**MEJO 379-4: Advertising and Public Relations Research**M&W: 2:00 – 3:15 pm | Carrol Hall 0033

**Instructor**: Dr. Xinyan (Eva) Zhao

**Email:** ezhao@unc.edu

**Learning Mode:** In-person (mask-to-mask). You can also access the course through Zoom ([https://unc.zoom.us/j/93128526504](https://unc.zoom.us/j/93128526504?pwd=emVIblgxRFBwcWpUZnh4bjEwcXljQT09), meeting ID: 931 2852 6504, password: 379004). All classes will be recorded, and the videos will be available on Sakai.

**Office:** 356 Carrel Hall

**Office hours:** M&W 3:20– 4:20 pm in person or via Zoom <https://unc.zoom.us/j/5742089274> (Meeting ID: 574 208 9274, no password, with waiting room). Or by appointment.

**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 you have completed this course, you should be able to:

* Describe quantitative, qualitative, and computational research options 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 & READINGS**

(Required) 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. (Free e-textbook available through the Park Library <https://www-taylorfrancis-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/books/9781317507376>)

Supplemental readings will be made available through Sakai at least one week prior to their assigned day.

**COURSE POLICES**

**Attendance**

* Attending all classes is essential for this required course. To accommodate those who are immunocompromised and/or medically venerable, students can attend this class either in person or through Zoom. No formal attendance will be taken. Students who attend in-person sessions are required to wear a mask covering the mouth and nose. This course is heavy on group projects (50% of the total grade), and you will have time to work with your group members in class. If you are absent from a synchronous session, it is important to watch the lecture videos and coordinate with your group so you can contribute to any group work.
* If you are absent from any grading event, such as a quiz or a graded class activity, you need an excused absence to make up for the missing work. University approved absences are recognized as excused absences in this class. You must notify me your request with appropriate documents in advance to the class. University approved absences include:
  + University authorized activities such as NCAA.
  + 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).
* If you believe your absence should be excused for other relevant event or a religious holiday, please send me an email detailing the event beforehand. I may require evidence justifying the request as I see fit.

**Mask Use in the Classroom**

* All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your 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](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UNCChapelHill&layout_id=23).  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/>.

**Use of Laptops and Other Technologies**

You are encouraged to use laptops for quiz-taking, note-taking, research, and other work as assigned in class. However, please minimize use of your laptop and other technologies for non-class purposes to minimize distractions to your classmates and to me.

**Email & Communication**

I will guarantee a response within 24 hours 9:30 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday. On Fridays and the weekend, I will respond within 24-48 hours as I will work on research projects and grants. Please treat emails to me as professional correspondence. All communication should include your name, your class/session, and a professionally worded message.

**Late Work**

Deductions: 10% is deducted the moment an assignment is past the due date and time. Late assignments will receive an additional 10% deduction each additional day after. After ten days, an assignment can no longer be turned in and receive points. It is the student’s responsibility to check that all assignments have successfully uploaded and that they’ve uploaded the correct file.

**Grade Questions**

If you have concerns about a grade, please wait 24 hours after receiving your grade and inform me of this concern via **email**. You should outline your concerns and provide evidence to support your claim in the email. After you contact us about a grade, I will set-up a time to meet with you online or in-person so we can discuss the grade. You have two weeks to challenge a grade after it is posted on Sakai.

**Honor Code**

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the [University’s Honor Code](http://honor.unc.edu/). You will need to visit this website the first week of class and complete [the student module](https://studentconduct.unc.edu/honor-system-module). All work submitted for this course must be your work. All sources used for information must be properly cited. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable. If any part of your work reflects inappropriate use of reference materials, I reserve the right to adjust your grades downwards as well as to turn the case over to the University’s Honor Committee. 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.

**Special Accommodations**

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](https://ars.unc.edu/) or email [ars@unc.edu](mailto: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.

**Policy on Non-Discrimination**

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](https://unc.policystat.com/policy/4467906/latest/) 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](https://safe.unc.edu/)) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](http://eoc.unc.edu/), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

**Diversity Statement**

The University is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive academic community and [prohibiting discrimination and harassment](https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/). Our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](http://hussman.unc.edu/diversity-and-inclusion) with accompanying goals. Please review these policy statements. Please know that I am fully committed to fostering and enforcing these policies. 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.

**ASSESSMENT & GRADE COMPONENTS**

**Participation 15%**

* Class Participation 10%

Students are expected to complete all readings prior to the class meetings. This is a discussion-heavy course. Students are asked to participate regularly in class by expressing their opinions and raising questions about the course material. Please be respectful and open to others’ opinions and questions. In addition, we will use class time for activities that test your comprehension of concepts and/or your ability to apply concepts and techniques. Make sure that you have registered with [Poll Everywhere](https://edtech.unc.edu/service/poll-everywhere/) for trackable participation. In all, participation will account for 10% of students’ overall course grade.

* Research participation 5%

You will receive 5% of the total grade if you participate in academic research. You must complete one of three options described below by **the last day of class** to fulfill this requirement.

* Option 1: Participate in a total of two hours of academic research studies in the school. You will be able to sign up online to participate in these studies.
* Option 2: Write two 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.
* Option 3: Combo of Options 1 & 2, one hour of academic research plus one summary of research articles.

**Quizzes & Exam 35%**

* Quizzes 15% (lowest dropped)

There will be five times of quizzes at the beginning of the class meetings throughout the semester, based on the lecture and reading assigned for the past one or two weeks. This is to make sure you master key concepts in ADPR research. Beyond being good for you, this helps out all team members to make sure everyone is up to speed with the group project. A quiz will be about 5 minutes and may have multiple choice, true or false, and/or fill-in-the-blanks. To minimize risks, you are encouraged to bring your laptops to take the quiz on Sakai. Hard copies of quizzes will also be provided for those in need.

* Final Exam 20%

A final exam including multiple choice, matching, and short answer will be given covering video lectures, reading assignments, and class discussions. A review session will be conducted. Final exam times are based on the [University final exam schedule](https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-calendar/final-examination-schedule-fall/).

**Team Project 50%**

In groups of 4-5, you will conduct secondary research and use various methods to approach a research problem. The project requires you to work as a team to produce professional research and complete three major group assignments. You will be graded for the content of your submissions and your individual effort within the team. Further details about these projects will be posted on Sakai.

* Team Survey

I will select students to fill specific leadership roles within their groups. Each student must complete a survey providing the top two preferences for team roles, a quick explanation of qualifications for these roles, specific areas of interest in public relations and advertising, and preferred modes of group work. I will assign each student a team and a team role, and students will have the option to pick their own topics. Surveys should be completed by Wednesday, August 18 (by midnight). Description of leadership positions:

1. Literature Review/Secondary Research Coordinator: This person will be responsible for organizing the literature review/secondary research and synthesizing findings.

2. Qualitative Design and Execution Director: This person will be responsible for overseeing the focus group/interview assignment “logistics” for the group and leading the focus group/interview design.

3. Quantitative Design and Execution Director: This person will be responsible for overseeing the survey/experiment assignment “logistics.”

4. Qualitative Data Analysis Director: This person will be responsible for leading the interpretation, analysis, and presentation of all qualitative data gathered.

5. Quantitative Data Analysis Director: This person will be responsible for leading the interpretation, analysis, and presentation of all quantitative data gathered.

6. Communication and Professionalism Coordinator: This person will be responsible for setting up channels of communication for the team and fostering team building and open dialogue. This person will also check all reports for cohesive writing, grammar/style, and overall professionalism.

* Research Topic

Your group may research: 1) a problem of importance to the profession in general (e.g., how companies can drive online engagement, reputation management, incorporating new technology, etc.); 2) a problem tied to a specific organization (e.g., how a particular organization might recover from a crisis, how a specific brand may extend to a different audience, etc.); or 3) a real problem for a real client in the local community with a research need that you work with directly. This is due on Monday, August 30. Any change of topic during the semester should be approved by the instructor.

* Group Contract

Your team will write a group contract outlining expectations for all team members (due Friday midnight, August 27). The contract is expected to include (a) ground rules and functions for dealing with assignments as a unit; (b) procedures for participating in projects and meeting deadlines; and (c) steps for contact the instructor when necessary to discipline a team member. Each group member will be evaluated throughout the semester. As an individual member of a team, you are expected to:

* Join a project team and fully participate by attending all team meetings and all class meetings.
* Lead at least one research assignment.
* Keep updated on group work and maintain project documents.
* Non-contributing individuals: The evaluation of an individual's contribution comes from the instructor and his/her peers. 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.

* Secondary Research Assignment (10%)

To understand a problem or issue for a client or for your chosen profession, you will first need to conduct a scan of secondary research and literature related to your research need. What is the problem or organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, current standing, etc. in relation to the topic/population? You should identify what is out there currently about your topic and/or your client and prepare a report. For more secondary research resources, see <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo379>

* Qualitative Assignment (17.5%)

The goal of this assignment is to allow you to explore questions that can address the client’s research needs combining a focus group and 4-5 in-depth interviews.

* + 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.
  + Each member of a group is required to interview (30-minute) one of your classmates to get their thoughts on your product or problem in class.
  + Groups need to submit the protocols, transcripts, qualitative data analysis worksheet, and qualitative report. Grades will mainly be based on the group-submitted report (individual score adjusted by peer evaluation scores). This report will be approximately five to seven pages. More details to come.
* Quantitative Assignment (17.5%)

Your group will develop a survey ora split-run experiment that will apply to your problem. Use findings from your earlier projects to help inform protocol development.

* + The survey will be an online survey administered by Qualtrics and will be taken by at least 70 participants (including everyone in the class). This is because a survey typically requires a larger sample than a split-run experiment.
  + The split-run experiment 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 at least 35 participants (including everyone in the class).
  + The group will need to submit the protocols, data files, quantitative data analysis worksheet, and quantitative report. Grades will mainly be based on the group-submitted report (individual score adjusted by peer evaluation scores). This report will be approximately five to seven pages. More details to come.
* Peer evaluations (5%)

You will receive 5% if you complete 2 peer evaluations thoroughly and on time. During the semester, you will receive a survey link after your submission of qualitative and quantitative assignment to fill out your evaluation. If you do not adequately and accurately evaluate your peers, you will not receive these points. I expect everyone to contribute equally. Should a problem arise with a team member, I expect you to try to solve the problem within the group. If the problem continues, I should be notified in writing. Written documentation of a student’s lack of participation *will be factored into a student’s grade and significantly impact a student’s grade in an assignment.* Under rare circumstance, a team member can be fired if there is (1) majority agreement in the team, (2) a student does not improve after communication/warning, (3) any other rule detailed in the group contract. A petition detailing the reasons and justifying evidence should be submitted to the instructor. The instructor will review the petition and will approve the request if it is reasonable.

**Tentative Point-Grade Scale**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Points** | **Grade** | **Descriptions** |
| 93-100 | A | Mastery of course content at highest level; Excellent attainment. |
| 90-92.9 | A- |  |
| 87-89.9 | B+ |  |
| 83-86.9 | B | Strong performance; Good attainment. |
| 80-82.9 | B- |  |
| 77-79.9 | C+ |  |
| 73-76.9 | C | Average performance; Satisfactory attainment of the subject. |
| 70-72.9 | C- |  |
| 67-69.9 | D+ |  |
| 60-62.9 | D- |  |
| 59.9 or below | F | Failed performance; Unacceptable attainment. |

\* subject to minor changes based on the distribution of total points.

**Tentative Weekly Class Schedule**

* All reading is to be completed by the day of the lectured topic.
* All due items are to be submitted by *start of class* unless otherwise noted.
* Course schedule will be finalized after the first two weeks of the semester and be subject to minor changes at the discretion of the instructor.

Both in-person and through Zoom Virtual only No class - holiday

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| **Date** | **Content** | **Go Through** | **Due** |
| Aug 18, W | Overview and Intro | Ch 1 & 35 | Pre-class survey due by midnight |
| Aug 23, M | Research basics  Why research? | Ch 2 | Complete the Honor Code Module |
| Aug 25, W | Research processes, introduce secondary research assignment  *Group work: meet your teammates, discuss topic, set ground rules etc.* | Ch 3 & 4  Assignment brief on Sakai | Group contract due on Friday midnight |
| Aug 30, M | Secondary research  *Group work: Decide the topic* | Ch 5 | Quiz 1  Group research topic due by end of day |
| Sept 1, W | (Zoom only) Guest lecture by Stephanie Willen-Brown: Library Resources for Secondary Research  *Group work: Work on secondary research assignment* | Review library guide (Sakai) | Pre-class library resource assignment |
| Sept 6, M | Labor Day Holiday – No class |  |  |
| Sept 8, W | More resources for secondary research  *Group work: Continue working on secondary research assignment* | Ch 6-8  Readings posted to Sakai |  |
| **Qualitative Research Unit** | | | |
| Sept 13, M | Intro to qualitative research, introduce qualitative research assignment | Ch 9, 14, 37  Assignment brief on Sakai |  |
| Sept 15, W | Focus Groups  *Group work: Draft the qualitative protocol* | Ch 10  Readings posted to Sakai | Secondary research report due  Focus group protocol due under the assignment tab on Sakai by end of day |
| Sept 20, M | Finalize the protocol  *In-class: conduct your focus groups* |  |  |
| Sept 22, W | Interviews  *Group work: prep for interviews* | Ch 12  Readings posted to Sakai | Focus group transcripts due  Interview protocol due under the assignment tab on Sakai by end of day |
| Sept 27, M | *In-class: Take turns conducting interviews and being interviewed* |  | Quiz 2 |
| Sept 29, W | Analyzing Qualitative Data | Ch 15  Readings posted to Sakai | Interview transcripts due |
| Oct 4, M | *Group work: In-class qualitative data analysis* |  | Qualitative data analysis worksheet due by the end of day |
| Oct 6, W | Content analysis | Ch 11  Readings posted to Sakai |  |
| **Quantitative Research Unit** | | | |
| Oct 11, M | Measurement scale | Ch 18  Assignment brief on Sakai |  |
| Oct 13, W | Intro to sampling | Ch 17, pp. 283-289 (in Ch 32) | Qualitative Report Due  Peer Eval 1 due |
| Oct 18, M | Sampling techniques, survey,  Intro to quantitative assignment | Ch 23 |  |
| Oct 20, W | Survey design  *Group work: Brainstorm survey questions* | Ch 19, 21  Readings posted to Sakai | Quiz 3 |
| Oct 25, M | Survey design with Qualtrics  *Group work: Develop your survey using Qualtrics* | Ch 16  Readings posted to Sakai | Submit survey preview link on Sakai by end of day. |
| Oct 27, W | Experiment  *Group work: Brainstorm a simple experiment* | Ch 24 & 25  Readings posted to Sakai |  |
| Nov 1, M | Experiment design  *Group work: Develop a simple experiment through Qualtrics* | Ch 26  Readings posted to Sakai | Submit experiment preview link on Sakai by end of day. |
| Nov 3, W | *Finalize the experiment or survey*  *In-class quantitative data collection* |  | Quiz 4  Submit finalized launched survey/experiment link on Sakai |
| Nov 8, M | Statistics and significance test | The latter half of Ch 32 (pp. 289-292) |  |
| Nov 10, W | More about statistics  Analyze a single variable through Qualtrics | Readings posted to Sakai | CSV data file due on Sakai |
| Nov 15, M | Quantitative data cleaning and pre-processing using jamovi  *Group work: quantitative data cleaning* | Readings posted to Sakai | Quiz 5 |
| Nov 17, W | Analyze relationships between two variables  *Group work: continue work on quantitative data analysis* |  | Quantitative data analysis worksheet due by the end of day |
| Nov 22, M | (Pre-recorded video only) Large-scale data and computational methods  *Video will be uploaded on the class day.* | Readings posted to Sakai  Watch the lecture video |  |
| Nov 24, W | Thanksgiving Recess - No class |  |  |
| Nov 29, M | Play with automated content analysis and topic modeling  Course wrap-up | Readings posted to Sakai |  |
| **Final Exam** | | | |
| Dec 1, W | LDOC: Final Exam Review |  | Quantitative Report Due  Peer Eval 2 due |
| Dec 4, Sat | Final Exam |  |  |