# MMC 5422 Customer Research and the Fundamentals of Online Testing

Summer 2017

3 Credit Hours

## Instructor Information

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Website: http://elearning.ufl.edu/

## Course Access Information

This course is accessible within the Canvas Learning Management System (UF e-Learning). To access it, go to http://lss.at.ufl.edu. Click the blue e-Learning button. Login with your GatorLink account. Your course will be listed in the Courses Menu within the navigation located on the left-hand side of the page. You may have to click the "All Courses" link at the bottom of this section depending on the number of previous course you have taken at UF.

Contact UF Helpdesk http://helpdesk.ufl.edu (352) 392-HELP (4357) if you have any trouble accessing your course.

## Course Overview

The internet has enabled the greatest revolution in market research in history. Like never before, marketers are able to test and analyze millions of real-time decisions. Today's marketers have the unprecedented opportunity to leverage the internet to peer directly into the cognitive psychology of their customer's thought processes and decision patterns.

This course addresses the critical concepts and theories of online behavioral testing. It covers the development and implementation of testing an offer, including the selection of a research question, proper metrics to measure, validity assurance and data interpretation.

# Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain how an organization can use the web to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage
- Describe the different means used, in the context of advertising and marketing, over the past 50 years to perform customer research.
- Leverage customer data to inform the testing process
- Craft a research question, hypothesis and test question that can be tested using the scientific method
- Discern the proper variables and values to effectively test proposed research questions
- Identify the proper primary and secondary metrics to use when running a behavioral test
- Detect the most common validity threats in online behavioral experimentation such as the history effect, selection effect, sample distortion and instrumentation effects
- Differentiate between the three factors that impact an experiment's statistical validity: internal, external and construct
- Interpret online behavioral tests to determine if the findings are conclusive or inconclusive
- Craft a robust customer theory dossier

# Required Texts

- McGlaughlin, Flint. *The Marketer as Philosopher: 40 brief reflections on the power of your value proposition*, 2014.
- Hopkins, Claude. *Scientific Advertising*. New Line Publishing, 1923.
- Reeves, Rosser. *Reality in Advertising*. New York: Knopf, 1961.
- Mlodinow, Leonard. *The Drunkard's Walk: How Randomness Rules Our Lives*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2009.
- Mlodinow, Leonard. *Subliminal: How Your Unconscious Mind Rules Your Behavior*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2012.
- Additional readings are assigned throughout the term and are available in digital format on Canvas in their respective assigned weeks.

## Supplemental Texts

- Wiseman, Richard. *Quirkology: How We Discover the Big Truths in Small Things.* New York: Basic Books, 2007.
- Kahneman, Daniel. *Thinking, Fast and Slow.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.

## Course Philosophy and Expectations

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class, be on time and meet all deadlines. Work assigned should be completed as directed. Full participation in online discussions and activities is required.

My role as the instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct students to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing student performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative and professional way. Feedback is essential for students to have confidence that they have mastered the material — and for me to determine that students are meeting all course requirements.

At all times, it is expected that students will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, treat fellow students, instructors and assistants with respect, and contribute to the success of the class to the best of their abilities.

### Ownership Education:

As graduate students, you are not passive participants in this course. This class allows you to not only take ownership of your educational experience, but to also provide your expertise and knowledge in helping your fellow classmates. The Canvas shell will have an open Q&A thread where you should pose questions to your classmates when questions relating to an assignment or an issue come up at work. Your classmates, along with your instructor, will be able to respond to these questions and provide feedback. This also allows everyone to gain the same knowledge in one location rather than the instructor responding back to just one student, which limits the rest of the class from gaining this knowledge.

# Course Specific Policies

**Attendance Policy:**

Requirements for class attendance, exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies unless specifically stated within this syllabus. These university policies can be found in the online catalog at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Due to the delivery mechanism of this course, through an online asynchronously manner, attendance in the form of calling roll will not occur. However, students are expected to sign onto the course site at least once each day, Monday - Friday to check for course updates in the announcements and discussion sections of the site.

**Coursework Submission Policy:**

Students are expected to submit all coursework through the Canvas Learning Management System unless otherwise approved in advanced by the instructor.

**Late Work Policy:**

Students are expected to complete assignments by the day and time they are scheduled. The following penalties will be applied to all work that is late for any reason — other than those identified by the university policies, which can be found online at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

| Point Deduction | Duration of Lateness |
|---|---|
| 5 Points | Less than an hour |
| 10 Points | Greater than one (1) hour but less than 24 hours |
| 15 Points | Greater than 24 hours but less than 48 hours |
| 25 Points | Greater than 48 hours but less than one (1) week |
| 50 Points | Greater than one (1) week but before the end of the semester |

**Technical Issue Policy:**

From time to time the Canvas E-learning system will undoubtedly experience technical issues. However, in most instances, technical issues when uploading work for a grade will not constitute a valid excuse to submit work late without penalty.

Students are expected to compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work. Additionally, students are encouraged to submit completed work to the instructor via UF email should they suspect there is a technical issue within the Canvas E-learning system.

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST email your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:
- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml

## Emergency and Extenuating Circumstances Policy:

Students who face emergencies, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member or other situations beyond their control should notify their instructor immediately.

Additionally, Students are advised to contact the Dean of Students' Office if they would like more information on the medical withdrawal or drop process: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/.

Lastly, students MUST inform their academic advisor before dropping a course, whether for medical or non-medical reasons. Your advisor will assist with notifying professors and go over options for how to proceed with classes. Your academic advisor is Tiffany Robbert, and she may be reached at trobbert@jou.ufl.edu or at distancesupport@jou.ulf.edu.

## Measurement Breakdown

Students' progress in this course will be evaluated according to the following distribution:

| Item | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Lecture Reinforcement Assignments | 40% |
| Reading Discussion Posts | 15% |
| Reading Discussion Comments | 10% |
| Quizzes | 10% |
| Conducting an Experiment (Final Project) | 25% |
| **Total** | 100% |

## Grading Scale

| A | (93-100) | B | (83-86) | C | (73-76) | D | (63-66) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A- | (90-92) | B- | (80-82) | C- | (70-72) | D- | (60-62) |
| B+ | (87-89) | C+ | (77-79) | D+ | (67-69) | E | (Below 61) |

Final grades are rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore 92.7 is an "A," but 92.3 is an A-. The university policies concerning this grading scale can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx.

# Course and Assignment Details

This course is comprised of readings, lectures, online discussions, class assignments, activities and a final research project. Students are expected to watch all lectures and contribute to class discussions by citing examples drawn from professional experience, personal experience and course readings. Additionally, students are expected to complete course assignments, activities and reading discussions. Lastly, a final research project, due at the end of the term, will measure students' mastery of the Conversion Heuristic through the examination of a real-world business case.

## Lectures

The instructor will post a lecture video to Canvas for each of the 12 weeks as well as related supplementary videos. For example, one supplementary video will consist of a syllabus review. These videos will vary in length depending on the material but are targeted to take between one hour and 1 ½ hours to complete.

It is the responsibility of the student to watch each of the lecture videos during the week identified in the course schedule. Although it is possible to watch the videos at any time and at any pace, keeping up with the videos week-to-week (per the schedule) is vital. The videos are designed to build off each other as well as correspond with the weekly readings and assignments. Lastly, students should be aware that it will be extremely difficult to complete the Lecture Reinforcement Assignments without first viewing the lecture video.

## Lecture Reinforcement Assignments

There is a total of eleven (11) Lecture Reinforcement Assignments during the twelve-week-long semester. These assignments provide students with theoretical and real-world context for applying the material learned from the lectures. Specific details about each assignment are provided within the "Assignments Tab" of Canvas. **The Lecture**

**Reinforcement Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. EST on the Friday of the week assigned.**

Each Lecture Reinforcement Assignment is awarded points according to quality of work and completion:

| | 100-90 Excellent | 89-80 Good | 79-70 Satisfactory | 69-60 Less than Satisfactory | Less than 60 Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Analysis (30%) | Expertly draws from lectures and outside material using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject | Competently evaluates lectures and outside material to demonstrate a superior level of analysis and synthesis | Evaluates lectures and outside material to demonstrate a reasonable level of analysis and synthesis | Evaluates lectures and outside material to demonstrate a basic level of analysis and synthesis | Related lectures and outside material are presented without analysis or synthesis |
| Argument (30%) | Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization | Writing is supported by capable argumentation, including conceptualization and understanding of topic | Writing falters at times when making a compelling argument, but the main point is clear and supported | Writing is haphazard with minimal evidence used to support argument | Argument is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments |
| Examination (20%) | All questions or assignment components have been addressed | Almost all questions or assignment components have been addressed | Three quarters of questions or assignment components have been addressed | Between three quarters and half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed | Half or less than half of all questions or assignment components have been addressed |
| Sourcing (10%)* | Demonstrates superior sourcing of lectures and outside materials that is sufficient to substantiate an argument | Demonstrates competent sourcing of lectures and outside materials that is sufficient to substantiate an argument | Demonstrates basic sourcing of lectures and/or outside materials that is sufficient to substantiate an argument | Minimal sourcing of either lectures or outside material, thus insufficient to substantiate an argument | Sourcing of lectures and outside material is absent and thus insufficient to substantiate an argument |
| Grammar and syntax (10%) | Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling | Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling that assists in understanding overall argument | Syntax is clear, and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding | Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling, which cause some difficultly in understanding | Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding |

* For any assignments that do not require sourcing written material, full credit will be granted for this category

## Supplementary Reading Discussion Boards

Readings enhance students' understanding of the specific topics covered during the weekly lectures. Students should complete the readings during the week identified in the course schedule. Assessment of student understanding of the readings is accomplished through discussion boards.

## Reading Reaction Post

To cultivate an ongoing dialogue about the supplementary reading material within the course, students will generate between 350-500 words of reaction to the material per week. While these posts can provide a short summary of the readings along with proper citations, **posts should overwhelmingly be comprised of analysis or insights students have gained from the material**. Reaction posts should cover **ALL** the readings assigned for the week to demonstrate that the student has fully completed the assigned readings. Additionally, students are welcome to link their posts to outside materials such as other readings or life experiences from their personal or profession life. Students are expected to source any materials used in their posts as appropriate.

**To achieve full credit, students' Reading Reaction Posts must be posted to Canvas by 11:59 p.m. EST on the Monday of the week assigned.**

Each Reading Discussion Post is awarded points according to quality of effort and level of completion:

| | 100-90 Excellent | 89-90 Good | 79-70 Satisfactory | 69-60 Less than Satisfactory | Less than 60 Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Analysis (20%) | Superior evaluation of readings and provides an insightful assessment of topics covered | Advanced evaluation of readings and provides an insightful assessment of topics covered | Competent evaluation of readings and provides a sufficient assessment of topics covered | Minimal evaluation of readings and provides limited assessment of content | Little evaluation of readings other than brief mentions |
| Argument (20%) | Compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior use of both internal and external materials and experiences | Argument is accurately supported by internal material and generally supported by relevant outside materials and experiences | Argument is accurately supported by internal material but falters due to a lack of outside materials or experiences | Weak argument is made due to a haphazard and minimal use of internal and external materials or experiences | Argument is poorly made due to the lack of any materials or experiences |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sourcing (10%) | Superior sourcing of internal and external material that supports the discussion's main arguments | Adequate sourcing of internal and external material and that supports the discussion's main arguments | Adequate sourcing internal material that supports the discussion's main arguments | Haphazard sourcing of material that supports the discussion's main argument | Sourcing of internal and external material is absent and thus insufficient to sustain an argument |
| Grammar and syntax (10%) | Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling | Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling that assists in understanding overall argument | Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding | Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling which present some difficultly in understanding | Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding |
| Examination (20%) | All assigned readings have been addressed | Almost all assigned readings have been addressed | Three-quarters of assigned readings have been addressed | Between three-quarters and half of all assigned readings have been addressed | Half or less than half of all assigned readings have been addressed |
| Length (20%) | Post is between 450 and 500 words | Post is between 400 and 449 words | Post is between 350 and 399 words | Post is between 250 and 299 words | Post is less than 250 |

## Reading Discussion Comment Post

In addition to their own Reading Reaction Posts, students will be required to comment on the posts submitted by other students. These Discussion Comment Posts must be at least 100 words in length and must be submitted into at least two (2) Reading Discussion Posts made by fellow students or the instructor each week.

Students are always welcome to submit more than two (2) Comment Posts each week, however, no more than two (2) comments will be counted toward a student's grade in any single week.

Comments must add something of value to the conversation thread (be thought-provoking). The instructor will evaluate the degree to which students' posts add to the conversation instead of simply being done to fulfill the grade requirement.

**Discussion Comment Posts must appear within the other students' reading discussion post in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. EST on the Wednesday of the week assigned.**

Lastly, students will monitor the Discussion Comment Posts added to their original Reaction Posts and will reply at least one (1) time per person, should another student or the instructor respond to their Reaction Post.

These processes will enable students to learn, not only from the instructor and the course material, but also from each other. **To achieve full credit, students' replies must be posted in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. EST on the Friday of the week assigned.**

Reading Discussion Comments are awarded points according to quality of effort and level of completion:

|  | 100-90 Excellent | 89-90 Good | 79-70 Satisfactory | 69-60 Less than Satisfactory | Less than 60 Unsatisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Argument & Supportive Analysis (40%) | Compelling and persuasive response offered through superior writing and conceptualization of topic in agreement or disagreement to reactions posted | Writing falters at times in making a compelling response to the reactions posted, but the main point is clear and supported | Response provides minimal response to reactions posted or simply signals agreement without further support | Response is haphazardly written, lacking an evaluative response of the reactions posted; neither indicates agreement or disagreement | Response is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments and does not address reactions posted |
| Sourcing (10%) | Superior sourcing of internal and external material that supports the discussion's main arguments | Adequate sourcing of internal and external material and that supports the discussion's main arguments | Adequate sourcing internal material that supports the discussion's main arguments | Haphazard sourcing of material that supports the discussion's main argument | Sourcing of internal and external material is absent and thus insufficient to sustain an argument |
| Grammar and syntax (10%) | Precise syntax and superior use of grammar, punctuation and spelling | Proficient use of syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling to that assists in understanding overall argument | Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation and spelling errors do not impede understanding | Syntax is at times garbled and includes errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling, which causes some difficultly in understanding | Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Examination (20%) | Two (2) 100-word comment posts submitted | Two (2) comment posts submitted, one of which was less than 100 words in length | Two (2) comment posts submitted, both of which were less than 100 words in length | One (1) 100-word comment post submitted | One (1) comment post submitted that was less than 100 words in length |
| Response Posts (20%) | At least one (1) reply has been made to every individual who submitted a Comment Post | At least one (1) reply has been made to three-quarters of the individuals who submitted a Comment Post | At least one (1) reply has been made to between three-quarters and half of the individuals who submitted a Comment Post | At least one (1) reply has been made to less than half of the individuals who submitted a Comment Post | At least one (1) reply has been made to one individual who submitted a Comment Post |

## Quizzes

Twice during the semester, students must complete quizzes intended to measure the their ability to retain key concepts from the course material. These quizzes can be completed at any time up until the date they are due. See the course schedule for due dates. Quizzes must be completed in Canvas.

## Marketing Experiment (Final Project)

Students will demonstrate their mastery of the scientific method by performing an experiment within the field of marketing*. To receive full credit, students must plan the experiment, execute it and document their experiences along the way. This experiment should follow, as closely as possible, the scientific method outlined in the course. To complete this project, students will receive a brief consisting of a sample behavioral experiment and a summary Test Protocol Tool.

*Phase 1: Concepting*
Students must generate three (3) experiment concepts of their own design and submit them for approval to the instructor.  Students are encouraged to use the optional text *Quirkology: How We Discover the Big Truths in Small Things* by Richard Wiseman as a resource for brainstorming experiment concepts.

Students should submit a one to three paragraph summary for each experiment concept that includes a summary of the experiment concept and a detailed description of the experimentation process that will be used to execute the experiment.

**The experiment concept document is to be submitted to Canvas by the Friday of WEEK 4 at 11:59 p.m. EST.** This document will not be graded, but students must receive approval of their concept before proceeding to the planning phase.

*Phase 2: Planning*
Students must generate a plan for their experiment which should, at minimum, include: observations, research questions, hypotheses, test questions, variables, values and metrics. Additionally, students are encouraged to provide any other details they feel will be useful for executing their experiment.

**The experiment planning document is to be submitted to Canvas by the Friday of WEEK 8 at 11:59 p.m. EST.** Note: This document will not be graded, but students must receive approval of their plan before proceeding to the execution phase.

*Phase 3: Execution*
Students must use the Test Protocol Tool to execute their experiment. All experiment data should be recorded in this tool. Students are required to execute the experiment themselves, unless otherwise approved in advance by the instructor. Additionally, students are encouraged to record and document any observations made about the experiment process itself during this phase.

There is no formal deliverable for this phase.

*Phase 4: Research Analysis*
After conducting the experiment, students must analyze the results of their experiment, their findings and their experience within the entire experimentation process. This analysis will be compiled into a five (5) to ten (10) page research brief.

When analyzing the experiment results, students should include a discussion of any potential validly threats that were present as well as a calculation of the Level of Confidence (LOC) achieved by the data. Additionally, students should identify if their results would qualify to achieve a MECLABS Certification. (Note: No points will be awarded for experiments that would qualify to achieve certification.)

When analyzing the experiments findings, students should include a discussion of their hypothesis. Was it supported or refuted and why? Additionally, students should explore the implications as it relates to their test subjects. What did you learn about this group?

When analyzing their experience, students should provide in-depth analysis of the similarities and differences between their plan and its execution. Additionally, students should discuss any surprises that arose when planning or conducting their experiment. Lastly, students should provide at least 3 recommendations for improving the experiment should it be run again in the future.

**The research brief is to be submitted to Canvas in its entirety by the Friday of WEEK 11 at 11:59 p.m. EST.**

\*Upon instructor approval, students can substitute an online behavioral experiment to satisfy the requirements of this assignment. In these instances, the student will be required to perform all equivalent work themselves, except for design and development work.

# University Policies

## University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. The DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall, or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

University counseling services and mental health services:
Counseling and Wellness resources
http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx
352-392-1575

## Netiquette

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy along with applicable university policies in all online activities, as these are extensions of the

course. The university's Netiquette guide can be found at: http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary measures, ranging from grade reduction to course expulsion.

## Additional Student Resources

Other resources are available at http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help for:
- Counseling and Wellness resources
  - http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx
  - 352-392-1575
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course, please contact your program director and/or student support coordinator at distancesuppport@jou.ufl.edu or visit http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process to submit a complaint.

## Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results.

## University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code.

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and

their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

**Cheating:** Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes (in physical or electronic form) in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.

**Misrepresenting Research Data:** The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions.

For this reason, any intentional misrepresentation of data or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

**Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.**

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Florida Code of Conduct.

If you have additional questions, please refer to the Online Graduate Program Student Handbook you received when you were admitted into the program.

# Course Schedule

## Calendar

| Week | Lecture | Reading Discussion | Reading Comments | Assignment(s) | Quiz | Project |
|------|---------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|------|---------|
| | Syllabus Introduction | | | | | |
| 1 | The Web as a Living Laboratory | 05/10 | 05/12 | NA | | |
| 2 | History of Customer Research | 05/15 | 05/17 | 05/19 | | |
| 3 | Making Observations | 05/22 | 05/24 | 05/26 | | |
| 4 | Research Questions | 05/31* | 06/02* | 06/02 | | |
| 5 | Developing Hypotheses | 06/05 | 06/07 | 06/09 | 06/09 | |
| 6 | Articulating Hypotheses | 06/12 | 06/14 | 06/16 | | |
| 7 | Test Prioritization | 06/19 | 06/21 | 06/23 | | |
| 8 | Determining Metrics | 06/26 | 06/28 | 06/30 | | |
| 9 | Executing a Valid Experiment - Part 1 | 07/05* | 07/07* | 07/07 | | |
| 10 | Executing a Valid Experiment - Part 2 | 07/10 | 07/12 | 07/14 | 07/14 | |
| 11 | Customer Theory Part 1 - Interpretation | 07/17 | 07/19 | | | 07/21 |
| 12 | Customer Theory Part 2 – Testing Cycle | 07/24 | 07/26 | 07/28 | | |

*Activity moved, therefore no comment response posts are required this week.

# Weekly Detail

## Pre-course: Course Introduction and Syllabus Overview Video

### Description
An introduction to the course, instructors and lecturers as well as an overview of what students will learn during the semester.

## Week 1: The Web as a Living Laboratory

### Lecture Description
Students will be introduced to the unique and unprecedented nature of the web and how it can be used as a living laboratory to study the cognitive decision process of our customers and predict their future behavior.

### Learning Outcomes
Explain how an organization can use the web to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage

### Readings
- "The Web as a Living Laboratory"
- *The Marketer as Philosopher* — Reflection(s) 1-2
- *Reality in Advertising* — Chapter(s) 6, 36
- *Scientific Advertising* — Chapter(s) 1, 4

### Assignment
Students are to post a short biography about themselves in the Week 1 Discussion Thread. Students are encouraged to include any appropriate personal or professional information that other students would find useful or interesting. Additionally, students may add statements concerning what they hope to accomplish in this course or the effects on their career they anticipate from taking the course. (Note: This is not a graded assignment.)

## Week 2: The History of Customer Research in Advertising and Marketing

### Lecture Description
From screening theaters to direct mail campaigns, this session will encourage students to evaluate the approaches marketers have taken for over a century to

understand their customers and to discover the key underlying framework that lies beneath all the various approaches.

**Learning Outcomes**
Explore the different means used, in the context of advertising and marketing, over the past 50 years to perform customer research.

**Readings**
- Schmidt, Sarah. *How Technology Is Changing Market Research.* http://blog.marketresearch.com/how-technology-is-changing-market-research
- Flecther, Brian. *Five Reasons Why Market Research Matters (and Five Tips for Using It).* http://www.marketingprofs.com/opinions/2013/23874/five-reasons-why-market-research-matters-and-five-tips-for-using-it.
- *Deacon, j. Experimental Design* http://archive.bio.ed.ac.uk/jdeacon/statistics/tress2.html.

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Compose an essay exploring the future of optimization within the context of marketing communication.

## Week 3: Leveraging Customer Data to Make Insightful Observations

**Lecture Description**
Students will discover the true value of data in the business context as well as how primary data can be utilized to generate insightful observations about customer behavior.

**Learning Outcomes**
Leverage customer data to inform the testing process

**Readings**
- *The Drunkard's Walk* – Prologue & Chapter(s) 01 -02

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Use the relevant steps from the six-step framework for Listening to Customer Data to generate multiple observations from the provided data sets. Suggest a potential cause for each observation made and identify the customer behavior that could be predicted should these observations be tested.

## Week 4: Crafting Research Questions

### Lecture Description
Students will learn to distill observations made from customer data into research questions suitable for use in online behavioral testing. Students will learn how to discipline an online experiment to yield the greatest potential customer insights through the adoption of a five-point criteria for crafting a functional research question.

### Learning Outcomes
Craft a functional research question and effective hypothesis that can be tested using the scientific method

### Readings
- *The Drunkard's Walk* – Chapter(s) 03-04

### Reinforcement Assignment
Using the provided sets of data and/or observations, craft 2-3 research questions that could be tested using the scientific method. Determine the feasibility for testing these research questions by leveraging the five-point criteria.

## Week 5: Developing Hypotheses

### Lecture Description
A valid hypothesis does not necessarily equate to the most effective hypothesis for testing our research question. How do we keep from wasting time and money with a poorly crafted hypothesis?

### Learning Outcomes
Craft a functional research question and effective hypothesis that can be tested using the scientific method

### Readings
- *The Drunkard's Walk* – Chapter(s) 05-06

### Reinforcement Assignment
Use the Four-step Framework for Developing Hypotheses to turn the provided research questions into effective hypotheses and test questions.

**Quiz One**
Quiz 1 due by Friday at 11:59 p.m. EST.

## *Week 6: Articulating Hypotheses: Treatments, Variables and Values*

### Lecture Description
While many organizations are running tests, they are not necessarily testing the best hypothesis; therefore, they are not consistently achieving their maximum conversion potential. How do we integrate our hypotheses in such a way as to compound our results and consistently achieve dramatic gains?

### Learning Outcomes
Discern the proper variables and values to effectively test proposed research questions

### Readings
- *The Drunkard's Walk* – Chapter(s) 07-08

### Reinforcement Assignment
Examine the provided marketing collateral and hypotheses used to create real-world experiments. Properly categorize the hypothesis used in these examples and generate a wireframe for an additional (hypothetical) experimental treatment that could be used to test these hypotheses. Clearly identify the new variables and values used in the hypothetical treatment.

## *Week 7: Test Strategy: Prioritizing Research Questions and Hypotheses*

### Lecture Description
If the goal of all customer research is to enable the marketer to predict customer behavior than a test must not only be valid, but also to be valuable. Students will discover a methodology for identifying the research question and hypothesis combination that has the greatest potential for customer discoveries.

### Learning Outcomes
Craft a functional research question and effective hypothesis that can be tested using the scientific method

**Readings**
- *The Drunkard's Walk* – Chapter(s) 09-10

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Use the provided sets of hypotheses and research questions as well as the two keys to prioritizing tests to develop a comprehensive test strategy.

## Week 8: Determining the Proper Metrics

**Lecture Description**
Not all experiments are created equal. In fact, properly identifying the primary and secondary metrics to track in an experiment can ensure you achieve the deepest customer insights.

**Learning Outcomes**
Identify the proper primary and secondary metrics to use when running a behavioral test

**Readings**
- *Subliminal* – Prologue & Chapter(s) 01-02

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Given the provided real-world experiments, identify the primary and secondary metrics that would produce the greatest customer insights.

## Week 09: Executing a Valid Experiment Part 1 – Common Validity Threats

**Lecture Description**
By nature, every online behavioral experiment carries risk when being used to predict future customer behavior. How do I know I can trust my results to be valid? What are the strategies for maximizing the probability that my experiments will be predictive prior to experiment implementation?

**Learning Outcomes**
Detect the most common threats to executing a valid test, such as the history effect, selection effect, sample distortion and instrumentation effects

**Readings**

- *Subliminal* – Chapter(s) 03-04

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Examine the provided data sets and identify any validity threats present. Describe the process you took to investigate, what validity threats you think were present, and strategies for minimizing their effects should this experiment be reconducted.

## Week 10: Executing a Valid Experiment Part 2 – Sample Distortion and Level of Confidence

**Lecture Description**
By nature, every online behavioral experiment carries risk when being used to predict future customer behavior. How do I know I can trust my results to be predictive? What are the strategies for maximizing the probability that my experiments will be predictive prior to experiment implementation?

Students will extend the conversation of validity threats to statistical certainty and explore the three factors that determine an outcome's statistical certainty. Additionally, students will understand how to accurately calculate statistical validity and Level of Confidence for an online behavioral test.

**Learning Outcomes**
Differentiate between the three factors that impact an experiment's statistical validity: internal, external and construct

**Readings**
- *Subliminal* – Chapter(s) 05-06

**Reinforcement Assignment**
Determine the validity of an experiment by calculating the Level of Confidence for the provided data sets. Then discuss the potential implications on the business in the provided scenarios, should the treatment be implemented.

**Quiz Two**
Quiz 2 due by Friday at 11:59 p.m. EST.

## *Week 11: Customer Theory Development: Test Interpreting*

**Lecture Description**

It is not enough to run a valid test; the marker must also understand why a specific treatment won over the control and/or another treatment. This session provides students with a framework to understand how to properly interpret the results of an online behavioral experiment.

**Learning Outcomes**

Interpret online behavioral tests to determine if the findings are conclusive or inconclusive

**Readings**

- *Subliminal* – Chapter(s) 07-08

**Final Project**

Due Friday at 11:59 p.m. EST.

## *Week 12: Customer Theory Development: Cycle of Testing*

**Lecture Description**

The goal of all customer research is to enable the marketer to predict customer behavior. This session provides students with a framework for creating and maintaining a robust customer theory throughout the behavioral experimentation lifecycle.

**Learning Outcomes**

Develop a framework for crafting a robust customer theory

**Readings**

- *Subliminal* – Chapter(s) 09-10

**Reinforcement Assignment**

Given the provided documentation, develop a customer theory dossier.

## Disclaimers

The instructor reserves the right to make any modification necessary to this syllabus to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes will be communicated via Canvas.

From time to time, students may be required to use tools, programs and websites outside of Canvas to complete course assignments. While students are welcome to use paid versions of these tools, programs and websites, all criteria for assignments will be able to be satisfied using free versions.