Market Intelligence – MEJO 479  
Prof. Shannon C McGregor   
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Tuesday & Thursdays | 8 – 9:15am | Zoom meetings every Thursday, 8am  
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Office Hours: By appointment – happy to schedule Zoom meetings whenever

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**:

This course is designed to help you make informed marketing and business decisions by giving you contemporary analytical tools to solve brand, marketing, and advertising problems. What is “Market Intelligence”? – Analytical strategies that provide a company with a sense of a market based on understanding what is happening in a given marketplace, what the issues are, what competitors are doing, what customers and potential consumers are doing, and what the likely market potential is for new products and/or services. In this course, you will learn analytical techniques and how they can be leveraged in marketing and advertising campaign development. After taking this course, you will be able to effectively evaluate market insights proposals, as well as interpret, review, and critique the subsequent report.

**OBJECTIVES**:

* Evaluate marketing and advertising problems and re-structure them as specific questions or hypotheses that can be analyzed or researched
* Understand primary and secondary sources of market information, as well as ethical and structural issues in data collection and management
* Fluency in specific market research techniques for data analysis as well as implementing those analyses in decision making

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**:

We will meet synchronously once a week, on Thursdays at 8am on Zoom. Your presence at these meetings is vital for your success in the class. I will also record each of these meetings in case you can’t make it on occasion – but suffice to say, it will likely not be a great stand-in for actually participating. More about participation below. The University attendance policy is listed [here](https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/) for reference as well.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**:

We will use as our main reading *Essentials of Business Research Methods* by Joe F. Hair Jr., Michael Page, Niek Brunsveld (4th edition). You can purchase it through the bookstore or online – but know that it is also accessible (for free!) as a PDF through UNC library.

We will also use SPSS – a predictive analytics software that is an industry standard for statistical analysis. You may already have this software for other classes. If not, you have two options. You can [purchase a license](https://software.sites.unc.edu/software/spss/) through UNC for $145 for 1 year of use. You may also access SPSS for free through UNC’s virtual labs ([https://virtuallab.unc.edu](https://virtuallab.unc.edu/)), which has a lot of great free software for students.

**GRADING**:

Grading scale

\*The University does not recognize an A+ or D-

A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D+ = 67-69% D = 60-66%, F = 59% or below

Grading rubric

Your overall grade for the course will be based on the following criteria:

Participation: 10%

Discussion posts: 10%

Assignments: 45%

Mid-term: 15%

Final: 20%

Participation

I value the diversity that each person brings to the University of North Carolina. Ten percent of your final grade in this class comes from participation. I need your input and believe you can greatly contribute to our discussions. Attendance is important. But, simply showing up to class is not enough – you must be actively involved in class meetings to earn full credit for participation. This is an advanced class, and its success depends on consistent participation by all members of the course. You should attend each meeting having completed all the readings and prepared to actively engage in our discussion. This includes coming to class with your own questions and observations about the readings and being ready to interact with the rest of the class. In-class participation will also mean meaningfully engaging with our in-class activities, which will often provide background and set up for out-of-class assignments.

Discussion posts

Beginning the second week of class, a critical thinking question (or questions) will be posted to Sakai. These will be rooted in the readings for the class. You should give the question(s) some thought and provide a thorough response – as well as at least one follow-up question and/or response to a fellow student. Your first response should be thoughtful, but compact (about two paragraphs). Your follow-up can be any length, but should be substantive (so not “good point!”). This is a completion-based assignment. In order to receive credit, your response must be posted by 11:59pm on Wednesdays. The posts will be available to you to begin commenting on Thursday afternoons – so they will each be “live” for about a week. Your first post is due Wednesday, August 19th for Week 2 readings, and it will be “live” on Sakai by the afternoon of Thursday, August 13th.

Assignments

All assignments are designed to facilitate understanding of the course material, i.e. data collection, analysis, and identifying market insights. By working on these assignments, you will become equipped with the skills to understand and conduct high-quality market research. Throughout the course, you will complete a series of individual assignments designed to *apply* the methods and skills we will learn in the course. Individual assignment sheets will detail each of the assignments, and we will go over them in class.

Midterm and Final (exam 1 and exam 2)

You will have two exams in this course – one around the midterm and one during the courses’ final session. Each exam will be a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions. The exams are designed to assess your understanding of the material presented in class and in assigned readings. The second exam will be partially cumulative. Both exams will be given via Sakai. I will provide a review sheet and host an optional review session before each exam.

**IN CLASS:**

There is *plenty* of research suggesting that distractions far outweigh the benefits of technology, yet here we are in Zoom U 2020. I do ask that you silence your phones while we’re “in” class and that you do your best to stay on task. There are some distractions we can work to avoid (Twitter, TikTok, email) and some we might not be able to (children, pets, or other family members at home with us).

Since this is an online class, here I want to list some norms that we can all follow during our synchronous classes on Zoom. As we are still negotiating these norms, if you think something is not working or is causing you trouble, please email me and we can make changes.

* You are not required to have your camera on – but I would strongly prefer did, provided you feel comfortable doing so. Our meeting is early – so feel free to have your coffee with you.
* I would strongly encourage you to at least have your camera on when you are in a breakout room and participating in a group activity.
* If you need to clarify something while in a breakout room, click the Ask for Help button and I will join the room to offer help.
* If you need to ask a question in the main Zoom room, type in your name in the chat. This creates a natural queue and helps us avoid instances of people speaking over each other.
* Stay muted when you do not need to speak.
* If something isn’t working well with technology, please alert Dr. McGregor.
* Be “professional” – if your video is on, have on a shirt and have the camera showing your face.
* Don’t show up to Zoom intoxicated.
* Don’t interrupt other people when presenting or discussing (including me please).
* Do not share pornographic or other adult content. This will result in being kicked out of Zoom immediately.

On top of the assigned readings for the course, you should pay attention to emerging trends in the marketplace. Subscribe to various digital media feeds of the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, Advertising Age, *Fortune,* etc. At the beginning of each class, you are STRONGLY encouraged to introduce and discuss news items you have read and share your perspectives on how the development affects and/or may benefit from the practice of market analytics. These contributions will count towards your participation grade in the class. And since we are on Zoom, you can drop a link to the story in the chat.

After discussing any relevant news, I will give a brief overview of our online discussion – along with any reflections, feedback, corrections, etc. From then, we will usually move to a discussion about the week’s topic more broadly, with some short bursts of lecture from me. (Other short lectures will be posted on our Sakai site for asynchronous viewing). Once we get into the more hands-on portions of the course, I will be live demoing certain tools in our Zoom meetings. On occasion, we will use Zoom breakout rooms – to foster discussion, to work on new analytical tools.

Although this class is scheduled for an hour and fifteen minutes, I will aim to keep our live Zoom meetings to about an hour. I find longer than that results in considerable Zoom fatigue.

But our best laid plans are just that – teaching via Zoom is as new to me as it is to you. I am open to feedback about what is working – or what is not working. We may have to pivot for any number of reasons as the semester goes on due to extenuating circumstances. I know we will find a way to excel together in this unprecedented time.

**COMMUNICATION:**

This is a class rooted in the practice of communication – so let’s communicate! Use social media to communicate with one another or share ideas. Email is also important – and can be facilitated via Sakai. Collaborative work or helping one another can be fostered with Google Docs. I’ll do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours (except for weekends). If something more urgent pops up, you may always @ me on Twitter.

**WHO AM I?**

I’m Dr. Shannon McGregor. I joined the faculty at UNC’s [Hussman School of Journalism and Media](http://hussman.unc.edu/) in the summer of 2020. I am also a senior researcher with UNC’s [Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life](https://citap.unc.edu/). Before coming to UNC, I was an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah. I have a PhD from the School of Journalism at the University of Texas, an MA from the College of Journalism and Communication at the University of Florida, and a BA in Journalism, Public Relations, and Political Science from Flagler College. I’m a former digital storyteller and editor, and I’ve been teaching in communication for over a decade. I also do research, which focuses mostly on political communication, social media, and journalism. You can find out more about my work at [www.shannoncmcgregor.com](http://www.shannoncmcgregor.com) or by following me on Twitter: @shannimcg

**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.

**SEEKING HELP**:

If you need individual assistance, it is 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, a learning difference, or an illness.

**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.

**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/>.

**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. The values and competencies associated with this course include being able to:

* 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
* apply basic numerical and statistical concepts
* apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work

**WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE**:  
\*Please see [UNC academic calendar](https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-calendar/) for the Fall 2020 schedule.   
\*\* Subject to change due to COVID-19

**Week 1 | August 11 & 13 – Introductions: to the course, to each other, and to the principles**

Read: Chapter 1 *Essentials* & “What the Bagelman Saw” (PDF)

**Week 2 | August 18 & 20 – The research process and its application in marketing Pt. 1**

Read: Chapter 2 *Essentials* & Chapter 1, *Blue Ocean Strategy* (available on Sakai, as a course reserve)

**Week 3 | August 25 & 27 – The research process and its application in marketing Pt. 2**

Read: Chapter 4 and 5 *Essentials*

**Week 4 | September 1 & 3 – Qualitative research Pt 1.**

Read: Chapter 8 and 11 *Essentials*

**Week 5 | September 8 & 10 – Qualitative research Pt. 2**

Read: TBD

**Week 6 | September 15 & 17 – Quantitative research: data preparation and descriptives**

Read: Chapters 7, 8, and 9 *Essentials*

**Week 7 | September 22 & 24 – Midterm**

**Week 8 | September 29 & October 1 – Quantitative research: hypothesis testing and introduction to regressions**

Read: Chapter 13 and 14 *Essentials*

**Week 9 | October 6 & 8 – Quantitative research: behavioral and transactional data**

Read: TBD

**Week 10 | October 13 & 15 – Quantitative research: survey data**

Read: Chapter 10 *Essentials*

**Week 11 | October 20 & 22 – Quantitative research: principal components factor analysis and key driver analysis**

Read: Chapter 15 *Essentials*

**Week 12 | October 27 & 29 – Quantitative research: correspondence analysis**

Read: TBD

**Week 13 | November 3 & 5 – Digital and social media analytics Pt. 1**

Read: TBD

**Week 14 | November 10 & 12 – Digital and social media analytics Pt. 2**

Read: TBD

**Week 15 | November 17 – How to communicate results to decision makers**

Read: TBD