Course Title: Market Research Methods (MARK 6340 90L)
Term: Summer 1, 2018  Meeting Times and Location: Online
Instructor: Dr. Xiaojing Sheng  Office Location: ECOBE BUSA 211J
Phone: 956.665.3317  Email: xiaojing.sheng@utrgv.edu
Office Hours: 1-3 p.m. Monday & Wednesday; other times by appointment

Course Description
This course addresses the use of market research as an aid to making decisions directly or indirectly related to marketing. This course covers quantitative and qualitative research procedures as well as techniques used in today’s businesses. In this course, you will be taken through the entire market research process from formulating research problem(s) and determining research design to analyzing and interpreting data to help you gain actionable information that will lead to intelligent decisions.

Required Textbook

To rent an eBook, please click on the following link:
[https://www.cengage.com/shop/ProductDisplay?langId=-1&storeId=10151&catalogId=10057&productId=587462](https://www.cengage.com/shop/ProductDisplay?langId=-1&storeId=10151&catalogId=10057&productId=587462)

Required Software
SPSS: SPSS is the abbreviation for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. We will use SPSS for some of the assignments in this course. Please click on this link, [http://www.utrgv.edu/it/services/spss/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/it/services/spss/index.htm) to read more information about SPSS and this link, [http://www.utrgv.edu/it/how-to/install-spss-for-students/index.htm](http://www.utrgv.edu/it/how-to/install-spss-for-students/index.htm) to submit a service request to install the software on your computer.
You can find many SPSS tutorials on the Internet. And I highly recommend this one to you. This is a very useful and easy-to-understand tutorial that assumes you do not have any prior knowledge of how to use SPSS.

**Technical Skills Required**

Student must be able to use computer and Internet browser software. In addition, student must be proficient in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint Software.

**Technical Resources**

This course is a fully online course and will consist of readings from the textbook, viewing of slides and video cases, course discussions, assignments, and quizzes. All course content will be delivered through Blackboard. You must ensure that you have access to the Internet and Blackboard. If you need assistance, please contact the Center for Online Learning, Teaching & Technology (COLTT) Help Desk at: 956-882-6792 (Brownsville) and 956-665-5327 (Edinburg). You can also email them at: colthelp@utrgv.edu or visit the website: https://colttapps.utrgv.edu/helpme

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

**Course Drops**

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

**Course Learning Goals and Outcomes**

- Understand the important role of marketing research in modern firms
- Understand the various elements of the marketing research system
- Be able to translate a marketing problem into a feasible research question
- Have a general understanding of the various research approaches and methodologies and how they differ in terms of the strengths, weaknesses, and domain of application
- Develop a good intuition for analyzing data and reporting the result of the analysis
- Become efficient at using SPSS, a statistical software package, to conduct basic data analysis
- Become efficient at using Qualtrics to develop survey questionnaires
Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship Learning Goals and Mission

The Robert C. Vackar College of Business Entrepreneurship has adopted the following learning goals and objectives that each student should achieve while in the MBA degree program. Not all goals and objectives are covered in each course; however, all goals and objectives should be addressed throughout the degree program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MBA learning goals</th>
<th>This course contributes to the following College of Business and Entrepreneurship learning goals:</th>
<th>How it is measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate collaborative and leadership skills as related to a global business environment.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Through class discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show effective writing and oral skills at a level appropriate for business executives.</td>
<td>This course contributes to the learning goal of demonstrating effective writing skills at a level appropriate for business executives.</td>
<td>Through postings on discussion board and individual case analysis assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of and classify ethical issues and behaviors.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Through individual case analysis assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply analytical techniques and quantitative analysis for effective decision making in various functional areas.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Through individual case analysis assignments</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Our mission at the College is to be the agent of innovation, knowledge discovery, and economic development in South Texas, Northern Mexico, and beyond, by offering a rigorous curriculum informed by experiential learning, high quality research, and community partnerships. Your mastery of these learning goals and objectives help us to achieve this mission.

Grading Components

i. Exams

Five exams will be given in this course and account for 40% of your total grade. The exams will be a combination of multiple-choice, true/false, and calculations questions that are drawn from book chapters. You will be given a window of time within which you must log in to take the exam; once in, there will be a time limit for completing the exam. If you fail to complete an exam because of technical issues, you must email me at xiaojing.sheng@utrgv.edu and detail the situation. Given the specific circumstances, I may let you retake it. However, if I’m not informed in a timely manner, then there will be no possibility of retaking it. Make-up exams must be
requested in writing, prior to the exam date, and must be accompanied by a profound reason as to why you cannot take the exam during its scheduled time.

**ii. Assignments**
Throughout this course you will participate in five (5) assignments that will collectively total 30% of your final grade. Details for assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Assignments will be submitted through Blackboard under the week within which the assignment is placed. No late assignments will be accepted.

**iii. Discussion**
As this course is fully online, your participation will be through discussions. Check discussion board daily and respond to discussion questions and the comments/questions from me and your classmates. This will be 30% of your grade.

Your initial discussion post is due on discussion board every Thursday by 11:59 p.m. Your follow-up discussion posts are due on discussion board every Sunday by 11:59 p.m. As for the quantity of your discussion participation, the minimum requirement is that for each discussion question, you have **three (3)** posts. Of these three posts, **one (1)** is your original, initial response to the discussion question and the other **two (2)** being your thoughtful comments on other students’ posts. However, I would strongly encourage you to participate more and contribute more than the minimum requirement! Please keep the following rules in mind when participating in class discussions:
- Regular and meaningful discussion postings constitute a substantial portion of your grade.
- Participation alone is not enough; a thoughtful and meaningful approach in your posts is required.
- Be respectful to others. Please remember that the cultural of mutual respect that is part of this course extends into the virtual classroom environment.
- Maintain a positive tone in the discussion forum.
- Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.

**Grading Policies**
The grading elements are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Exams</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Discussion</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading scale is as follows:
- 90 and above  A
- 80-89.99      B
- 70-79.99      C
- 60-69.99      D
- Below 60      F
Please note that grades will not be curved. 89.99 is a B, not an A. Final grades are just that: Final.

Below is an estimated timeframe within which your grade for each of the above grading elements will be made available:

- Discussion grade: Wednesday of the following week
- Quiz grade: available right after your submission
- Assignment grade: one week after your submission

Course Evaluation
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades.

Scholastic Integrity
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Email Communications
E-mail will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you:

- Include the course name in the subject line: MARK 6340-(type your subject here), e.g., MARK 6340-Meeting on Tuesday.
- Start the body text of your email with Professor’s name, e.g., Hi Professor Sheng.
- Write complete sentences. Please do not use “u” to replace “you” or “ur” to replace “your” in your email.
- Use a proper closing and sign your email messages.
- Be polite.
- Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
- Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered "shouting." Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or email).
- Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
- Never assume that your email can be read by no one except yourself; others may be able to read or access your mail. Never send or keep anything that you would not mind seeing on the evening news.
Check your email several times per week (more often is better).
Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message.
Generally, 24 hours is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Students with Disabilities
Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services. Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

Student Services
Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:
- Learning center: BSTUN 2.10 (Brownsville) or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg)
- Writing center: BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg)
- Advising center: BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg)
- Career center: BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg)
Modification of the Syllabus
The instructor or instructor and students together may make modifications in the tentative schedule during the semester if such alteration furthers the progress of learning. Any changed due to date will be publicly announced in class. The announcement will be sent to all students on Blackboard.

Tentative Course Schedule
(Note: This schedule may be revised and adjusted to better meet the learning needs of students.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wk1</td>
<td>6/4-6/10</td>
<td>Introduction to marketing research and problem definition</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk2</td>
<td>6/11-6/17</td>
<td>Working with existing information to solve problems</td>
<td>5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk3</td>
<td>6/18-6/24</td>
<td>Collecting primary data to solve problems (part 1)</td>
<td>8-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk4</td>
<td>6/25-7/1</td>
<td>Collecting primary data to solve problems (part 2)</td>
<td>12-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk5</td>
<td>7/2-7/8</td>
<td>Analyzing data</td>
<td>16-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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