys by next session.
Oct 28	Lecture: Data analysis, statistics, and Excel Group work: In-class activity	Ch. 22, 32
Nov 2	Lecture: Experimental research Group work - in class activity	Ch. 24-25
Nov 4	Lecture: Guidelines for group presentations and final projects. Group work: Put experiment online	No readings due. Submit survey assignment Submit preview link for experiment
Nov 9	Take experiments in class and write up worksheet	Submit experiment worksheet by end of the day
Nov 11	Exam	
Nov 16	Group work	
Nov 18	Group work - Plan for presentations and final paper	
Nov 23	Individual meetings for questions, group work	
Nov 25	No class meeting - Thanksgiving	
Nov 30	Final Presentations!	Final presentations due
Dec 4	Final exam period - NO CLASS MEETING	Final papers due by 7pm