BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL

Course Syllabus

BUS 253a: Marketing Research
Professor Jane E.J. Ebert

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9.30-10.50 am
in Sachar 116 (International Hall)

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1pm, and by appointment

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Course Description

Marketing research is critical for leaders to make informed business decisions for their company's success. This course is for individuals who want to be good leaders or marketing managers: individuals who can make informed decisions of how to obtain the data they need to answer their questions, who can ask intelligent and pertinent questions of marketing research professionals, who are able to assess the quality of marketing research conducted, and who are able to understand and interpret the research data and results they encounter.

Course Format

The first half of the course includes learning about and experience with important marketing research tools such as interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. This knowledge will come from lectures, cases, readings, and discussions in class, but also from hands-on experiential learning through your involvement in a semester-long group project. In the second half of the course we will cover a variety of statistical tests that you will use to analyze the data that you collect in your group project. You should aim for a high-level integrated understanding of the topics we cover combined with a deeper detailed knowledge and understanding of the specific topics and tools that we cover. You have a big part to play in your learning – you need to work hard, read carefully, think about the material, complete the assignments, and ask questions in class.

Learning Goals

You will learn how to:
1) clearly define research problems
2) apply a research process to solve a marketing problem
3) apply qualitative and quantitative methods to gain marketing intelligence
4) use Qualtrics software to collect data from consumers
5) use SPSS software to analyze your data
6) critically assess data and results
7) present research findings in a formal presentation and in writing.

Prerequisite: BUS 252a is recommended. In addition, familiarity with statistics from an introductory statistics course is expected.

Course Materials

All materials listed below are **required**. The assigned readings will form the basis of the two exams and of discussions in class. I will assume that you have completed all the readings in preparation for class. We will typically use time in class to discuss in detail or to apply several of the concepts covered in the readings.

1. **Textbook**: *Marketing Research Essentials (8th edition or later)* by McDaniel and Gates (listed as "M&G" in schedule below) and published by Wiley is required for the course. This textbook (including used books and rental options) is available at the Brandeis bookstore. It can also be obtained from online stores such as Amazon.com or Barnes and Noble.

2. **Software.** 1) *Qualtrics* is used in this course and is available to use for free through Brandeis. You will need to create a Qualtrics account with your UNet ID at brandeis.qualtrics.com. 2) *SPSS* is also required for this course (later). Brandeis provides free licenses to students. For instructions regarding downloading and obtaining the software license, visit http://brandeis.onthehub.com/. You will need to log in using your UNet ID. After logging in, follow the downloading steps as instructed. If you have questions or problems, please contact LTS or the IBS IT office. The course includes homework exercises and workshops to help you with the software. In addition, you can contact the TA or me for assistance in using the software for your projects.
3. **Coursepack.** Cases and readings from Harvard publishing are contained in an electronic "coursepack" I have set up there. The Harvard publishing web address for the coursepack is provided in a document on the Latte class website. Please go to that address to purchase and download the readings. You may need to register first on the Harvard publishing web site if you have not done that for other courses. If you have any problems call the customer service at (800) 988-0886, and please let me know. The discounted price is around $4 for each case/reading. There is an option to buy a print version of each case for an additional sum or you can print from your electronic copy for class. *For case discussions, you may want to print out the case as electronic devices are not allowed in class*. (Computers, tablets, phones are not allowed in class, except for specific workshops – see later note about this.)
4. **Remaining readings.** These will be electronic files and will be posted on the Latte site for the class for you to download at least a week in advance of the relevant class. (Most of these readings are available for free to the Brandeis community through the Brandeis Library electronic sources, e.g., Wall Street Journal and other media articles. The remaining files consist of shorter excerpts, e.g., a single chapter, from other books.)
5. **Class slides.** Handouts containing the slides for each class will be available in class. These slides provide an outline of the class material and important points, but you will need to take additional notes to fully capture the material discussed in class.
6. **Assignments**. Assignments will be posted on the Latte class website or handed out in class.

Workload expectation

As this is a four-credit course, you are expected to spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, exercises, assignments, preparation for exams, research, etc.)

Course Evaluation

All assignments are **required**.
Class participation……………………………………………………**22%**
includes attendance, contribution to class, case discussions, and 3 individual exercises assigned for class (Qualtrics, sampling, SPSS)
Exam 1……….…………………………………………………….**22%**
Exam 2……………….……………………………...........................**22%**
Data analysis problems (Problem set and Finale Just desserts analysis) ……**6%**
Research Project Report (includes survey)……………………………**22%**
Other project requirements……………………………...........................**6%**
(includes topic proposal, summary of interview research results, and presentation)

Class participation. First, I expect each student to come to class on time, having thoughtfully prepared all readings and assignments due that day. Simply attending class is not enough to do well. You need to contribute to discussions. The cases provide especially good opportunities for contributing. ***You should aim to contribute to discussion (with a response, comment, or question) in most classes, but <u>especially</u> in the case discussion classes.*** I pay attention to both the quality and quantity of your comments. All classes involve some discussion or class exercise, and a lively discussion of the topics by the whole class will greatly improve learning and understanding for everyone. ***If you are hesitant or finding it difficult to participate in class, please come and see me early on in the semester***. I am happy to work with you to help with this.

Attendance. I take attendance in the course. The text cannot replace what you miss if you are absent. In addition, we will cover important material not covered in the text. It is your responsibility to catch up on any material you miss by reading the textbook and borrowing class-notes from others in the class. Please let me know in advance by email if you need to miss a class. I allow each student up to 2 absences (interviews, career treks, sickness, religious observance, sports events, other extra-curricular demands, etc) without impacting participation grade. <u>Use these wisely</u>. For each additional absence, your participation grade will be reduced a half-step, e.g., A- becomes A-/B+; B becomes B/B-. If you have perfect attendance, but never actively participate in class discussions, your participation grade will be C+. Consistent lateness can also seriously affect your participation grade.

Exams: Two exams (in class, open-book, computers not allowed except to access digital class readings with wifi turned off) will be administered during the semester. These will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions (from a few words to a couple of paragraphs in length, from brief numerical responses to longer calculations). The exams will test your understanding and knowledge of the readings and lectures. Exam 1 will examine the work covered until that point (i.e., the first half of the course). Exam 2 will focus on the material from the second half of the course. You must remain in the classroom until you have completed the exam, and you will be assigned a seat for the exam. Both the TA and I will be available to assist with exam preparation in office hours, by appointment, on email, or via phone. No make-up exams are given.

Research project: You will participate in the project in groups of 4-5 individuals, and you will be graded as a group. I will assign you to groups, using information provided by you on your past experience and topic preferences, attempting to mix students from varied backgrounds where possible. You can pair with one other person for group assignment, if you wish. **All group members are expected to participate fully in every part of the project**, including attending group meetings, preparing each assignment, conducting analyses, and writing up and presenting the project report. If there is a "free rider" problem in any group, the group should talk to the group member first to try to resolve the problem. If that doesn't solve the problem, the group should meet with me to work it out. At the end of the class, I will also ask each group member to assess their fellow group members' contributions to the project. These assessments may influence individuals' project grades.

There are several assignments for the group project, including conducting exploratory research (using in-depth interviews) and designing a survey. The project culminates in a research report (15-17 pages of double-spaced 12-point text, <u>not</u> counting tables, figures, and appendices) and a presentation (around 12 minutes plus 3-5 minutes for questions). More information on the separate

assignments for the project will be provided later in the semester.

Other Project Requirements: These requirements will be graded using a 0 (if the assignment is not completed), /-, / or /+.

Class Conduct

Arriving on time. Latecomers are distracting. Habitual tardiness will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

Use of technology in the classroom. To help you and your fellow students stay focused on the class, laptops, tablets, and phones are prohibited unless otherwise indicated for a particular class (e.g., SPSS workshops). *Please keep them turned off, or an airplane mode, and in your bag during class. You may be marked as absent if you use one of these devices without permission during class.*

Late assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted without my prior permission and will incur a penalty unless the circumstances are exceptional (as judged by me).

Academic honesty. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work: individual work should be worked on individually. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities *(http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/srcs/rr/)* for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides *(http://guides.library.brandeis.edu/c.php?g=301723&p=2013447)*.

Disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Communications and Getting Help

I will communicate any changes in the syllabus or additional instructions about requirements in class and via email. Please ensure that you check your Brandeis email address regularly.

I hope you will enjoy participating in the class discussions. If you are hesitant to participate for any reason or if you have questions about anything, please come and see me. I am happy to help. Please don't hesitate to contact me or the TA for assistance for any reason, or if you have questions, comments, or concerns about the course. I can be reached by email (jebert@brandeis.edu), by phone (office, 781 736 2294), or in my office (Lemberg 250). E-mail is typically the best way to contact me outside of class. Office hours are on most Tuesdays (11am - 1pm) and by appointment (emailing at short notice for an appointment is often fine). The teaching assistant for the class is Luis Zuniga (lzuniga91@brandeis.edu).

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

This schedule could change, e.g., to accommodate a guest speaker or due to weather-related school closings. Changes will be announced in class and via (your Brandeis) email.
(M&G chapter numbers indicated are for the 8th edition)

Class	Date	In class	Readings and reading-related tasks to complete before class	Instructions and Assignments (Assignments are due as <u>paper copies, at or before the beginning of class</u>, unless stated otherwise)
1	Th 8/30	Introduction	M&G Ch. 1 (optional)	
2	T 9/4	Workshop on Secondary data research resources with Business Librarian		**Bring laptop computer or tablet to class**
	Th 9/6	*NO CLASS - Brandeis Monday*		
	T 9/11	NO CLASS – *Rosh Hashanah*		
3	Th 9/13	Case discussion	*In coursepack*: HBS The Coop	<u>Individual</u>: **Prepare responses to case questions** (for discussion in class, nothing to hand in) <u>Project</u>: **After class (by midnight), complete Google form group assignments**, including possible ideas for project topics
4	T 9/18	Secondary research	1) M&G Ch. 3, 6 ("Using the internet for secondary data") 2) Media article for secondary research	<u>Project</u>: **By midnight, email me with 1-2 potential project topics for your group**.
5	Th 9/20	Qualitative research	1) M&G Ch. 4 2) Media article for qualitative research	<u>Project</u>: **Begin working on your interview guide** (e.g., 3-4 main questions, with ideas for follow-up probes; see

				instructions on Latte. <u>Not</u> to hand in.)
	T 9/25	NO CLASS – *Brandeis Monday*		
6	Th 9/27	Observational research	1) M&G Ch. 7 2) Media article for observational research	<u>Project</u>: 1) **Hand in (paper copy) proposal for group project topic** (see instructions on Latte) 2) **Complete your interview guide** (e.g., 3-4 main questions, with ideas for follow-up probes; see instructions on Latte. <u>Not</u> to hand in.) 3) **Begin your in-depth interviews** (1-2 by each group member)
7	T 10/2	Causal research	1) M&G, Ch. 8 2) Media article for causal research	
8	Th 10/4	Survey research 1: Survey error	1) M&G, Chs. 5, 6 2) Media article for survey error	<u>Project</u>: **Hand in (paper copy) summary of results from your in-depth interviews** (see instructions on Latte)
9	10/9	**Exam 1**	Review readings, slides, and notes for exam	
10	Th 10/11	Case discussion	*In coursepack*: NA Finale and Survey on the Spot	<u>Individual</u>: **Prepare responses to case questions** (for discussion in class, nothing to hand in)
11	T 10/16	Survey research 2: Questionnaire design	M&G, Chs. 9, 10	<u>Individual</u>: **Complete online Qualtrics exercise and email to TA** (see instructions on Latte) <u>Project</u>: Begin writing your project questionnaire on Qualtrics (see instructions on Latte)

12	Th 10/18	Sampling	M&G, Ch. 11	Individual: **Complete sampling exercise** (see instructions on Latte; for discussion, nothing to hand in)
13	T 10/23	Introduction to data analysis	M&G, Ch. 12, 13 ("Descriptive statistics")	Project: 1) **Sign up for a survey questionnaire feedback meeting** of your group with me (*optional*) 2) Two days before your meeting, h**and in (paper copy) a paragraph explaining your survey research goal AND a paper copy of your survey questionnaire** (see instructions on Latte)
14	Th 10/25	*t*-tests	M&G, Ch. 13 ("Hypothesis testing" and "P-values and significance testing")	Project*: Optional group meetings with me this week and next for survey questionnaire feedback*
15	T 10/30	χ^2 and correlation	M&G, Ch. 13 ("Cross-tabulation"), 14 ("Correlation analysis")	Individual: Ensure SPSS is installed and working on your laptop, download Finale data from Latte, **complete SPSS analysis exercise and email to TA** (see instructions on Latte) Project*: Optional group meetings with me this week for survey questionnaire feedback*
16	Th 11/1	Workshop: Analysis using SPSS	*In coursepack*: NA Finale and Survey on the Spot (bring to class a copy of Exhibit 1, at the end of the case)	Individual**: Bring laptop computer (with SPSS installed and working, and Finale data downloaded) to class.**
17	T 11/6	Regression 1	M&G, Ch. 14 ("Regression analysis")	Individual work: **Hand in your answers (paper copy) for the data analysis problem set** Project: Finalize your questionnaire and begin to collect data

18	Th 11/8	Regression 2	1) M&G, Ch. 14 ("Regression analysis") 2) *In coursepack*: Multiple Regression Note	
19	T 11/13	Case discussion/ Analysis workshop	*In coursepack*: NA Finale - Just Desserts	<u>Individual</u>**:** 1) **Prepare responses to case questions (hand in paper copy of analysis responses requested and keep a copy for yourself)** 2) **Bring laptop computer (with SPSS installed and working, and Finale data downloaded) to class** <u>Project</u>: This week, complete your survey data collection.
20	Th 11/15	Project workshop		<u>Project</u>: **Bring laptop computer (with your group project data file in SPSS)**
21	T 11/20	**Exam 2**	Review readings, slides, and notes for exam	
	Th 11/22	NO CLASS - *Thanksgiving*		
22	T 11/27	Guest speaker		
23	Th 11/29	Project workshop		<u>Project</u>: **Bring laptop computer (with your group project data file in SPSS)**
24	T 12/4	Project presentations		
25	Th 12/6	Project presentations		
26	Th 12/11	Project presentations Brief wrap-up		<u>Project</u>: **Hand in project report (all groups)**