

# IMC 404 – Integrated Marketing Communications Research

Fall 2017

## INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS 404

Section 03

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### INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH

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Class Days and Times: Monday, Wednesday 1-2:15, Farley 121  
Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 10-11 (Farley 215)  
and **by appointment**

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### REQUIRED TEXTS

*Babin, B., & Zikmund, W. (2016). Essentials of marketing research (6th Ed). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning. ISBN: 978-1-305-26347-5*

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### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

IMC 404 was designed to provide an overview of how to use existing research and to conduct original research for the purposes of informing IMC decisions.

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### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you should:

1. understand the role and importance of integrated marketing communications research;
2. learn the primary types of narrative- and numbers-based research;
3. understand the role that research plays in the IMC decision-making process;
4. know the advantages, disadvantages and key characteristics of the most common research methods; and
5. understand how to use data to develop marketing insights, build strategies and make integrated marketing communications decisions.

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### ASSESSMENT

#### ***Class Participation – 10%***

I expect you to attend class and participate during class discussion. You must attend class, complete readings, and participate in discussion, though there is no formal “credit” for these activities. Your participation grade will be calculated as the average of short, unannounced quizzes given throughout the semester. You will take these quizzes in class. The quizzes collectively represent 10% of your final class grade.

### ***Finding and Using Research (Secondary Data Project) – 5%***

Before you start a research project or develop an IMC campaign you should always see what research has already been done on that topic. Thus, you will learn how to gather facts and information that others have collected. Your secondary report will represent **5%** of your final grade.

### ***Observation Project – 5%***

Watching consumer behavior in real time to see how they engage with a product and what other relevant behavior occurs will constitute **5%** of your final grade.

### ***Content Analysis – 10%***

Student groups will learn to find, code, analyze and draw conclusions from content that is available about a specific topic. This will represent **10%** of your final grade.

### ***Focus Group Project – 20%***

As part of a group project, you will learn how to plan, conduct research and analyze opinions gathered from a small group discussion. This will account for **20%** of your final grade.

### ***Survey Research Project – 20%***

Student groups will learn how to write a survey (10%) and then plan, conduct and analyze information that is gathered from that survey (10%). Overall, this assignment represents **20%** of your final grade although it is split into two specific assignments (writing the survey, then reporting on the survey).

### ***Exams (3) – 30%***

I have scheduled three exams throughout the semester, with the third given during the final examination period. The first exam will count 5% toward your final grade, the second 10%, and the third 15%. Increasing percentage allocation has everything to do with me providing an opportunity for you to get used to my exams and nothing to do with the importance of material or ease of the exams.

Please note that although the projects will be discussed in class, they will be conducted outside of class – ***so there will be a lot of outside work to do.***

## **GRADING**

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The grade you EARN for this class will be based on a formula that weights each assignment by its respective percentage. **For all assignments, you will earn a letter grade** that corresponds to the “meaning of grades” found below. These letter grades will correspond to a traditional 4.0 scale, where a 4.0 equals and grade of “A” as follows (think GPA):

A+ = 4.33	C = 2.0
A = 4.0	C- = 1.67
A- = 3.67	D+ = 1.33
B+ = 3.33	D = 1.0
B = 3.0	D- = .67
B- = 2.67	F+ = .33
C+ = 2.33	F = 0.0

To figure your course grade, transform your earned letter grade to its corresponding number and multiply by the assignment weight. Then, sum the weighted coefficients; your total is a score out of 4.0 that can then be converted to a letter (again, think GPA).

For example, earning an “A” for participation means  $4.0 \times .10 = 0.4$ , and earning a B+ for the focus group project means  $3.33 \times .20 = 0.667$ . The sum of these two weighted coefficients is  $0.4 + 0.667 = 1.067$ . If a student earned grades of “F” on all other assignments, she would earn a D in IMC 404.

As a rule, I do not discuss grades until at least 24 hours after you have received feedback. During this time, you should review the material in an effort to figure out why you did better or worse than you anticipated. **The purpose of this rule is to encourage an intellectual rather than a strictly emotional discussion of your grade.**

## The Meaning of Grades

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**A - Excellent work.** The student went above and beyond assignment expectations. Furthermore, the student has represented mastery of course material, both conceptually and pragmatically.

**B - Above average work.** The student completed the assignment with more effort than average. B work is good work, but still has room for improvement.

**C - Average work.** The student completed the assignment as specified by the assignment description. No more than “effort as expected” was achieved. Minimum requirements were met, minimum effort was put forth.

**D - Below average work.** The student seemed unsure of assignment specifics and did not complete said assignment in a satisfactory manner. There were both conceptual and pragmatic holes in the presentation.

**F - Poor/Failing work.** Student was not prepared for and/or did not execute the assignment properly. There are large holes or missing information.

## SELECTED POLICIES

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### ***Attendance***

Attendance is a necessary first step toward completion of IMC 404. To abide by federal regulations, The University of Mississippi has instituted a verification period during the first two weeks of courses each academic semester. Any student who is absent without an approved University excuse during this time will be dropped from the course. Beyond that, I will not take daily attendance daily.

It is not possible to “make up” missed quizzes (those that count toward your participation grade), though students who have valid reasons for missing class on particular days will be officially excused from class assuming appropriate documentation is provided. A student who does not have a valid reason for missing class should submit a formal letter outlining

the reason for missing that class at least 24 hours prior to that class's start time. I only accept hard copies of letters. Letters should follow standard business letter format.

**Late/Tardy policy:** On days when assignments are due, if you show up late you will be unable to turn in your assignment. The deadline for all assignments is the START of class, not half-way through when you finally get around to printing it. On exam days, you can choose to show up late, but you will only have the class period to take the exam.

### ***Honor Code***

The University's honor code will be strictly enforced in this class. Please read the honor code statement provided in your student handbook. We will review the necessary and appropriate documentation policies for the research papers in class prior to the assignment due dates. In the spirit of collaboration and peer mentoring, you may consult with peers on individual projects, but your work must be your own. Cheating, including plagiarism, falsification of research data, using the same assignment for more than one class, turning in someone else's work, or allowing someone to copy your work, will result in severe penalties. If you have questions about academic integrity, please discuss the matter with me.

### ***Accommodations***

Accommodation recommendations from the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) for ANY documented disability or learning need will be honored in the course. Please see me during office hours during the first week of class to discuss how I can assist you with an appropriate learning environment. I am committed to making this course accessible to everyone.

### ***Cultural Diversity***

The Meek School of Journalism and New Media is committed to diversity in the classroom, in its publications and in its various organizations and components. Faculty and staff recognize that the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of their colleagues and students are best served through respect toward gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and other personal characteristics. In addition, the School is committed to taking a leadership position that calls for promoting a commitment to diversity in and out of the classroom and in the practice of journalism and IMC.

**Diversity in Action:** In the observation, survey and focus group projects, you will be asked to reflect on how the research and results might be different (if at all) based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race and culture.

### ***Communication Policy***

Please drop by during official office hours (or whenever I am in my office), or make an appointment to speak with me at any point. Part of my job is to assist students in learning course material as well as providing advice for all things academic and professional. If you are having issues in your personal life that are impeding your ability to perform in this class as you normally would it is vital that you speak to me about them before you begin to fall behind. I do not need all the details if you are not comfortable disclosing them. I do, however, need to be "in the know" – if it can be prevented, I do not want you to slip through the cracks.

***Scheduled Appointments:*** My availability on campus is quite good – when I am here, you are free to come in and talk about the course or anything else that is on your mind. If you prefer to schedule appointments, I will do that as well (both on and off campus). Failure to attend a scheduled appointment without prior notification will result in a suffix reduction in your final course grade (e.g., A- to B+).

For most questions and concerns, email is likely the best form of exchange. When you send an e-mail, be sure to write IMC 404 in the subject heading. Blackboard and e-mail are only a supplement to the course. “Official business” (including minor changes to due dates or criteria for assignments) is conducted in class.

### ***Electronics Policy***

Students may use electronic devices during class under one condition: Students must be using these devices to take notes or otherwise improve their learning experience. Students using electronic devices for other purposes will be asked to leave class for the remainder of that period; upon their return, these students will be restricted from using any electronic device for any reason for the remainder of the semester. If, for family or other unavoidable reasons, you must have a cell phone or other electronic device “ping” you, please notify me before class starts for the day. Please note, however, I will not accept “my work might text me” as a viable reason to be interrupted during class. If you must, take your phone calls or text exchanges outside of the class. Conducting any other business than class business in class disturbs the learning environment. You have chosen to take this course, and it is your only responsibility for the hour-and-fifteen-minutes we have scheduled on Mondays and Wednesdays. Research clearly shows that people can do ONE cognitively taxing thing at a time – multitasking is a myth! People only switch-task, which is costly in terms of information retention, learning, and is distracting to other students. If it helps, take notes the old-fashioned way!

### ***Deadlines and Late Work***

Most assignments are due at the start of class; submit it then. Do not rely on using the lab computers to work on or to print assignments due moments before class begins. We will have things to do, and I may restrict your use of the computers during lecture. Failure to print is not an acceptable excuse. I do not accept late work without prior approval (and then only in rare circumstances).

## Course Schedule

*Subject to change. You will be notified in class of any change.*

You must complete readings **before** class.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
<b>1</b>	8/21	Course Intro	Syllabus
	8/23	What is Marketing Research? Why is it important?	B&Z, Chs. 1, 3
<b>2</b>	8/28	Research and Ethics	B&Z, Ch. 4 (pp. 88-105)
	8/30	Research Decisions; Communicating Results	B&Z, Ch. 4 (pp. 75-87); Chs. 2, 5, 12, 16
<b>3</b>	9/4	No Class – Labor Day Holiday	-----
	9/6	Research Decisions; Communicating Results	B&Z, Ch. 4 (pp. 75-87); Chs. 2, 5, 12, 16
<b>4</b>	9/11	Research Decisions; Communicating Results	B&Z, Ch. 4 (pp. 75-87); Chs. 2, 5, 12, 16
	9/13	<b>Exam 1</b>	-----
<b>5</b>	9/18	Finding and Using Secondary Data	B&Z, Ch. 6; Guest Lecture (Ashley Dees)
	9/20	Observation	B&Z, Ch. 8
<b>6</b>	9/25	Observation	<b>Secondary Data Project Due;</b> B&Z, Ch. 8
	9/27	Content Analysis	B&Z, Ch. 8
<b>7</b>	10/2	Content Analysis	B&Z, Ch. 8
	10/4	Catch up day	<b>Observation Project Due</b>
<b>8</b>	10/9	<b>Exam 2</b>	-----
	10/11	Focus Groups	<b>Content Analysis Project Due;</b> B&Z, Ch. 5 (pp. 120, 130-134); Guest Lecturer (Leslie Westbrook)
<b>9</b>	10/16	Focus Groups	B&Z, Ch. 5 (pp. 120, 130-134)
	10/18	Focus Groups	B&Z, Ch. 5 (pp. 120, 130-134)
<b>10</b>	10/23	Focus Groups	B&Z, Ch. 5 (pp. 120, 130-134); Guest Speaker, Meg Payment, Mississippi Power
	10/25	Focus Groups	B&Z, Ch. 5 (pp. 120, 130-134)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<b>11</b>	10/30	Survey Research	<b>Focus Group Report Due;</b> B&Z, Chs. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15
	11/1	Survey Research	B&Z, Chs. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15
<b>12</b>	11/6	Survey Research	B&Z, Chs. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15
	11/8	Survey Research	B&Z, Chs. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15
<b>13</b>	11/13	Survey Research	B&Z, Chs. 7, 10, 13, 14, 15
	11/15	No Class – NCA Convention	-----
<b>14</b>	11/20	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday	-----
	11/22	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday	-----
<b>15</b>	11/27	Experimental Methods	B&Z, Ch. 9
	11/29	Experimental Methods	<b>Survey Project Due;</b> B&Z, Ch. 9
<b>16</b>	12/6	<b>NOON – Final Exam</b>	-----