

MEJO 379: Advertising and Public Relations Research Methods Spring 2021

Days, Time, & Location: Mostly Asynchronous – T/Th, 8:00am-9:15am (section 379.5)

Instructor: Alex Kresovich
Carroll 369
akk28@live.unc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Prerequisite: To take this course, you must have passed Principles of Ad/PR (MEJO 137).

Course Objectives: Upon course completion, she/he should be able to:

- Understand the standard practice quantitative and qualitative research methods in the area of strategic communication (Public Relations and Advertising);
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of these different research methods and when best to apply them to client problems;
- Explain how specific research methods will answer certain client research problems and needs;
- Develop research plans and initiatives using these methods;
- Problem solve and develop actionable plans using the data obtained from one's research process;
- Expand knowledge of groups (people, consumers, voters, organizations, issues and publics) through primary and secondary research.

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

The full list of competencies is available here:

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

Communication policy: You are encouraged to e-mail me with any questions or comments you have throughout the semester. I will do my best to answer within 24 hours. If your e-mail relates to your group project, please copy your group members on the e-mail. In a remote course, please expect regular communication from me and your classmates via email. *It is your responsibility to check your e-mail and Sakai regularly for messages and updates.*

The Honor Code: It is my duty to report any and all suspected Honor Code violations to the Student Attorney General. If you are not familiar with the Honor Code, review it here: <http://instrument.unc.edu>. As stated in the Honor Code, "It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to

obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic process or University student or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.”

A special note about plagiarism: The Instrument of Student Governance at UNC defines plagiarism as “deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.” Copying-and-pasting from online sources without citing the source from which you obtained the content is clearly an instance of plagiarism. However, it may also be plagiarism if you rely too heavily on the structure and reasoning of another piece (for example, if you rely too much on swapping out synonyms or making only very superficial changes to content that is not yours). This type of extensive paraphrasing is not acceptable in this course, which requires you to demonstrate original thinking and analysis. If you have any questions about whether your use of reference material is appropriate, please see me. If any part of your work is judged by me and an independent faculty member to reflect inappropriate use of reference material, I reserve the right to adjust assignment and course grades downwards, in addition to reporting suspected violations as described in the preceding paragraph.

Special Accommodations: If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know *as soon as possible*. If special accommodations will be needed, please contact Accessibility Resources & Service at 919-962-8300 or via the department’s website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>.

Although I aim to be as understanding as I can, please understand that, under University policies, disability-related accommodations are not guaranteed without authorization from ARS.

Diversity and Inclusion: The School of Media and Journalism adopted [diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements](#) in spring 2016 with accompanying goals. It complements 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.

Mental Health: Your mental and emotional health are important, not only to your success as a student at UNC but also as a student of life. What you may be going through at school and outside of school matters. Please consider taking advantage of the resources provided through the University via CAPS (<https://caps.unc.edu>). As someone who was diagnosed with Generalized Anxiety Disorder as a child, I’m also happy to be a resource for you as best as I reasonably can. You are never alone in your difficulties and help is always available.

Nutrition: Your physical health and wellness will enable you to put forth your best efforts in this class. If you are facing food insecurity, please consider the Carolina Cupboard, an on-campus food pantry that provides food at no cost to students (<http://carolinacupboard.web.unc.edu>).

Readings: We will rely primarily on the textbook *Advertising and Public Relations Research* by Jugenheimer and associates (see citation below). It is available at no extra cost to you as an e-book via our library system. You may also purchase the text at the bookstore or on Amazon if you prefer hard copy. In addition, there will be readings outside of the text that will be made available on Sakai under the corresponding lesson module.

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. (If you purchase, get the **SECOND** edition.)

FREE e-book version via UNC Library: <http://www.tandfebooks.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/isbn/9781315716565>

Online and Remote Learning:

This class will be mostly asynchronous. It will operate through weekly lessons (modules) posted in Sakai. **There will be one module to complete each week.** I will aim to make expectations and duties to ensure you learn all that is expected of you in this course as clear as possible.

There will be a handful of live/synchronous class sessions that will be recommended but not be required (other than the exam time which is required to be synchronous). Please connect with me and your group if you will miss any of the live sessions. You and your group members will also need to schedule virtual group conversations (via videoconference, phone, group texts, and/or email chains) in order to collaborate on group assignments throughout the semester. How and when and how often you all chat will be up to you. This will be discussed and agreed upon once groups are assigned. **You all will submit a team charter that reflects careful discussion with your team and provides details on communication preferences and expectations within the group to ensure that everyone is on the same page.**

In order to be successful in this course, you will need discipline and determination. It is up to you to set alarms, create a planner, and/or use other suggested tips in order to keep track of your obligations. This is great preparation for the real world, of which you will soon be a part upon graduation. Please prepare in advance for how you will manage the workload in this course with other courses and other responsibilities you may have. Although this course is in a remote environment, we will still maintain the same commitment to excellence required of all UNC classes. My job as your instructor is to uphold the high expectations of the Hussman School of Journalism and Media that make employers so excited to hire our graduates; they know the exact quality of individuals they are getting from this program. As you navigate online and remote classes at UNC, consider the tips and strategies found at <https://learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/online-and-remote-learning/>. Adapt these suggestions to best suit how you learn and work.

Sakai: You will use Sakai to complete the learning modules and discussions each week. I will use Sakai to post syllabus updates, announcements, 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.* **If you need materials for an upcoming assignment, task, etc. that you do not see on Sakai, it is your responsibility to let me know that you cannot access/view the materials.**

Also note, we will use the 'Wiki' on Sakai (found in the left bar) to create a class summary guide together throughout the semester.

Voice Thread: We will use voice thread throughout the semester. It is a tool that allows us to post videos that can be commented on by others in the class using a variety of multimedia options including video or text. More information can be found at <https://voicethread.com/howto/> and student instructions can be found at https://sakaitutorials.unc.edu/module_build.php?tag=voicethread&page=VoiceThread%20FAQ.

Research participation requirement: 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. The first way is to participate in three hours of academic research studies in the School of Media and Journalism. Participating in studies is a valuable way for you to receive first-hand experience with basic mass communication research. You will be able to sign up online to participate in these studies.

The second way to fulfill your research participation requirement is to write three one-page (single-spaced) 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. I will post full instructions on Sakai for those who wish to write summaries.

If you are enrolled in other MEJO classes that have research requirements, your fulfillment of the three hours for 379 may satisfy the requirements for the other course(s) provided the other course(s) do not require more

than three hours. If you have any questions about the subject pool participation, please contact me or Professor Joe Bob Hester at joe.bob.hester@unc.edu.

Participation and Professionalism: Please be prepared each week to engage fully in class discussions/engagement activities, team meetings, etc. If you show a consistent pattern of disengagement or disrespect, this will be addressed with verbal and/or written warnings. Failure to improve behavior will negatively influence your final grade per my discretion.

Attendance: I will assess attendance by marking you present for each week that you complete the engagement activities as instructed in the corresponding learning module: contributing discussion posts in the Sakai forum and contributing to the summary guide (the Wiki on Sakai). You will be expected to meet the minimum post length with substantive responses, respond to your classmates as indicated, and respond to any follow up questions I may ask. Your contribution to the summary guide **can be any length (full sentences) as long as your response adds value toward answering one or more of the questions being asked**. If you do not complete the forum posts and guide contribution for the corresponding week, you will be marked absent. I will be flexible regarding illnesses *with documentation from a doctor*. For any other absence, you will have a maximum of three absences with no penalty. Beyond the third absence, you will lose 2 points or 2% of your overall grade. **Please continue to treat attendance as a requirement in the remote environment. All Zoom sessions are required unless we have spoken individually so as to make it an allowable absence (i.e., I would completely understand time zone issues given an 8am ET start time)**. The guest talks are *incredibly* helpful (and a great networking opportunity for a potential internship.....).

FYI on Zoom: Zoom works on a phone or tablet as well as a computer. It does not require high-bandwidth access. The decoder automatically adjusts bandwidth to what your device has.

Seeking Help: If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is *as soon as you are aware of the problem* – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, an illness, etc.

Additional Resources:

Library resources: <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo379>

Grading and Assignments: 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 week. Your group will then select the brand or organization that you will focus on for the semester.

This semester you will have the opportunity to think more deeply about real-world issues in at least a few ways: choosing a client/issue related to any current social movement/cause/crisis/concern/issue, learning about research ethics issues that have involved BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities, and learning from course examples/case studies from diverse perspectives. Please see "Client/Issue Choice" document for more information.

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 synthesis of all the above assignments with additional components.

Summary of Graded Items:

- 1) Secondary Data/Background Research (10 points - DUE 2/21):** Your group will 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. Coordinate with each other and share individual findings so all group members see the “big picture.” ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP
- 2) Focus Group (10 points - DUE 3/7):** 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 - DUE 3/21):** 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) Ethnography (10 points - DUE 3/28):** This project will require you to take field notes around campus on your observations of people/situations around a problem that you define or to analyze the social media site of the client (if deemed appropriate). 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 - DUE 4/11):** Your group 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 and will be taken by everyone in class. The group will then analyze the data and submit the findings. Grades will be based on the group-submitted report. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP
- 6) Split-Run Experiment (10 points - DUE 4/25):** This project will require your group to come up with two versions of an ad, PSA, persuasive message, visual, or other stimulus that would apply to your client/issue. The experiment will be administered via a Qualtrics online instrument and will be taken by everyone in class. The group will then analyze the data and report the results. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP
- 7) Final Project (10 points) and Presentation (5 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. ONE SUBMISSION PER GROUP
- 8) Mid-Semester (5 points) and End-of-Semester (5 points) Peer Evaluations:** 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. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION
- 9) Research Participation Requirement (3 points):** See description provided above.
- 10) Reflection papers mid-semester (5 points - DUE 3/7) and end of semester (5 points - DUE 5/8):** This project will require you to use the class summary guide to reflect on your progress in the course. You will compose responses to questions that ask you to evaluate the knowledge you have found valuable throughout the semester, relate key concepts to your personal/professional/academic journey, and inquire about aspects of the course material that need further clarification. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION

TOTAL: 100 POINTS = 45 points from Individually-Graded items + 55 points from Group Assignments

Late assignments: Assignments submitted within 24 hours after the submission site closes will incur a 10% penalty, based on the overall point value of that assignment. An additional 10% will be deducted for assignments submitted within each additional 24-hour period of lateness. No exceptions.

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.*

Grading Summary:

Assignment	Type	Points
Secondary data/background research	Group grade	10
Focus group	Group grade	10
Interviews	Individual grade	10
Participant observation/ethnography	Individual grade	10
Survey	Group grade	10
Experiment	Group grade	10
Final project (written (10) & presentation (5))	Group grade	15
Peer evals (mid-semester and end; 5 points each)	Individual grade	10
Attendance + participation	Individual grade	2
Research participation	Individual grade	3
Reflection papers (mid-semester and end; 5 points each)	Individual grade	10
TOTAL		100

Letter grade	Range of points	Interpretation
A	94 - 100%	Highest level of attainment
A-	90 - 93.99%	
B+	87 - 89.99%	High level of attainment
B	84 - 86.99%	
B-	80 - 83.99%	
C+	77 - 79.99%	Adequate level of attainment
C	74 - 76.99%	
C-	70 - 73.99%	
D+	67 - 69.99%	Minimal passing level of attainment
D	60 - 66.99%	
F	Below 60%	Failed, unacceptable performance

Note: I do not round up.

Important Life Lesson: The devil is *always* in the details.

Course Schedule:

This schedule represents a good faith effort to outline our work over the course of the semester. However, because our needs may change, the timeline and assignments are subject to change. I will alert you via e-mail and Sakai of any changes in readings, assignments, due dates, etc., over the course of the semester. Thank you for your flexibility.

***All due dates are by 11:59p Eastern unless otherwise noted.**

***All engagement activities are due by Sunday at 11:59p unless otherwise noted.**

*****Assignments due BEFORE Sunday at 11:59pm EST for the given week are highlighted in green.**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
INTRODUCTION			
1	1/19	Course Introduction; Need For Research and Key Concepts	<p>Live Class on Zoom Tues, 1/19 @ 8:00a ET Topic: Official Class Welcome + Introduction!</p> <p>Read: Ch. 1, 2 Complete: Any engagement activities</p> <p>Due THURSDAY 1/21: Project Preferences Survey</p>

2	1/25	Planning, Using, Designing Research <i>Group Work:</i> Team Assignments, Select Client, Set Expectations	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 3,4 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due 1/31: Submit Team Charter with top three clients/potential research topics
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SECONDARY RESEARCH

3	2/1	Secondary Research <i>Group Work:</i> Discuss needs and assign roles for background research assignment.	Guest Talk on Zoom Tues, 2/2 @ 8:00a ET Aurora Pfeiffer, President – The Rolan Group <i>Read:</i> Ch. 5, 6 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities
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4	2/8	Syndicated, Online, and Other Resources <i>Group Work:</i> Continue working on secondary research reports	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 7, 8 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Reminder: Don't forget to fulfill your Research Participation requirement
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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

5	2/15	Qualitative Research and Research Ethics WELLNESS DAY THIS WEEK!	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 9, 37 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due 2/21: Background/Secondary Research Assignment (Group)
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6	2/22	Focus Groups; Qualitative Data Analysis <i>Group Work:</i> Assign roles and prepare to conduct focus groups.	Live Class on Zoom Thurs, 2/25 @ 8:00a ET Topic: Conduct Your Focus Groups! <i>Read:</i> Ch. 10, 15 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due THURSDAY 2/25 before class: Moderator's Guide
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7	3/1	Interviews <i>Group Work:</i> Plan out interviews (conduct individually)	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 12, 13, 10 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due 3/7: Focus Group Assignment (Group) Due 3/7: Reflection #1 (Individual)
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8	3/8	Ethnographic Observation WELLNESS DAY THIS WEEK! <i>Group Work:</i> Plan out observations (conduct individually)	<i>Read:</i> Required Readings from Sakai <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Reminder: Don't forget to fulfill your Research Participation requirement
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QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

9	3/15	Surveys Research and Sampling <i>Group Work:</i> Brainstorm survey focus that builds upon qualitative research	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 16, 17 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due 3/21: Interview Assignment (Individual) Due by 3/22: Mid-semester peer evaluations on Sakai (Individual)
10	3/22	Survey Measurement and Questions <i>Group Work:</i> Refine Survey Questions	Guest Talk on Zoom Thurs, 3/25 @ 8:00a ET Rick French, CEO - French West Vaughan <i>Read:</i> Ch. 18, 19 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due 3/28: Ethnography Assignment (Individual)
11	3/29	Obtaining Accurate Responses <i>Group Work:</i> Submit Draft Survey, Refine Final Survey	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 21 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due TUESDAY 3/30: Survey Draft Due 4/4: Finalized Survey
12	4/5	Data, Statistics, and Excel <i>Group Work:</i> Analyze Survey Data	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 22, 32 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due WEDNESDAY 4/7: Take all surveys Due 4/11: Survey Assignment (Group)
13	4/12	Experimental Research <i>Group Work:</i> Design Simple Experiment in Qualtrics; Submit Draft Experiment	<i>Read:</i> Ch. 24, 25 <i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due WEDNESDAY 4/14: Draft Experiment <i>Reminder: Don't forget to fulfill your Research Participation requirement</i> Due 4/18: Final Experiment in Qualtrics
PRESENTATIONS AND WRAPPING UP			
14	4/19	Preparation for Final Projects/Presentations <i>Group Work:</i> Analyze Experiment Data	<i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities Due WEDNESDAY 4/21: Participate in Experiments Due 4/25: Experiment Assignment (Group)
15	4/26	Wrap-Up <i>Group Work:</i> Work on Final Project (written & presentation)	<i>Complete:</i> Any engagement activities

EXAM	5/8 @ 8AM	<p>Guest Speaker</p> <p><i>Group Work:</i> Work on Final Project (written & presentation)</p>	<p>Guest Talk on Zoom Sat, 5/8 @ 8:00a ET Joshua Esnard, CEO – The Cut Buddy</p> <p>Due: End-of-semester peer evaluations on Sakai (Individual) Due: Final Projects (Group) Due: Reflection #2 (Individual)</p>
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