

**CMGT 587:** Audience Analysis

**Four units**

**Spring 2020 – Monday – 6.30-9.20pm**

**Section:** 21720

**Location:** ASC 328

**Instructor:** Mathew Curtis

**Office:** ASC 321

**Office hours:** Monday 1-2pm.

**Contact info:** [mcurtis@usc.edu](mailto:mcurtis@usc.edu)

**Course website:** [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)

*Check your email linked to Blackboard regularly.* I will regularly send emails about class agenda and logistical arrangements through Blackboard.

## **Course Description**

This class is intended to make you think and think specifically about research. Although many of you examined research methods in CMGT 540 this was only an initial exposure to research methods. In this course we move deeper into research methods and focus on how research can be employed to answer business related questions. This is an applied course. I believe the best way to learn is via doing and so we will do as much research as we can in the course. At the same time while this is an applied course our actions should be supported by theory and so we must cover theoretical perspectives.

## **Course Format**

Class will meet weekly for 2 hours and 50 minutes. Class meetings will consist of lectures, presentations, exercises, videos and/or discussions.

The class is designed as a series of workshops. Some weeks build directly on prior weeks whereas other weeks cover standalone material. On one level everything in the class is related – it is all audience analysis/market research. On another level the connections between different classes may not be immediately apparent or clear until later in the semester.

A typically week will consist of some sort of presentation from me followed by some interactive class/group exercises to assess understanding of material. These initial exercises will be supported by me via use of prompts or clues to guide you in the correct direction. I will then gradually withdraw my support as you start mastering the material until (hopefully) you can complete tasks without my input. The workshop will then conclude with graded individual or group assignments that may take place in the classroom or as homework.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Research is an evolving discipline and typically each situation or problem we may research has characteristics we have not encountered before. Different situations need different research approaches. Partly as a result of this solving a problem in a specific situation does not mean what you learned will transfer to assist you in a different situation or that you will be able to solve a different problem. However, there are common steps to consider that allow us to deconstruct problems and identify where we focus our attention. Once we determine what we need to know we can then make educated predictions about what we may find and how collect data to test our understanding.

The objective of this course is to educate you regarding a selection of research methods and provide you the ability to conceptualize problems in a manner that allows for research analysis.

When you have completed this course you should be able to

- Deconstruct arguments or theories to identify chains of reasoning.
- Identify logic flaws.
- Improve your knowledge of research methodologies (survey, focus groups, content analysis, experiments, and naturalistic observation).
- Apply new approaches to statistical analyses.
- Identify actionable recommendations from data sets.
- Identify influential individuals within social media and more importantly influential individuals specific to niche areas.
- Quickly examine social media metrics to provide improved insight into current events.
- Professionally, concisely, and effectively, present information to decision makers.

**Prerequisite(s):** none

**Co-Requisite(s):** none

**Concurrent Enrollment:** none

### **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

All assignments are submitted via blackboard in a Word document. Do not submit pdfs/pages or other types of files. Do not email submissions to me.

**Assignments (20%)** In most weeks there will be a short assignment to assess your understanding of the material that week. The assignment will not directly replicate in-class activities but rather be an extension of the work. This is graduate school and so the assignments should make you think a bit rather than directly replicating what happened in class.

**Applied project (40%)** Work with a client to investigate an audience analysis problem and then present a solution to the client to address the problem. This includes peer evaluations where your group members will indicate how effective you were in group work. If you do not complete a peer evaluation your score will be substantially lowered.

**AdWords project (35%)** Audience analysis in real time. Apply a Google AdWords campaign with a real world client. You will also create a webpage to promote the client's business

This includes peer evaluations where your group members will indicate how effective you were in group work. If you do not complete a peer evaluation your score will be substantially lowered.

**Participation (5%)** This grade is participation within the course but excludes participation on the applied projects. Contribute professionally to class discussions, group work, and peer review. Simply being in class does not mean you score well on participation. Doing a minimum amount of work in the group activities means you will score poorly on participation. Students who take initiative in an appropriate manner in group work and at times do more than their 'fair' share of work (for instance helping a group member who is struggling) will likely score higher. I take note of students who are distracted in class time (e.g. surfing the web) or not participating appropriately in other ways and such students score poorly in participation. Do not expect you will score 100% on participation. Scoring at an A level in participation (93%+) means participating at an outstanding level.

*Reading assignments.* There are readings assigned for most lectures. The required readings are stated at the end

of the syllabus and are available via blackboard. It is likely I will do a short five minute closed book quiz on the assigned weekly readings starting about week 2 or 3. You are expected to pass the quiz. Failure to pass the quiz results in a deduction from your final grade. We may also conduct small in-group class discussions around the readings which will require creation of a one page discussion prompt. Details of this will be announced.

## Grading

### Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Assignments	20
Applied project	40
AdWords project	35
Participation	5
TOTAL	100

### Grading System

The number of points each assignment is assigned does not reflect the importance of the assignment in determining your final grade. The weighting each assignment receives is the determining factor (see assignment table). Many assignments are scored out of 100 points (including all papers) but some important assignments are scored out of 10 points. Blackboard displays a weighted total which indicates your grade in the course.

### Grading Scale

There is no rounding. Plus/minus grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Grade Range
A	93-100%
A-	90-92.99%
B+	87-89.99%
B	83-86.99%
B-	80-82.99%
C+	77-79.99%
C	73-76.99%
C-	70-72.99%
D	60-69.99%
F	59.99% or less

Some students think that putting effort into a course automatically equals an “A” grade regardless of the level of mastery of the course material. In other words, some students mistakenly equate effort with mastery, which is

not true. For example, a runner can put a lot of effort into a race, but if the runner has not mastered the effective techniques of running, then the running performance will not be excellent.

### **Grading Timeline**

Most work will be graded within 7 days of submission.

### **Writing Quality**

The course project demands much in terms of writing. The quality of your writing will significantly influence how your work is evaluated.

Many students judge themselves to be good writers. This judgment is often over-optimistic. The writing demands in this course are very high, complex, and constant. Even competent writers will be challenged. Hence, be prepared to expend much effort in improving your writing. I encourage you to be open and receptive to feedback for improving.

The effort to improve must come from you. I will highlight where your writing needs to improve, and point you to resources. Then, it is your responsibility to use these resources to improve.

How will writing quality be evaluated? One basic component is writing mechanics. Good mechanics refer to careful attention to spelling, punctuation, and grammar; good grammar includes subject-verb agreement, appropriate use of parallel structures, absence of sentence fragments, and so on. Another aspect of mechanics is the use of proper vocabulary and expressions. For a refresher, refer to [owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](http://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html). More resources are listed at: [dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter](http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter)

Another component of writing quality is organization. In a well-organized paper, the arguments flow smoothly; the transitions from one idea to another are well written, i.e., the reader knows when different arguments are being presented and can grasp the important and subtle distinctions. A well-organized paper respects the reader's cognitive burden and shepherds the reader's attention carefully.

The basic criterion is to communicate well to your readers (your instructor and your peers). If your readers cannot understand your writing due to flaws in grammar, vocabulary or organization, then the quality of your thinking cannot be appreciated. I will not spend minutes to decipher a sentence you wrote. You cannot ask me to ignore poor writing in order to focus on content.

A paper with good ideas but bad writing will earn a poor grade. When evaluating your writing, I may correct the first few language errors. Thereafter, I may not comment on the same language error if it repeats elsewhere in the paper.

### **Paper Guidelines**

All documents should be in Microsoft Word format. Papers must be type-written or word-processed, double-spaced, with 12 point font. Make sure you keep a copy of all submitted papers. Please ensure that each paper is written in APA style. Refer to the APA manual (6th Edition). Finally, typos and spelling errors are unforgivable at this level and reflect poorly on you. This is a professional program and a paper with multiple grammar, typo, or spelling errors will receive substantial deductions. All page length requirements are for double-spaced pages, with 1-inch margins, in 12-point Times New Roman font.

### **Classroom atmosphere**

In this course, we will engage in classroom discussions. Any true discussion involves personal exposure and taking risks. Your ideas may or may not be consistent with those of your classmates. However, as long as your points are supportable, they need to be respected by all of us in the classroom.

There will be times when you will give wrong answers to technical questions posed during classroom discussions. This is acceptable because I assume that you do not know everything about audience analysis. If you did, you would most likely not be enrolled in this course.

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

The majority of work is due at the time class starts and submitted via blackboard. Exceptions to this will be listed in the weekly email and/or in class.

### **Weekly Emails**

Each week after class an email will be sent via blackboard. This email lists the tasks to complete before the next class. Typically this email will be sent within 24 hours of the end of class. I will usually have already described in class all the tasks listed in the email. The email serves as a convenient reminder/to do list and may occasionally list things not previously described in class. It is your responsibility to check your email and ensure you are aware of what is expected.

### **Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

#### **Textbooks**

There are no required textbooks for the course. In my opinion most textbooks suffer from a number of flaws, for example overpriced, not specific to the course, or contain material not needed. Instead of using textbooks we will read journal articles which will be available on blackboard.

#### **Harvard Business School Press**

We will likely use articles from Harvard Business School Press which are available for purchase online. The link to purchase these will be posted later in the semester on blackboard. The cost here will be under \$30.

#### **Money**

We will collect data and run an AdWords campaign. Both these activities cost money and each student will spend about \$60-100 on this.

#### **SPSS**

As an Annenberg student you have access to a free copy of the statistical program SPSS. I will provide details of how to access SPSS in class

#### **Qualtrics**

We will use the online survey application Qualtrics. If you took CMGT 540 you should already have an account. In the fall of 2018 USC changed how to access USC Qualtrics and you now access Qualtrics at the following address

<https://itservices.usc.edu/qualtrics/>

You should check to ensure you have access to USC Qualtrics.

#### **Laptop Policy**

All students are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg Digital Lounge for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's Information Technology Services website.

### **Note on use of Personal Laptops during Class.**

Many of you expect to be able to use your personal laptops in class. Laptops are useful tools but also distracting devices. When you have your laptop in front of you, you will tend to IM, email, check sport scores, or watch YouTube videos while your peers are trying to engage in the lecture. This is very frustrating. When you are using your laptop for tasks other than note taking you also distract those next to you. Distracting fellow students who are trying to attend to the lecture material is a selfish act. As an instructor it is typically obvious when a student is using their laptop for tasks unrelated to the class. To improve the classroom atmosphere please use laptops only for tasks related to the class.

### **Lateness**

I realize that all students may occasionally submit an assignment late. To encourage everyone to hand in assignments, I will accept late work. However, in fairness to those who do turn things in on time there will be a price to pay for late work. I will grade all late assignments and then deduct percentage points. Work less than 24 hours late will be deducted up to 10%, work more than 24 hours late but under a week late will be deducted up to 25%. Work that is more than one week late will be deducted up to 50%. An exception to this rule is at the end of the semester. Any late work must be submitted before the last day of class unless approved by me. After the last class I am finalizing grades and so typically cannot accept late work. If you are going to be late turning in an assignment, email me to notify them of this, and then email me again to alert me when you have submitted the assignment. Additionally, late assignments may only receive a score and no feedback or minimal feedback. Extensions are available but extensions will only be approved for a 'good' reason and it is my subjective interpretation of what good means. Additionally, unless the reason is unexpected extensions are highly unlikely to be approved when requested within 24 hours of the due date.

*Class absence.* As we only meet once a week, and much of the material from lecture does not overlap with that of the text, *attendance and participation is crucial*. Everyone is allowed one absence per term in recognition of the demands of life – however, note the make-up policy for any missed class (even the first class). If you do not attend class you are not participating. If you are *absent more than once* you will lose participation points unless a reason deemed valid by me is provided. If you miss a second class you are deducted 2% of the total grade, the third absence results in an additional 3%, the fourth an additional 5% (i.e., having four unexcused absences costs 10%,  $2+3+5=10$ ). Additionally, being absent from four or more classes opens the possibility that you may fail the course regardless of your performance in the class.

When you are absent from a class I need to ensure you understand the material. For this reason whenever you miss a class you owe me about three hours work (the length of a missed class). This means you will be required to write a five page paper on the material covered in the lecture that you missed. Five pages are about 1,500 words. You do not gain points for writing this paper. However, if you fail to submit a paper for a missed class you lose significant points from your final grade. The specific deduction is 5% for each missed paper. When you miss a class it is your responsibility to contact me within seven days to allow me to inform you of the material you will write five pages on and your due date for this paper. If you know ahead of time you are going to miss a class you can contact me before the missed class to discuss the five pages if you wish. Failing to contact me within seven days of the missed class equates to failing to complete the paper and you lose significant points from your final grade. This five page paper is required regardless of the reason for missing a class (e.g. family emergency, medical, work/career, sport, wedding/funeral, religious holiday). Note also the participation section in the evaluation of performance and how absence from class affects performance on this criterion. Completion of the five page paper does *not* compensate for your failure to participate in any class you miss. The five page paper should be emailed to me.

### **The grade of incomplete (IN)**

A grade of incomplete can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of documented illness or some other emergency. Students must NOT assume that I will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to by myself and the department and reported on the official “Incomplete Completion Form”

**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/13/20 – 5/1/20)**

Friday, January 31: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Tuesday, February 4: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, February 28: Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, February 28: Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Friday, April 3: Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

**Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

The course is better thought of as a series of lectures rather than as weeks assigned to specific topics. We will work through a lecture and it may take one class, or two classes, or one and a half classes to finish a lecture. The lecture ends when the material is covered rather than ending after 2 hours 50 minutes. It is better to cover the material appropriately than end a content area simply because the class ends that week. Weekly to do emails will be sent indicating which readings are to be completed before class.

**Changes to syllabus**

The course schedule will be followed as closely as possible but may vary depending on the pace of the class. Changes to the syllabus are unlikely to occur. However, I reserve the right to make changes. Any changes will be announced in class or by e-mail as far in advance as possible.

	<b>Topics/Daily Activities</b>	<b>Readings and Homework</b>	<b>Deliverable/Due Dates</b>
<b>Week 1 13<sup>th</sup> January</b>	What is market research? The research process	See blackboard	
<b>Week 2 20<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Holiday No Class		
<b>Week 3 27<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Critical thinking, evaluation, and argument mapping	See blackboard	
<b>Week 4 3<sup>rd</sup> February</b>	Meltwater social media analytics	See blackboard	
<b>Week 5 10<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Critical thinking, evaluation, and argument mapping	See blackboard	Google pre-campaign
<b>Week 6 17<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Holiday No Class		
<b>Week 7 24<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Critical thinking, evaluation, and argument mapping	See blackboard	

<b>Week 8 2<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	Sampling, marketing, segmentations	See blackboard	
<b>Week 9 9<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Sampling, marketing, segmentations	See blackboard	Start Google campaign
<b>Spring Break 16<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Holiday No Class		
<b>Week 10 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	Theory, models and tools	See blackboard	
<b>Week 11 30<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Theory, models and tools	See blackboard	
<b>Week 12 6<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Method refresher: Survey, FG, and content analysis	See blackboard	Google post-campaign
<b>Week 13 13<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Method refresher: Survey, FG, and content analysis	See blackboard	
<b>Week 14 20<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Method refresher: Experiments	See blackboard	
<b>Week 15 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	Statistics and communicating findings	See blackboard	
<b>Finals 11<sup>th</sup> May</b>			Paper

## Policies and Procedures

### Communication

Outside of class time email is the best way to contact me. Face-to-face communication is usually better so if possible talk to me during class or office hours. Office hours are best used via appointment. You are welcome to attend office hours without an appointment but during office hours priority is given to students who have an appointment. If you have not received a response from me within 48 hours please contact me again as I have likely missed your initial email.

## Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

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 the same paper to more than one class, 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 website:

( [sjacs.usc.edu](http://sjacs.usc.edu) ): In the general resources tab on this website the following two guides are especially relevant

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*” ( [usc.edu/scampus](http://usc.edu/scampus) ) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies.

The School and the University is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by TurnItIn technologies ([turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com)) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and TurnItIn is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work.

### Disabilities Policy

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructors as early in the semester as possible. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. [dsp.usc.edu/](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

### Library Access

As a USC student, you have access to all the library resources and the Annenberg Librarian, Chimene Tucker ([cetucker@usc.edu](mailto:cetucker@usc.edu)), is available to assist you with any inquiry you may have.

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### a. Academic Conduct

#### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](https://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

### b. Support Systems

*Counseling and Mental Health* - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP)* - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)*- (213) 740-5086 | *Title IX* – (213) 821-8298  
[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](https://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment* - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* - (213) 740-0776  
[dsp.usc.edu](https://dsp.usc.edu)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Support and Advocacy* - (213) 821-4710  
[uscса.usc.edu](https://uscса.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenbergsuccessfund.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.