CMGT 587
Audience Analysis: Understanding your Audience through Research
Jessica Neff, PhD
Kimberlie Stephens, PhD
Emails: Jessicajneff@gmail.com
kimberliestephens@yahoo.com
Office: ASC 333

Throughout this course, you will learn how to think critically about research by asking good questions and applying rigorous methods and models to data. You will also practice using research to answer business questions. As industries become increasingly competitive, organizations are relying more and more on data to make more informed decisions. This reality requires individuals who understand not only how to interpret data, but how research can be designed to optimize the quality of decisions. This course has been designed to provide you with grounding in the overall process of research design, to build your competence as a communicator of complex research findings, as well as to help you gain practical skills in some of the most common research methods.

You will have the opportunity to learn course concepts through the development of a marketing research project for a client. Throughout the semester you will work with a team and use research to answer your client's questions and provide recommendations. The final product will be presented to your clients.

Required Texts:
1. Koomey, J. G. (2008). Turning numbers into knowledge: Mastering the art of problem solving (2nd Ed.). Oakland, CA: Analytics Press.

2. Cases from Harvard Business School Press [instructions for purchasing and downloading these will be on blackboard]

3. The remaining readings will be available on blackboard.

Course Evaluation

Weekly Assignments	30%
Analysis Method Presentation	20%
Final Client Project	35%
Class Participation	15%

Assignment Overview

Weekly Assignments
This course is designed as a workshop style course. Each week you will learn new concepts and practice applying them. This will require you to complete homework assignments and come prepared to present, discuss or work with classmates in class. Details of individual assignments will be posted on blackboard.

Analysis Method Presentation
This assignment requires you to work with an assigned partner (or team). Your team will be given an analytical method that you will teach to your classmates. Data can be gathered in a variety of ways and different types of data require different kinds of analysis. Different methods of analysis provide answers to different questions. Using the wrong method or data can result in incorrect recommendations and ultimately poor decisions. Your job is to show how your assigned method is useful for analysis of marketing research data and to develop a presentation in which you teach the class about the method, what types of questions it can answer, what type of data is required and its strengths and weaknesses.

Client Project
You will work in groups to complete your marketing research project for your client. You will be working on issues identified as important to the client. Throughout the semester you will be working to analyze both secondary data as well as to collect primary data. You will ultimately use those findings to provide results and recommendations to your client. They will visit class to give you more specific guidance early in the semester.

Class Participation
Class participation is an important aspect of this class. We will spend time in class discussing the readings and working through cases that deal with research challenges. You will be expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings, with questions/comments prepared on those readings, and with case questions or application examples when requested. Your timeliness and ability to work with others will also be evaluated in your course participation grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor.

It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member.

Resources on academic honesty can be found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS):

1.   "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program;

2.   "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration. The "SCampus" (http://www.usc.edu/scampus) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies.

DISABILITIES POLICY

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to the TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

CMGT 587 Class Plan (Please visit the weekly folder on Blackboard each week for full details on assignments and class preparation)

Week	Topic	Reading
Part I: Critical Thinking and Research Design		
1	What is this course about?	None
2	Labor Day	No class
3	What makes a good researcher? Critical thinking and evaluation	Koomey Parts 1-3 HBS Building a Marketing Plan ch. 3 *See blackboard for further prep*
4	What makes good research? Principles of research design	Malhotra Chs 2 & 3 HBS Market Segmentation Article HBS Note on Marketing Strategy HBS Tivo Case *See blackboard for further prep*
5	What is the purpose of theory? Using models and tools	Koomey Part 4 NYT Article on Habits *See blackboard for further prep*
6	How do we decide what data to use? Data evaluation, analysis & sampling	Aaker, Kumar & Day Chs 5 & 14 *See blackboard for further prep*
Part II: Data Evaluation and Analysis		
7	Asking "what" questions	Readings will vary by group and week during this portion. See blackboard.
8	Asking "why" questions	
9	Asking "how" questions	
10	Using analysis to find robust answers	Analysis Method Presentations
11	Using analysis to find robust answers	Analysis Method Presentations
Part III: Drawing Conclusions and Communicating Recommendations		
12	Communicating findings	Koomey Part 5 *See blackboard for further prep*
13	Visual representation	Tufte Ch 2 & 5 Few Ch 5 & 6 *See blackboard for further prep*
14	Dry run workshop	
15	Client presentations	