

JOUR 460: Research Methods in Strategic Communication

Fall 18

Monday & Wednesday, 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Stauffer-Flint Hall, Room 100

Instructor

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WELCOME! Do you know we actually conduct research on a daily basis? It's all about finding information to make the best decision. We may not use the word 'research' directly but the activity is embedded in everything we do. Have you "Googled" it? What about reading yelp reviews before choosing a restaurant? In strategic communication, research is the foundation for creative strategies, executions, and evaluations. Without it, even the most brilliant creative works would fail. If you don't like to do research, well, we really need to talk.

In this course, you will learn a variety of research methods applicable to your internship and future profession. We will see real-world examples and former students' campaign works to demonstrate the importance of research and how fun it can be (it is really fun—trust me).

This course is perhaps one of the challenging courses in your undergraduate career. So what is the key to success in this class? Be present (not distracted), participate (with all your heart), do the best you can, and keep trying. Life is a funny thing; the more you put into it, the more you get out of it.

Finally, we live in a multicultural world — and our discipline reflects that. We also have different lived experiences. This classroom is 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. I also appreciate and encourage diversity of thought, provided you can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students experience this classroom as a safe environment.

I am committed to your success. Please do visit me during office hours or after class so I can get to know you better. I am excited to embark on this journey with you and hope you are too!

What is this course about? The heart of this class is to learn how to think critically of a marketing challenge and to apply appropriate research methods to seek insightful solutions and formulate creative recommendations based on solid research findings. You 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, we 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.

What will you learn? 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.

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

What assignments am I expected to accomplish?

Class Participation: 7%

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, as well as other material you will share with our class. You may miss up to two classes before it negatively affects your class participation 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: 15%

As part of our research project, you will each submit the following assignments: Individual strategic plan(s) (20%); Google analytics certificate (20%); Qualtrics survey questionnaire design (10%); an executive summary (25%) and an infographic (25%).

Research Participation: 3%

This course is part of the research participant pool for the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, which means that you are expected to participate in research studies in our field as part of your overall grade. You are each expected to take part in three studies this semester, worth 3% of your final grade (1% per completed study). Researchers will contact you directly during the semester with specific details about their study. If you do not wish to participate in a study, you will have the option to write a summary of a peer-reviewed research article instead (please see guidelines on Blackboard). If you do not wish to participate in any study, you will have to write three research summaries in order to obtain full credit. Deadlines to participate in the studies or write the research summaries will be set by the researchers.

Team Research Assignments: 35%

As a team, you will conduct secondary and primary research, and make sense of your findings in a series of report. Your grade for your team research assignments will be calculated as follows: Team contract (5%); Team weekly briefing (5%), Secondary research (25%); Moderator guide (5%); Focus group transcription (0%); Survey questionnaire (5%); Focus group table (5%); Focus group report (25%); survey report (25%).

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 however your group evaluates your performance.

Grading scale:

To calculate your final grade, I will use the following scale:

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

But hold on...I still have some pressing questions. If you are interested in our course policies on note taking, absences, inclement weather, campus resources, etc., I might have the answers you're looking for. Read on!

Could I submit assignments late? Each 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.

Could I use laptop and cellphone in class? Let's admit it: Technology is helpful and disruptive at the same time. To enhance your learning experience, I warmly invite you to put away your laptop and cellphone in class, *unless it's requested by the instructor for learning purposes.*

How could I take my notes if my laptop is stored away? Take notes in longhand. 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.](#)"

What is the grade change policy? First, please leave your parents out of this. Your parents, Chancellor, or the Dean, are not responsible for your grade. You are. They also would not tell professors like me to change a student's grade. If you have any questions about your grade, come talk with me. Better yet, ask questions to receive feedback before any assignments are due. If there is a change in grade, it is solely authorized by me and only under unusual circumstances.

What if I need help? I am committed to your success. I encourage you to attend office hours or meet with me by appointment to discuss any questions pertaining to the course, the readings, exams and assignments, or career prospects and opportunities. Do not hesitate to seek continuing assistance throughout the semester. I am here to help!

Here is a list of resources to help you succeed: If you are overwhelmed, KU SOS is a good start! It will refer you to relevant units to give you the best care possible (<http://sos.ku.edu>).

- Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) offers help to underrepresented students and offer inclusive learning environment for all. It also has retention programs to help you succeed, academically and personally: <https://oma.ku.edu/about>
- Need tips for learning? Or if you think you need course-specific academic assistance, please contact Academic Access and Achievement Center (AAAC): <https://achievement.ku.edu>
- KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible: <https://disability.ku.edu/>
- Public safety offers provide a safe and secure environment for everyone on campus. If you need information about how to protect you from becoming a victim of a crime, help you recognize and report suspicious activity and guide you in the event of an emergency, Public Safety is your go-to source: <https://publicsafety.ku.edu/>
- Need help with issues related to adjusting to college and other psychological, interpersonal, and family problems? KU Counseling and Psychology Services (CAPS) is here to help: <https://caps.ku.edu/>
- Are you in need of food to help you get through the week? Campus Cupboard is here to help: <https://www.cco.ku.edu/food/>
- Want to learn more about gender equity? Need a private service to discuss gender related issues? Want to advocate and support campus community of all genders? Please visit Emily Taylor Center for Women & Gender Equity: <https://emilytaylorcenter.ku.edu/>

What is your take on diversity? As a first-generation, female minority faculty, fostering an inclusive learning environment is very important to me. This means that diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, and appreciated in this class and beyond. All students benefit from training and experiences that will help them to learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society. We will 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 will not be tolerated.

Could I copy or record your class lectures? Course materials prepared by me, as well as content of all lectures presented by me in class and on Blackboard, are my property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, I 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. 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 me on Blackboard.

Could I sell my notes to commercial note-taking ventures? Commercial note-taking is not permitted in this course. 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.

What if I want to bring concealed weapon to campus? For students who choose to carry concealed handguns, you are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with state and federal laws and KU weapons policy. 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.

The weather is bad. Do I still have to go to school? 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 or in class.

	Topic	Required readings	Due dates
Week I			
M. 8/20	Thinking about research Syllabus agreement form & student consent form		
W. 8/22	Building a community and establishing accountability: Skillsets to help you thrive Team organization	Bring your laptop to class!	Submit your individual strategic plan to Blackboard, 5 pm, 8/24

Week II

M. 8/27	Research Basics Team contract assignment	-Chapter 1: pp. 1-6	
W. 8/29	Thinking like a researcher	-Chapter 2: pp. 9-13 -Chapter 3: pp. 22-24	

Week III

M. 9/3	Labor Day—NO CLASS		
W. 9/5	Secondary research	-Chapter 13: pp. 115-116 -Using library and database resources (BB)	Team contract assignment due at the beginning of class— <u>hardcopy submission</u>

Week IV

M. 9/10	Workshop: Secondary research		
W. 9/12	Qualitative research	-Introduction to qualitative research (BB)	Discuss focus group days/times: Need to be conducted between 9/26-10/12 Secondary research report: F. 9/14, 5 pm Team weekly briefing due: F. 9/14, 5 pm

Week V

M. 9/17	Qualitative research (cont.)	-Brief guide for focus groups (BB)	
W. 9/19	Workshop: Moderator Guide	-Moderator role (BB)	Moderator guide: F. 9/21, 5pm Team weekly briefing due: F. 9/21, 5 pm

Week VI

M. 9/24	Workshop: Conducting a focus group	-Conducting focus groups (BB) -Chapter 9: pp. 78-80	
W. 9/26	Workshop: Conducting a focus group (cont.)		Team weekly briefing due: F. 9/27, 5 pm

Week VII

M. 10/1	Google Analytics Workshop by Heather Lawrenz		
W. 10/3	Ethnographic research	-Ethnographic research (BB) -Airbnb in Japan (BB)	Team weekly briefing: Take a break this week

Week VIII

M. 10/8	Quantitative research	-Chapter 9: pp. 73-75 -Chapter 9: pp. 80-82 -Chapter 10: pp. 83-87	
W. 10/10	Quantitative research (cont.)	-Chapter 7: pp. 55, 56, 58 -Chapter 8: pp. 65-70	Team weekly briefing due: F. 10/12, 5 pm

Week IX

M. 10/15	Fall break		
W. 10/17	Workshop: Types of scales	-Chapter 6: pp. 43-49	Focus group transcription: F. 10/19, 5 pm Team weekly briefing due: F. 10/19, 5 pm

Week X

M. 10/22	Workshop: Developing survey questions—led by Jiang Liefu	-Chapter 6: pp. 43-49	
W. 10/24	Workshop: Developing survey questions	-Chapter 9: pp. 75-78	Survey questionnaire: F. 10/26, 5pm

			Team weekly briefing due: F. 10/26, 5 pm
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Week XI

M. 10/29	Midterm		
W. 10/31	Workshop: Analyzing qualitative data	-Analyzing focus group data (BB) -Chapter 13: pp. 113-115	Survey dissemination

Week XII

M. 11/5	Workshop: Analyzing qualitative data	-Creating excerpt-commentary units (BB)	Focus group table: T. 5pm
W. 11/7	Workshop: Writing findings and focus group report		<u>Individual</u> Qualtrics survey questionnaire design: F. 11/9, 5 pm Team weekly briefing due: F. 11/9, 5 pm

Week XIII

M. 11/12	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data—led by Jiang Liefu	-Download SPSS version 25; See instructions on BB -Chapter 14: pp. 119-122	Focus group report: T. 11/13, 5pm
W. 11/14	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data—led by Jiang Liefu		Team weekly briefing due: F. 11/16, 5 pm

Week XIV

M. 11/19	Workshop: Infographics –led by Heather Lawrenz		
W. 11/21	Thanksgiving		Team weekly briefing: Taking a break this week

Week XV

M. 11/26	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data—led by Jiang Liefu		Infographics walk-in hours from Heather Lawrenz (Tentative): 3:30-5 pm on Nov. 28 and 9 am-12 pm on Nov. 30; location: JBar in the Clarkson Gallery
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W. 11/28	Workshop: Analyzing quantitative data—led by Jiang Liefu		Team weekly briefing due: F. 11/30, 5 pm
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Week XVI

M. 12/3	Workshop: Executive summary		Survey group report: T, 12/4, 5 pm
W. 12/5	Review session		
Th. 12/6			<u>Individual</u> Infographic, executive summary, and Google analytics certificate: Th. 12/6, 5pm FINAL team weekly briefing due: T. 12/6, 5 pm

Final Exam

Tuesday, 12/11, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. https://registrar.ku.edu/fall-2018-final-exam-schedule
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Syllabus Agreement Form

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the course syllabus for

Jour 460, Fall 2018.

My class meets on _____(days) at _____(time) in room _____.

I have read the syllabus (either in paper or online), and I understand the classroom policies, instructor's expectations, and policies/rules as stated in the syllabus for this course.

If I have any questions or concerns, I will contact the instructor for further explanation.

I understand that I am responsible to complete all homework assignments, quizzes/in-class assignments, and written projects by the due dates as outlined in the syllabus.

I agree to be prepared for and attend class each day and on each scheduled test day.

PRINT NAME _____

SIGNED _____ DATE _____

Student Consent Form – Sharing Course Work

I randomly select several students whose work is copied and included in an archive of student work that I keep for this course. That archive is important to my continued reflection on how well students are learning in my courses. In addition, I may develop a course portfolio in which I write about the quality of student performance that is generated in the course. These examples are a very important piece of my work that I show to other professors to indicate how much and how deeply students are learning. Once a course portfolio is completed, it can also be made available to a wider audience of professors on a public web site on teaching and learning in higher education (www.cte.ku.edu/portfolios).

This form requests your consent to have your work possibly included in discussions of understanding for future students and in any versions of my writing about teaching in a portfolio, at a conference, or in a publication. There is only a small chance your work would be randomly included in my private archive for any assignment, but I ask all students for their permission should that be the case. Note that you have the choice to have your work be anonymous or have your name be part of the work.

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

I am willing to have copies of my coursework available so later students can use it for preparation.

I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in my professor's course portfolio.

I am willing to have copies of my coursework included in public presentations or publications.

Please check one of the following:

I wish to have my name remain on any work that is used.

I wish to have my name removed on any work that is used.

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

Print Name _____ Date _____

Phone Number () _____ Email _____

Course Title _____ Professor _____

By signing below, you give your permission that work you produce for this course may be used with the restrictions and for the purposes you indicated above. You understand that your grade is *NOT* connected in any way to your participation in this project, and I will not receive the list of students who have given permission to have their work shared until after I have turned in the grades for the course. Your anonymity will be maintained unless you designate otherwise. Finally, you understand that you are *free to withdraw consent at any time, now or in the future, without being penalized.*

Signature _____

Please address questions to: Professor Yvonne Chen, School of Journalism, 785-864-0613, y.chen@ku.edu.