

JOUR 460: Research Methods in Strategic Communication

Fall 17 (posted on August 20, 2017)

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Stauffer-Flint Hall, Room 100

Instructor

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Professor

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(No office hours during finals week)

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Research Methods. Research is the foundation for creative strategies and executions in campaigns. Without it, even the most brilliant creative executions would fail.

This is one of the most challenging courses in your undergraduate career. In this course, you will learn a variety of research methods applicable to your interns and future jobs. Real-world examples and former students' assignments will be showcased to demonstrate the importance of research and how fun it can be.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The heart of this class is to learn how to think critically about a marketing problem and to apply appropriate research methods to seek insightful solutions and formulate creative recommendations. Specifically, students will conduct, analyze, and apply various research methods through secondary and primary sources to understand how to address strategic communication problems.

Using a mixture of lectures, discussions, and team-based learning activities, this course will cover how to gather information from secondary sources, collect data from primary sources using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, basic statistics, data analysis, data interpretations, data visualization, and, finally, ways to present data meaningfully in the format of written reports and visual presentations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the semester, you should be able:

- To understand the role of research in strategic communication process
- To explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative research methods
- To apply both qualitative and quantitative research methods to effectively identify and propose recommendations to solve strategic communication problems
- To connect research findings to the strategic planning process
- To communicate research results clearly, concisely, and effectively in the format of written reports and visual presentations
- To provide constructive feedback through team collaborations and peer evaluations

COURSE STRUCTURE

Our class will be a mixture of lectures, class discussions, and team-based learning activities. Unannounced quizzes will take place randomly throughout the semester. We will also discuss current marketing campaigns so that you will be prepared for your capstone course: Strategic Campaigns and beyond.

READINGS

The required textbook for this course is Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices by Anol Bhattacharjee. It is an open-source textbook and has been uploaded to the course Blackboard site. Additional reading materials will be posted on Blackboard. Please read all the assigned material before class. This will help you better understand the day's topic and will facilitate our discussions.

Finally, you are strongly encouraged to read trade publications (e.g., *Ad Age*, *AdWeek*, *PR Week*, *Communication Arts*) so that you stay up-to-date with what's happening in the industry.

COMMUNICATIONS

The University of Kansas email account (@ku.edu) and Blackboard will be used as a primary vehicle for official communications including announcements of any changes in the course schedule or assignments.

Email is the best way to reach me out of scheduled office hours. Basic etiquette (e.g., appropriate salutation/title, signature) is expected because you are already a strategic communication professional.

Please read [this on how to email your professor](#).

SOFTWARE AND WRITING SKILLS NEEDED



Although this course does not require you to be proficient in InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, and other software skills, you may want to take advantage of the online tutorials and in-person workshops (free of charge) that J-School provides (<http://www.jourtech.dept.ku.edu/>).

Everyone needs an editor! I highly recommend you to have your individual and group work edited by the Bremner Editing Center staff. Check [the site](#) for how to schedule an appointment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

This is how your final grade will be calculated (subject to change).

- Attendance/Class Participation: 10%
- Midterm: 20%
- Individual Research Assignments: 20%
- Team Research Assignments: 30%
- Final: 20%

Attendance/Class Participation: 10%

Your participation will impact the quality of this course. We will be addressing various aspects of strategic communication research, so regardless of your specific interests, you are expected to take advantage of our discussions to express how you feel about certain matters related to such an important aspect of your future career.

Participation includes comments and involvement in our in-class discussions, participating in peer evaluations, group exercises and workshops, comments or links relevant to the class posted on our Blackboard discussion board as well as other material you will share with our class. You can't participate unless you are in class. Therefore, I will randomly take attendance, which will be part of your final grade. Missing team meetings will affect your attendance/participation, too.

Note: If you miss any of the first three classes this semester, you might be involuntarily dropped. Excessive absences will likely lead to significant grade penalty (beyond the 10% of your final grade). Faithful attendance will likely result in a slightly higher final grade.

Midterm & Final: 20% each, 40% total

The midterm and final exams will consist of a series of multiple-choice questions. Multiple-choice questions will be answered on a scantron, which I will provide. Our final exam may also include short open-ended questions.

Individual Research Assignments: 20%

As part of our research project, you will each submit the following assignments: moderator guide (20%), survey questionnaire (25%), focus group coding (25%), and an executive summary and infographic (30%).

Team Research Assignments: 30%

As a team, you will conduct secondary and primary research, and make sense of your findings in a series of reports. Your grade for your team research assignments will be calculated as follows: Secondary research (30% of the 30% of your final grade); Moderator guide (5%); Focus group code table (5%); Focus group report (30%); survey report (30%). We will discuss each assignment in more detail during the semester.

Note: Your portion of the team research assignment grades will be adjusted based on multiple peer evaluations. For example, even if your group receives 100% on the secondary research, this does not necessary mean that you will receive 100% of your grade. Your grade could go as low as how your group evaluates your performance. More details will be shared during the semester.

Grading scale:

To calculate your final grade, I will use the following scale (I reserve the right to slightly modify it):

- A = 93-100%
- A- = 90-92%
- B+ = 87-89%
- B = 83-86%
- B- = 80-82%
- C+ = 77-79%
- C = 73-76%
- C- = 70-72%
- D+ = 67-69%
- D = 63-66%
- D- = 60-62%
- F = 59% or below

I do not round-up grades except in specific circumstances where special conditions exist that warrant such an action. Please keep in mind that your final grade will depend upon your peer evaluations as well. The bottom line: I will ensure that the final grade in this course accurately and fairly reflects the grade that is earned.

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due on the designated date/time. Grades on individual and group assignments will be reduced 10% of your grade for each day they are late. All assignments will be graded for spelling, grammar, and clarity in addition to the substance.

MY APPROACH TO WRITING

I only accept assignments that have been carefully formatted and proofread. Professional quality is expected; therefore, multiple revisions are essential. If Hemingway could write 47 endings for his masterpiece, *A Farewell to Arms*, we (who are not yet Nobel and Pulitzer prize winners) don't really have any excuse for not revising and editing to get it right.

The following quote from Ursula K. LeGuin should be taken to heart:

" Ignorance of English vocabulary and grammar is a considerable liability to a writer of English. The best cure for it is, I believe, reading. People who learned to talk at two or so and have been practicing talking ever since feel with some justification that they know their language; but what they know is their spoken language, and if they read little, or read schlock, and haven't written much, their writing is going to be pretty much what their talking was when they were two."

Ursula K. LeGuin

COURSE POLICIES

Intellectual Property

Any work that you or your team have produced for a real-world client will become the property of the client. You will receive no compensation. However, you keep the rights to use the work for your own professional portfolio.

Diversity (adopted from the website of KU Center of Teaching Excellence)

The instructor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the instructor's expectation that ALL students experience this classroom as a safe environment.

The University of Kansas supports an inclusive learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated. We believe that all students benefit from training and experiences that will help them to learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society. All members of our campus community must accept the responsibility to demonstrate civility and respect for the dignity of others. Expressions or actions that disparage a person's or group's race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity / expression, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or disability are contrary to the mission of the University. We expect that KU students, faculty, and staff will promote an atmosphere of respect for all members of our KU community.

Late work

Each individual and group assignment has a deadline. **Late assignments, unless barring significant intervening circumstances, will be deducted 10% of your grade each day the assignments are late.** If you do not plan to be on campus the day an assignment is due, please submit it in early. If you mail or ask someone else to deliver an assignment, you are still responsible if it does not arrive on time.

Laptop and cell phone policy

This class prohibits the use of laptop and cell phone, unless it's requested by the instructor for learning purposes. I've found the use of technology during class (e.g., checking your social media updates, shopping, checking wedding photos) is a sign of being disrespectful to the instructor and classmates. All mobile devices, gadgets, etc., including phones, iPods, iPads, etc. must be SILENCED and STORED during all class periods.

Using technology also interferes with your learning and contribution in class. Handwriting, according to new scientific evidence, allows you to read more quickly and to remain better at

retaining information and generating new ideas. For more details, see *the NY Times* article on [“What’s Lost as Handwriting Fades.”](#)

Feedback on your drafts

I am happy to discuss/review your assignments before they are due. This, however, does not necessarily mean that your revision will score better. If you choose not to do so, and receive a grade that you do not like, you cannot use excuses such as “I didn’t know what you expected” and try to argue for a higher grade.

Absences

Please clear absences (especially for an examination) in advance with the professor (except for medical emergencies) in writing in the form of a memo (e-mail or a hard copy). Excused absences (especially for exams) will be granted only under highly unusual circumstances, such as documented medical emergencies, the death of an immediate family member and official KU business. Family gatherings, weddings, vacations, leaving early for the break, etc. do not qualify. Official documents will be required and may be kept by the professor for a certain period of time. In addition, if any of the crucial days this semester (e.g., an exam) is a religious holiday for you and you are not able to attend class, please notify the professor in writing by the end of the third week of this semester. Otherwise your request will not be honored.

Religious holidays

I honor religious holidays. Please notify the professor about your absences via mail by the end of the third week this semester.

Make-up quizzes and exams

If you have an official excuse (e.g., serious illness, participation in official KU events or other emergencies – which do not include weddings, family gatherings or vacations – you will need official documents), a make-up quiz and exam can be arranged in advance.

Grade change

A change in grade is authorized only by the instructor and only under highly unusual circumstances.

SCHOOL & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Copying or recording class lectures

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor in class and on Blackboard, are the instructor’s property. Video and audio recording of

lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually permit students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. This also applies to any lecture notes and other content prepared by the instructor on Blackboard.

Commercial note-taking policy

Pursuant to the University of Kansas' Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures, commercial note-taking is not permitted in Jour 460: Research Methods in Strategic Communication. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. Please note: note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is not the same as commercial note-taking and is not covered under this policy.

Concealed weapon policies

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with state and federal laws and KU weapons policy**. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Tests and Quizzes

Instructors are allowed by Kansas Board of Regents policy, to require backpacks, purses and other bags be placed in the front of the classroom during exams and quizzes, and as such those items will not be under the constant control of the individual. Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

Individuals who violate the KU weapons policy may be asked to leave campus with the weapon and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate university code of conduct.

Seeking assistance

You are urged to attend office hours or meet with your professor by appointment to discuss any questions pertaining to the course, the readings, exams and assignments, or career prospects and opportunities. You should not hesitate to seek continuing assistance throughout the semester.

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact me as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at <https://disability.ku.edu/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone number is: 785-864-4064. The email is: achieve@ku.edu. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

Academic integrity

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification -- *Adopted May 7, 2004:*

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for an assignment and/or this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of this course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

Plagiarism

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Here's some clarification:

- If you use or attempt to use any unauthorized materials during a test, or if you give any unauthorized materials to someone else during a test, this is cheating. Unauthorized materials include written materials, such as notes. Unauthorized materials include any forms of nonverbal communication (one cough, the answer is A; two coughs, the answer is B, etc.).
- Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else's ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person's ideas, opinions, and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due. “Recycling” past reports/assignments from previous classes/students and presenting them as your own falls into the category of plagiarism.
- If you cut and paste something then add a source, that is not enough. You'd need to rewrite it *in your own words* unless you treat it as a direct quote (by adding quotation marks). Otherwise, it is still plagiarism.
- Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire interview or embellishing a fact, quote, or statistic to make it sound better. Don't do it.

We will discuss these issues further in class. If you have any questions, please contact the professor. Violation of these rules will be reported to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and the advising center.

Inclement weather

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note: Course schedule subject to change. Any changes to due dates will be announced by email, on the course Blackboard site, and/or in class.

	Topic	Required readings	Due dates
Week I			
M 8/21	Thinking about research		
W 8/23	Research basics Critical thinking Ethics Team formation	-Chapter 1: pp. 1-6 -Chapter 16: pp. 137-142	

Week II

M 8/28	Thinking like a researcher (lecture by Jiang)	-Chapter 2: pp. 9-13 -Chapter 3: pp. 22-24	
W 8/30	Secondary research Team contract assignment	-Using library and database resources (BB)	

Week III

M 9/4	No class (Labor Day)		
W 9/6	Workshop: Secondary research	-Chapter 13: pp. 115-116	Team contracts due at the beginning of class—hardcopy submission

Week IV

M 9/11	Qualitative research (lecture by Jiang)	-Introduction to qualitative research (BB)	Discuss focus group days/times: Need to be conducted between 9/27-10/12
W 9/13	Qualitative research (cont.)	-Brief guide for focus groups (BB)	Secondary research report: <u>Friday, 9/15, 5 pm via email</u>

Week V

M 9/18	Workshop: Moderator Guide	-Moderator role (BB)	Individual moderator guide: <u>W. 9/20, 5pm</u>
W 9/20	Focus group	-Conducting focus groups (BB) -Chapter 9: pp. 78-80	Team moderator guide: Friday, 9/22, 5pm, via email

Week VI

M 9/25	Workshop: Conducting a focus group (cont.)		
W 9/27	Ethnographic research	-Ethnographic research (BB) Case study: Airbnb in Japan (BB)	

Week VII

M 10/2	Quantitative research (lecture by Jiang)	-Chapter 9: pp. 73-75 -Chapter 9: pp. 80-82 -Chapter 10: pp. 83-87	
W 10/4	Guest lecture by Heather Lawrenz: Google Analytics		

Week VIII

M 10/9	Quantitative research (cont.)	-Chapter 7: pp. 55, 56, 58 -Chapter 8: pp. 65-70	
W 10/11	Workshop: Types of scales	-Chapter 6: pp. 43-49	

Week IX

M 10/16	No class (Fall break)		
W 10/18	Workshop: Developing survey questions	-Chapter 9: pp. 75-78	Survey questionnaire (individual): Th. 10/19, 5pm Focus group transcription: F. 10/20, 5 pm

Week X

M 10/23	Midterm exam		
W 10/25	Workshop: Analyzing qualitative data	-Analyzing focus group data (BB) -Chapter 13: pp. 113-115	

Week XI

M 10/30	Workshop: Analyzing		
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	qualitative data		
W 11/1	Workshop: Analyzing qualitative data		Individual focus group coding: F. 11/3, 5pm

Week XII

M 11/6	Workshop: Writing qualitative findings	-Creating excerpt-commentary units (BB)	Team focus group table: T. 5pm
W 11/8	Workshop: Focus Group Report		

Week XIII

M 11/13	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data	-Chapter 14: pp. 119-122	Focus group report: W. 11/15, 5pm
W 11/15	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data		

Week XIV

M 11/20	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data		
W 11/22	No class (Thanksgiving)		

Week XV

M 11/27	Guest lecture by Heather Lawrenz: Data visualization		Infographic walk-in hours from Heather Lawrenz: --Wednesday Nov. 29 3:30-5 pm, Room 105. --Friday, Dec. 1. 9-noon, Room 105
W 11/29	Workshop: executive summary & Infographic		Survey group report: Friday, 12/1, 5 pm

Week XVI

M 12/4	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data		
W 12/6	Review session and/or additional lecture		Individual executive summary & Infographic: Thursday, 12/7, 5pm

Final Exam

Friday, 12/15, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. https://registrar.ku.edu/fall-2017-final-exam-schedules
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Student Consent Form – Sharing Course Work

I randomly select students' work for a course portfolio, which can be made available to a wider audience of educators and professionals on a public web site on teaching and learning in higher education. I also showcase the assignments of former students as good models.

This consent form requests your permission to have your assignments possibly featured in a course portfolio, be shown in a future course, or be featured in a conference paper or publication. There is only a small chance your work might be randomly included in my teaching or writing, but I ask all students for their permission should that happen. Please note that you have the choice of having your name included with or excluded from your work.

Please check the following designated purposes (if any) to which you give your consent:

_____ I am willing to allow my coursework to be made available so that future students can use it as a model.

_____ I am willing to allow my coursework to be included in my professor's course portfolio.

_____ I am willing to allow my coursework included in public presentations or publications.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I wish to have my name *included* on any coursework that is used.

_____ I wish to have my name *excluded* from any coursework that is used.

Additional restrictions on the use of my texts (please specify):

Print Name _____ Date _____

Phone Number (optional) () _____ Email: _____

Course Title: JOUR 460 Research Methods (Fall 2017) Professor: Dr. Tien-Tsung Lee

By signing below, I give my permission that the work I produce for this course may be used with the restrictions and for the purposes I indicated above. I understand that my final grade is *not* connected with whether or not I give my consent. My anonymity will be maintained unless I designate otherwise. Finally, I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, now or in the future, without being penalized.

Signature _____