BUSINESS RESEARCH – MKTG 3808

Fall, 2017

Instructor: Dr. Beheruz N. Sethna
Contact Information: Office: 2310 Miller Hall; Tel: 678-839-5078
E-mail: BNSethna@WestGA.edu
All assignments are to be submitted to this address.
Office Hours: M, W: 1:30-4:30 p.m.; T: 1:00-2:20 pm., and by appointment
Prerequisites: Enrollment in this course requires compliance with the College of Business Policy for Major Status and completion of ECON 3402 and CISM 2201 or consent of department chair. You are expected to have a basic understanding of statistics for this course.

Course Description: This course is designed to meet the rapidly growing need for a systematic approach to the business research process, and its implementation in terms of strategic decision making. Both primary and secondary sources of information are considered along with research design, measurement, sampling, data collection, processing, analyses, and interpretation.

Course Objectives: Research has become an important tool in the world of business today. It is increasingly being used to improve decision-making and formulate new strategies. This course aims to provide an understanding of the value and limitations of business research. Students will be introduced to some key research methods and design issues.

Upon successfully completing the course, the student should be able to:

1. Have knowledge of the key terms and concepts in the business research process. (LG 2)
2. Be able to analyze business situations, and apply basic quantitative skills to solving business problems and developing effective strategies. (LG 2)
3. Recognize how diversity, ethical, global, and multicultural considerations affect the business research process and decision-making. (LG 5)
4. Have knowledge about a variety of secondary sources of information including online data banks, the Internet and the Web, and be able to collect and analyze relevant information from these sources (LG 3).
5. Have knowledge about primary research, including research design, sampling procedures, measurement issues, development of a data collection instrument, and data collection, processing, analyses and interpretation. (LG 2)
6. Be able to use statistical tools to analyze and interpret the results (LG 3).
7. Be able to effectively communicate the results of a research project. (LG 1)


Note: I am very sensitive to the costs of text books, so you can have considerable flexibility (within reason) with regard to which edition you buy so as to save money, assuming that you will occasionally be willing to make the extra effort to find the correspondence between one edition and another.
My Teaching Philosophy:

This section is a very important one. Please read it carefully and ask me questions if you are confused.

The bottom line (here it is, perhaps paradoxically, at the very top!) is: How can I be of maximal service to you in helping you succeed in this course and beyond?

Please refer to the course objectives listed on the previous page. This course, as is true for many university courses at this level, has multiple objectives. In 1956, a committee of educators chaired by Benjamin Bloom, developed a classification system of learning objectives, which later became known as Bloom’s Taxonomy. That system was later modified by Lorin Anderson. Presented below is the sense of that taxonomy, arranged in increasing order of complexity.

Knowledge (Remembering): Recalling data, information, terms, terminology.
Comprehension (Understanding): Understanding the meaning of the above, and stating a problem in your own words.
Application (Applying): Using what was learned above in new and different situations.
Analysis (Analyzing): Analyzing material or data to determine relationships or lack thereof.
Synthesis (Creating): Putting the components parts together to create a new understanding of a situation.

The first component and, to a large extent, the second one, can and will be learned from the text book. These are not unimportant. When you write a letter applying for a job, or go for a job interview, or write your first report for your boss, you must know the terminology appropriate to the field. You cannot, for example, hope to get anywhere if you don’t know the difference between a population and a sample, or if you use one term when you should have used another. So, tests will cover such material. However, the instructor can be of little help here. It will not be the best use of your time or mine for me to use a class session to read from PowerPoint slides describing these terms, when you know how to read the text book or slides yourself. So, I will expect you to read the material on your own (you will be tested on it). If you have questions or cannot understand something, I am at your service to help you understand it; however, having got an F in mind-reading when I was in graduate school, these conversations will, of necessity, be at your initiative.

So, I can be of most service to you in helping you with the next four stages of the modified Bloom’s Taxonomy shown above. Thus, I will spend class time (and private time, if you request it) largely on helping you with the Analysis and the Evaluation part of the objectives shown above. These two will help you succeed in this course and after the course, even after you graduate.

What can you expect from me?

Engagement and Commitment of time and effort: I have high standards, but want to help you reach those standards. There is a high bar you have to reach, but my shoulders are available for you to stand on to reach that bar. If I need to get down on my hands and knees to help you reach a bar, I shall do so.

Hard work: I will work hard to help you succeed.

Help, if you need it and ask for it: In this course, there is no such thing as a dumb question. Ask; please ask. Ask me in class (preferably), and ask me outside of class. Ask me over e-mail, and ask me in person.
Correspondingly, what do I expect from you?

**Engagement and Commitment of time and effort:** None of the above will work if you are not totally engaged and committed to your own success. Period. You have to want to climb and work to climb to reach the high bar. When I visited Yellowstone National Park 42 years ago, there was a sign at the entrance that said (words to this effect – not an exact quote): “It takes time to enjoy this park. If you don’t have the time, we suggest you return when you do.” I ask you to follow the same approach. This course takes a lot of time. If you don’t have the time and the commitment, come back when you do.

**Hard work:** Expect to work really hard in this course. If I (past my 69th birthday) can work really, really hard for your success, I will certainly expect that you, who are somewhat younger, will work really, really hard for your own success. Expect to put in several hours of work each week outside of class time. This course will include much work in statistics. I will work hard to help you with that. But, you must resolve to do the same. If you have had the prerequisites but are less comfortable with statistics, that means that you will need to work even harder (with my assistance) to overcome that limitation.

**Ask questions, and ask for help:** Ask for help during class, during office hours, and over e-mail. Although I am in my 40th year of teaching at the university level, I must have missed the class session where they taught us how to read minds, so I still don’t know how to read your mind and know that you don’t understand the third paragraph on Page 203 of the text book. *I can’t help you if you don’t help yourself and you don’t ask for help.*

(Note the correspondence of the three above headers with the preceding three headers.)

**Class Schedule:**

MKTG 3808-01 (Business Research): Monday and Wednesday, 9:30-10:50 a.m., Room 2328 Miller Hall

MKTG 3808-02 (Business Research): Monday and Wednesday, 11:00-12:20 p.m., Room 2328 Miller Hall

**Grading Plan:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project (including interim reports)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Contributions – Peer / Instructor Evaluations</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grades** will be assigned as follows (the instructor reserves the right to adjust the cutoff lines):

- A  90-100
- B  80-89
- C  70-79
- D  60-69
- F  59 or below
Make-up policy.

1. Don’t miss a test.
2. If you must miss a test for a serious medical reason, you must notify me in writing before class on the day of the test, and provide a written excuse from a medical practitioner. If you have to miss a test for university business (such as presenting a paper or being part of a UWG team which is away on a trip), you must notify me in writing at least a week prior to the test.

You will have one week to reschedule and retake the test unless your illness is one that prevents you from retaking it in that time.

Research Project: Each project team will have a research project that you will work on throughout the semester. This applied research project, arguably, is the most important part of the course (see the Grading Plan on the preceding page). It is designed to give you invaluable experience for your future careers and potentially provide an excellent demonstration of your capabilities for future job and/or graduate school interviews. A very detailed handout is provided on D2L (under the Research Projects Handouts tab) entitled “Format for Final Research Project Report With Explanations of the Analysis Section.” I don’t believe in surprises or “gotchas” so I have taken the time to tell you exactly what I expect. Seriously, would it be wise to ignore such a document? It might be a good idea for you to read this very thoroughly multiple times, and when we start on the Analysis, to make multiple copies to paste all over your computer, your refrigerator, your apartment walls, etc. Use it early and often!

Important: It is my hope that you do a very good research project; one which can be used to show off your prowess at an interview for a job or for admission to graduate school, or which potentially may be used to apply to present at a national conference. All of this would be outside the realm of the course, and would have no grade associated with it, but I will help you through it even after the course has ended. The data collected may potentially be used to write research papers as well. You are at liberty to do so, and I will help you if you ask. If I believe that it has merit in the same vein, I will contact you – please leave me your permanent e-mail address – and ask if you are willing to work on such a joint paper. If you decline to do joint work or cannot be contacted, and if I am able use the data for further work, I will proceed and credit this group with the data collection. I also reserve the right to use the data collected during the course as examples, illustrations, or databases for other classes, courses, seminars, or programs that I teach. Please let me know in writing by the last class of this course if you disagree with my doing so.

Contributions to the Project as assessed Peer / Instructor Evaluations are something that I take very seriously. The ability to contribute to, and interact with, your project team is a skill that is essential in corporate America.

Each person within the team will evaluate themselves and the other team members on contribution to the class project team assignments. The evaluation form is already on D2L.

The grade on this dimension will start from a base whose percentage is equal to that of your overall project grade and then be adjusted to reflect your individual contribution to the project.

This means that the average grade for a group on Contributions to the Project grade (expressed as a percentage) will be = the average grade on the Project (expressed as a percentage).

The Contributions to the Project grade is not a freebie for a group to artificially increase a grade. In other words, if a group (hypothetical, of course) did a very poor job on their Project (which, along with the assignments is worth 50 points), then they cannot give themselves 10s and expect that the Contributions to the Project grade will be 10 for all members.

Rather, the following two examples may help clarify the methodology used:

Example 1: If a group of three members earned an 80% grade on the Project (which, along with the assignments is
worth 50 points), and all of them did equal work, then they would each get 8 points on Contributions to the Project grade which is worth 10 points (i.e. 8/10 = 80%).

Example 2: If a group of three members earned an 80% grade on the Project (50 points), and one of them did far more work than the other two, then that first person might get 10 out of 10 for the Contributions to the Project grade and the other two would each get 7 points on Contributions to the Project (the average of those grades, 10, 7, and 7 is = 8 / 10 or 80%).

**Your Class Participation & Attendance grade consists of:**

- Attendance (being in the classroom)
- Class Participation (*actively engaged in classroom discussions*)
- Professionalism in Class (being attentive, prepared, and respectful)

**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to attend every class session. Whether or not you have an excused absence, you are responsible for knowing anything presented, distributed, discussed, and assigned in class.

**Assignments Due:** All assignments are due on the date listed in the Course Schedule at or before the beginning of the class period, unless otherwise stated by the instructor.

**Communications:**

The official University communication method is through campus e-mail (MyUWG) – this is particularly important at times of emergencies, and at other times as well. Class communications (including the submission of assignments) will be over e-mail. Please check e-mail very frequently, and use my University of West Georgia address to reach me: BNSethna@WestGA.edu.

**Wolf Pact:**

The Wolf Pact is a commitment by the Richards College of Business family to honesty, integrity, professionalism, accountability for ethical behavior, and to respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others.

We are committed to a culture of academic integrity, where members adhere to our shared values in all academic and non-academic endeavors.

We believe these values are essential to student development; whether personal, academic, or professional. Most importantly- establishing yourself as an honest person of integrity, who acts in a professional and ethical manner- will be as important as the academic skills you learn in the Richards College of Business.

In addition, please review “COMMON LANGUAGE FOR COURSE SYLLABI” at this site: https://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/

This site includes helpful information on Academic Support Services such as Accessibility Services, Center for Academic Success, Online Courses, the UWG Honor Code, UWG’s Email Policy, the Credit Hour Policy, and HB 280 (Campus Carry). Even if you are a continuing student who is familiar with most of these items, note that the last item is new, as of July 1, 2017.