

MGB 249: Marketing Research
Course Syllabus: Spring 2020
Version: Feb 13, 2020 (Subject to change!)

Course Information

- **Instructor**
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- **Session Information**
 - Time: Odd Weekend Fridays (2-5 pm, 6-9 pm)
Class dates: Mar 27, Apr (10, 24), May (8, 22)
 - Final session: June 5 (2-5 pm)
(Project presentations and reports)
 - Location: BR-1501 (San Ramon)
- **Text**
 - Kumar, Leone, Aaker, and Day, *Marketing Research*, 13th Edition, Wiley. This is available as an e-book (but only *directly* from the publisher: <https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Marketing+Research%2C+13th+Edition-p-9781119624899>) for either purchase or rental. There is also a softcover version that can be purchased or rented from the publisher. (ISBN: 978-1-119-49749-3)
 - I have been checking in with students each quarter on the subject of “e-books,” and this one generally seems to be useable.
- **Software**
 - Students in this course will use SPSS for all *statistical analysis* assignments. There are multiple reasons for this decision (which I realize could be a topic for discussion given the hype surrounding R). More details on how to obtain licenses will be provided early in the course.
 - For *survey data collection*: We will be using Qualtrics (a top commercial package) which UC Davis currently has a site license for.
- **Prerequisites: The core courses in marketing, economics, and statistics are absolutely required.** Formally, the entire core is a plus, but we do realize that students may vary in their timing. In particular, we consider the material in MGX 201B (Organizational Strategy and Structure) to be helpful.
- **Prerequisites (cont.):** A ‘Frequently Asked Question’ is whether the second statistics course (203B) “should” be taken prior to this course. It is *not* a requirement, and traditionally the course has had a mix of students (with and without). The answer to this question varies on a case-by-case basis. For example, students that experienced difficulty with 203A might consider contacting me for a more in-depth discussion. Conversely, in the past, students

who have taken 249 *before* 203B report that there are advantages in this ordering as well (particularly for marketing-oriented students).

Code of Academic Conduct

An absolute requirement in this course (and in our program) is that all students must rigorously adhere to the ethical standards specified in the Code of Academic Conduct. The full text of this code is available at this link: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/cac.pdf>. Because this course has a heavy group project component, the most critical thing to understand is that the “group work” paradigm does not extend to the individual SPSS analysis assignments. (This will be discussed in more detail at the appropriate time.)

Course Description

To begin, there are two “pillar” elective courses for an MBA concentration in marketing: *Marketing Strategies* and *Marketing Research*. (Other courses are “vertical/depth,” e.g., pricing, distribution channels, international, or “horizontal/integrative,” e.g., product management, new product development.) *Marketing Strategies* provides a theory-based framework for defining marketing problems and identifying the decisions that managers are required to make. *Marketing Research* addresses the practical aspects of defining marketing problems and decision making, and the role of information: how to correctly identify the type of information needed, and how to collect and analyze it as part of the decision-making process.

Historically, *Marketing Research* has been the course that covers *data analysis* in a marketing context (and it still does). With the rise of “big data” and “marketing analytics,” there are now additional, overlapping courses that focus on data analysis methods applied to readily available, existing data from, e.g., current customers in a business-as-usual context. However, the most important (and interesting) marketing decisions require information and analyses that cannot generally be supported by this type of data.

These situations require an understanding of which information is needed, and how to get it. While some cases can be addressed by secondary source data, solving many marketing problems first requires a clearer understanding of how and why consumers may respond to new products and situations, which requires qualitative research (such as *focus groups* and depth interviews). Ultimately, most decisions require quantitative analysis of data measurements collected from the target market using *surveys*. This course covers both qualitative and quantitative marketing research and analysis. More generally, the course is structured around the concept of the “marketing research process,” which emphasizes the critical importance of first developing a correctly framed business/marketing problem that is centered on decision making.

Learning Objectives

The main *overall objective* for the course is to understand and learn how to implement all steps in the *marketing research process*.

To do this, the student will learn how to:

- (Correctly) formulate and *define business problems* whose solution requires the manager to make (marketing-related) decisions (and take actions) that are firmly based on proper analysis.
- Determine what information/data is needed for a 'proper analysis.'
- Design a method for collecting the information/data.
- Manage/execute the data collection.
- (Correctly) analyze the data and interpret results.
- Communicate results, draw conclusions, and make recommendations.

Remark: The first of these items is a critical skill required in IMP (MGX 440), which students rarely learn in other courses. Moreover, the remaining skills are also often required in IMP.

To implement the above steps, the student will learn:

- What the different types of research approaches are.
- The specific research methods associated with each type of approach. (E.g., focus groups, in-depth interviews, surveys, experiments.)
- Which approaches/methods to use for different types of information/data.
- How to design and implement the methods.
- How to perform data analysis and interpret results for different methods.

Course Approach

The main approach for addressing the learning objectives embodied in the above description is for students to execute a **course-long group project**. This is an exercise in *experiential learning* that requires students to develop a business problem that is a good “fit” for the following commonly-occurring research sequence: initial qualitative research (e.g., focus group), followed by quantitative research (survey data design, collection, and analysis). Many of these skills cannot be effectively learned through lectures and homework problems alone. In addition, students will review previously learned statistical analysis methods, and also learn new methods, in a marketing context. These will be applied via hands-on data analysis using SPSS.

Course Topics [In approximate chronological order.]

- Role of Marketing Research in Managerial/Marketing Decision-making
- Marketing Research Process
- Overview of Consumer Choice Modeling
- Research Design

- Qualitative Research/Focus Groups
- Primary Data Collection (Overview)
- Introduction to SPSS
- Attitude Measurement and Scaling
- Survey Design
- Data Analysis with SPSS
- Cluster Analysis
- Factor Analysis
- Conjoint Analysis
- Final Project Presentations and Reports

Course Launch: PLEASE READ!

Because of the need to get organized into groups and get started on group project formation, attendance on the first day of class is essential. In addition, students will be asked to view some “flipped lecture material” (in the form of MP4 videos and/or narrated PowerPoint presentations) *prior to the first day of class. This is particularly important for the San Ramon program due to the every-other-week format, which creates logistical and pedagogical challenges.* I will be providing an expanded schedule grid with more details, and also ask students to fill out a short survey.

All of these considerations mean that it will be critical for students to regularly check email near the end of the Winter quarter and over the break, so that we can be well organized before the first day of class.