

MARK 4000 – Marketing Research for Business Decisions

Fall 2007

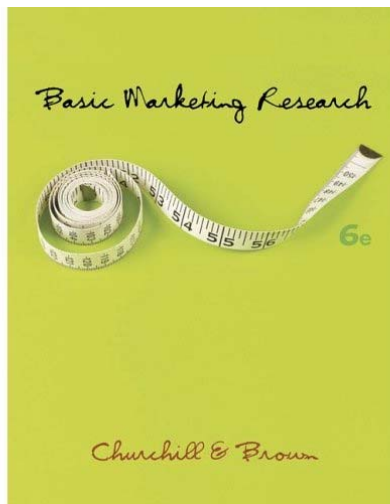
Instructor: Rex Yuxing Du
Assistant Professor in Marketing
Terry College of Business, UGA

Office: 116 Brooks Hall	Phone: 706.542.3540
Email: rexdu@terry.uga.edu	Web: http://rexdu.myweb.uga.edu/
Office Hours: Friday by appointment	

Class	Day/Time	Location
Section 1 (35-715)	Tue & Thu 9:30-10:45	Student Learning Center 153
Section 2 (75-717)	Tue & Thu 3:30-4:45	Sanford 112

Course Website: <http://terry.blackboard.com/> -- look for UNG.FA.07.MARK.4000 Marketing Research for Business Decision; Instructor Name (Rex Du). Check the course website regularly, as I will use it to make announcements to the class. Assignments, reading materials, teaching notes, etc., will also be posted on this site. All questions regarding access to or usage of Blackboard should be directed to Terry OIT Help Desk, 304 Sanford Hall, **706-542-6799**, or **help@terry.uga.edu**.

Required Text: *Basic Marketing Research*, 6th Edition, Thomson South-Western, by Gilbert A. Churchill, Jr. and Tom J. Brown – available at the UGA bookstore.



Prerequisites: MARK 3000 and MSIT 3000 or STAT 3000. Final class rosters will be reviewed after Drop/Add. Any student not meeting prerequisites will be administratively withdrawn from the class.

Course Description:

The last decade has witnessed an explosion in the quantity and quality of data available to marketers, accompanied by the development of useful analytical frameworks for transforming this surfeit of data into information used for specific classes of marketing decisions. This course is intended to introduce you to the basic concepts and principles of marketing research, which is primarily concerned with gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data about markets and customers. You will learn about the sorts of marketing decision problems in which research information might prove useful -- problems of selecting target markets, introducing new products or services, pricing, monitoring the business environment, performing competitive analyses, etc. You will also learn about the basic quantitative and qualitative skills involved in conducting marketing research projects (e.g., focus group, questionnaire design, regression analysis, etc). In short, the course introduces you to the value and methods of marketing research in the context of business decision making, which first stresses the process of obtaining information, and then emphasizes the use of this information to reduce the risks in marketing decision making.

Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes

Our objectives are:

1. Learn how to define the marketing decision problem and determine what information is needed to make the decision;
2. Learn how to gather trustworthy and relevant data;
3. Learn how to analyze the data to make certain classic types of marketing decisions.

On the first of these objectives, the organizing theme of the course is “backward market research.” This is a process of starting at the end of the process, envisioning decisions that will be taken based on research. You must think through what the marketing decision problem is, what courses of action you might conceivably recommend, and what information would be necessary to choose from among those courses of action. This ending point then drives any subsequent data collection.

On the second objective, after you know what information we need, the question arises of how to get the necessary data. Secondarily, we need to know how to judge its quality. We first look to see whether it exists already in the form of trustworthy secondary research or internal customer databases or knowledge management systems. If the necessary data do not exist, we carry out (or commission) a study or series of studies. This usually begins with exploratory research to refine our understanding of what our decision alternatives are, what criteria should be used to choose among them, and to generate hypotheses about what the key levers will be that will drive us toward course of action A versus course of action B. Exploratory research never generates scientifically projectable numbers. To get such numbers, we will typically conduct a survey or an

experiment. We'll learn enough about these methods that you can have confidence in making decisions based on them.

On the third objective, once we have gathered relevant and trustworthy data, there is typically some analysis that must be done in order to make the marketing decision. There are certain basic tools for crunching the numbers and drawing the right conclusion about, for example, what price to set, which product concept to develop or launch, how to segment the market, which segment(s) to target, etc.

Upon completion of this course, each student should be able to:

- a. Realize the importance of marketing research in making effective marketing decisions
- b. Understand the relevance of secondary data in marketing
- c. Understand the advantages and disadvantages of major primary data collection methodologies (survey, focus group, observation, experimentation)
- d. Understand the importance and application of appropriate statistical methods in marketing research
- e. Be able to assess, evaluate and communicate research findings.

Topical Outline

- Definition and importance of marketing research
- Problem definition and approach
- Introduction to research design
- Secondary data
- Emerging information technology as it applies to marketing research
- Qualitative research
- Survey, observation, and experimentation
- Measurement and scaling
- Questionnaire design
- Sampling
- Data collection and preparation
- Application of the following statistical methods: Descriptive (including cross tabs), estimation, basic hypothesis tests, comparisons of two or more groups, regression and correlation
- Reporting results

Individual and Group Assignments:

Much of the learning during the course will take place with the help of individual and group case analyses. If an exercise is labeled "individual" you are not allowed to work with other students – the write-up should reflect your own work only. If an exercise is labeled "group" you should work on it in groups and only hand in one write-up per group

(3 students per group). Groups should be formed at the beginning of the semester and remain constant for all group exercises.

It will be a violation of academic integrity if you base your assignments on solutions you have found on the Internet or which you have obtained from others inside or outside of UGA. I reserve the right to fail you for the course if I become aware of such a violation.

Class Participation, Group Assessment and Attendance:

Quality contributions which are relevant to the discussion will improve your participation grade. **I will cold call on students at random to open case and assignment discussions.** Your class participation grade will be significantly hurt if you are called upon to offer your analysis on a case or assignment question and you are not prepared.

Every group member is expected to participate actively in all aspects of the group exercises. Group participation grade will be determined by the average of peer evaluations. Specifically, each group member will evaluate, at the end of the course, the contribution made by the other group members on a 100-point scale.

Attendance is mandatory at all class sessions. If you have an emergency and thus cannot attend, please let me know by contacting me in advance. If you miss 5 or more classes for non-emergency reasons I reserve the right to fail you for the course. A class role sheet will go around most classes. You are responsible for your own signature on the role sheet; do not sign for another individual under any circumstances. 2% will be deducted for each absence without pre-approval.

Academic Integrity, Honor Code and Classroom Etiquette:

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

You are expected to comply with UGA Student Honor Code – ***“I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.”***

Our classroom should have a professional environment. In keeping with such an environment I ask the following of you:

- Please do not enter or leave the room while class is in session
- Please limit your sidebar conversation
- Food is not allowed in the classroom
- Please turn off your mobile phone before the start of class

I expect you to help me enforce these norms, so we can have a good environment free of distractions. If we all cooperate, this will be no big deal and we will be more productive.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor during regular office hours or by appointment.

About Case Studies:

The case situations that will be discussed have been developed after careful research on actual situations in real companies. The case writer(s) has (have) attempted to describe enough of the background and details of the situation in order to provide an adequate basis for class discussion.

Thorough preparation on the part of all class participants is essential to having a good and fruitful class discussion. Merely reading the case is not to be enough. After an initial reading to get a broad overview, go back and study the case thoroughly. Consider the course material covered up to that point in time, the assigned text and other readings on that particular day. Make any notes you find helpful and mark up the case to facilitate structuring your understanding of the situation. Identify the major problems and key relationships. Conceive alternative solutions to the problem and identify the advantages and disadvantages of each. Be prepared to defend your stand and recommendation in the class.

Each case is bound to lack some information that you would like to have in order to make a decision. As in real life, management decisions frequently must be made in the absence of information. A key executive skill is the ability to make effective decisions under uncertainty. A case discussion is preparation for just such situations.

Rarely, if ever, does a case contain an ideal solution to the problem highlighted in it. So do not expect a perfect all-encompassing solution at the end of the case discussion. In most cases, no such answer will emerge because each management problem often has multiple alternative solutions, each involving different degrees of risk, cost and complexity of execution. The major benefit of case discussion is that it provides the participants with a perspective and a repertoire of ideas which non-participants will lack. Another benefit of the case discussion is that concepts which may appear theoretical in a textbook come to life when seen from the perspective of a case.

Changes to This Syllabus: The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. You are responsible for keeping up with any adjustments.

Grading:

Evaluation methods include individual exams over knowledge of concepts, terms, and methodologies; group and individual assignments/case studies demonstrating practical application of concepts and methodologies. Class and group participation will also contribute to the final grade according to the distribution shown in the table below. All assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Grading Element	Weight
Class attendance (Attendance is mandatory at all class sessions. If you have an emergency and thus cannot attend, please let me know by contacting me in advance. If you miss 5 or more classes for non-emergency reasons I reserve the right to fail you for the course. A class role sheet will go around for most classes. You are responsible for your own signature on the role sheet; do not sign for another individual under any circumstances. 2% will be deducted for each absence without pre-approval.)	10%
In-class discussion participation	5%
Group participation (based on the average of peer evaluations)	5%
Individual assignments (all assignments have equal weights)	20%
Group assignments (all assignments have equal weights)	20%
Midterm exam (closed book, Tue, 10/09/2007)	15%
Final exam (closed book, Thu, 12/13/2007)	25%
Grading Distribution (Grades due by Tue, 12/18/2007)	
92-100 A (there is no A+) 91,90,89,88 A- 87,86,85,84 B+ 83,82,81,80 B 79,78,77,76 B- 75,74,73,72 C+ 71,70,69,68 C 67,66,65,64 C- 63,62,61,60 D 59-0 F	