Syllabus and Course Outline

BA 595 Applied Business Research

Professor: ***Dr. Bob Folden***

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Office Hours: ***Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 am to 12:00 pm, Tuesday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm and other times by special appointment.***

Course Description:

A course to investigate the techniques of the research process as applied to business and economics. Experience is gained in defining research problems, designing a research project, and in collecting, analyzing, recording and interpreting data. Also, an analysis of pertinent research literature in business and economics is conducted.

Course Prerequisite(s):

No graduate prerequisites. This should be one of the first courses taken in the MBA program.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate secondary data to solve business problems.

2. Students will develop a research plan including a problem statement, hypotheses and methodology.

3. Students will understand the scientific method of research and be able to differentiate between descriptive, historical, correlational and experimental research methods.

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Accommodations

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

Conduct

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Guidebook, p. 42-45)

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students

All work submitted to this Instructor may be submitted to an academic integrity verification service such as Turnitin.com.

You are responsible for authenticating any assignment submitted to this instructor. If asked, you must be able to produce proof that the assignment submitted is actually your own work. Therefore, it is recommended that you engage in a verifiable working process on assignments. Keep copies of all drafts of your work, make photocopies or digital copies of research materials, keep logs or journals of your work on assignments, and papers, learn to save a version of assignments under individual filenames on computers or diskettes, etc.

The inability to authenticate your work, should it be requested, is sufficient grounds for failing an assignment.

Appeals Process:

Students taking online classes at Texas A&M University-Commerce have the same rights as students enrolled in face-to-face classes. The A&M-Commerce Student *Guidebook* (page 55) details those rights and explains complaint and grievance procedures, as well as the Student Code of Conduct. Students have the right to appeal course grades, *Guidebook* (page 35), admissions committee decisions, or any adverse action taken by any *online* faculty against any student. The appeal process is the same for all types of appeals.

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Projects:

All projects turned in should adhere to the APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition. All papers should be typewritten and submitted in electronic form online. Papers will be graded on content, organization, and format, as well as adherence to the directions provided. It is important to remember that when writing for professional audiences, it is generally necessary for writers to not refer to themselves directly. Most of the writing should be done in the third person. This a-personal approach is considered the scholarly writing style. With this in mind, the writer should recognize that s/he does not have the authority to present a position that is not supported in the literature or by data. **You must never allow your thoughts to be presented as your thoughts alone.** ***They must have support from some documented source.***

1. **Business Problem**. Prepare a statement of your research question including problem statements (hypotheses) and research objectives. **Remember that applied business research is neither informative research, aka a term paper, nor theoretical research, aka a thesis, although there is some theoretical research done for business reasons**. **Applied business research is decision oriented and therefore seen as a persuasive style of paper.** Provide some background information to help the reader understand the nature and the relevance of the question. This process should focus the research, providing guidance into the nature of the results and the data that will need to be gathered in the research process. Data in this sense is focused on the supporting documentation in the type of topics that will need to be included from the journal articles that you will need for support. You will be graded on the succinctness of your presentation and the completeness of the background support for the problem under consideration.

2. **Research Proposal Presentation**. You need to create a 10 minute research proposal. This is to be done by videotaping a presentation to convince your supervisors that they need to support your research to solve the business problem that you identified in your first assignment. You need to cover the Business Problem and supporting rationale for pursuing this research. This will identify what basic problems this will solve for the company and any hypotheses that you have identified.

3. **Bibliography.** Prepare a three to four page list (thirty to fifty) of **scholarly journal articles** that relate to your research question. These should be listed following the APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition. **You need to ensure that you are using scholarly, peer reviewed journals for you reference list.** You need to visit the Webliography section on eCollege that covers the differentiation of peer reviewed/scholarly journals from other sources. Be sure to include journals that present multiple sides of the questions, both pro and con. You should plan on having three to four pages of journals in your bibliography. These will be graded on your adherence to APA Style, utilization of peer reviewed journals, and the adequacy with which they fairly represent the views on the subject.

3. **Publishable Paper.** Prepare a paper that is suitable for publication relating to your problem statement and research objectives. The paper should move logically from your introduction of the business problem, to the question, culminating in your proposed solution or hypothesis. Your presentation should provide a clear background from the literature to clarify and define your research question. This background will provide both the theoretical and practical information that would be used to structure the complete research process to answer the research hypotheses related to your business problem. You should present the material in such a way that the reader will follow logically to your conclusion. **Remember that applied business research is neither informative research, aka a term paper, nor theoretical research, aka a thesis, although there is some theoretical research done for business reasons**. **Applied business research is decision oriented and therefore seen as a persuasive style of paper.** This paper should represent that focus, answering a business question leading the reader to make an informed decision to solve a business problem.

   Every point that you make should be supported by a reference to one or more of your journal articles. You should plan on averaging three to five citations per page. Many journals will be cited more than

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once, so the total number will not be thirty to fifty journals, but realistically five to ten journals. Be sure to give every source credit for the information that you use. It does not matter whether you are quoting or paraphrasing the material; you are to give the source credit for the material. **Failure to cite the appropriate source can result in a zero on this assignment and potentially failing the course.**

Pay attention to the readability of the paper. If the reader can't understand what you are saying, you might as well not write it. This paper should be 8 to 10 pages of typewritten text, not including the title page, table of contents (if included), or citation pages. Neither the number of pages nor the number of citations is a significant measure of quality. Clarity of presentation with adequate support from scholarly literature will be the prime measure of quality. You need to assume that you are writing to other professionals who probably have limited knowledge of the material that you are presenting.

The grading rubric for the Publishable Paper is on the next page of the syllabus.

4. **Research Design.** Assume that you are going to conduct an experimental study related to your research question. **What statistical procedures would you need to use to accept or deny your hypotheses?** Support your answer with references to statistical manuals. You will need to convince the professor that your choices are the best and that you know what you are talking about. The Kanji book will be a great place to begin. This should probably not be more than three to four pages in length.

Essay Exams

There are three essay exams that must be completed during the semester. Each exam is a single question. You are to answer them in as much detail as possible. **You should support your answers from the literature.** Your support must **come from sources other than course textbooks**. You must document your sources or you may receive a zero for any work submitted. You may work offline to complete the exams and then copy and paste your answers into the appropriate space. You must submit them by the due date. I would recommend that you pace yourself so that you are not doing them all at one time. Your grade will be determined on the basis of the quality of your answer and not on the basis of quantity of answer.

These answers are to be solely your own effort. You are not to collaborate with other students or use another individual's or group's work without proper citation.

Discussions:

In this course, you will be expected to participate in Discussions weekly. Professional communication is always expected. In order to achieve the maximum number of points for your Discussion grade, please answer each thread on three separate levels:

1) Answer the posted question (10 points);
2) Respond to another's posted answers (6 points);
3) Reply to any persons who have responded to you (4 points).

Discussion questions and topics may be added to the discussion area throughout the Semester. You will need to visit the area regularly. You are to consider the question or topic and post an appropriate response. You should support your response with external sources (**not course textbooks**) whenever appropriate. I will grade your responses based upon the quality of the response, including whether it is supported from external sources. All support should include all of the appropriate elements as identified in the APA Style Manual.

This is to be an attempt to create a seminar environment where you will be able to increase one another's knowledge of the subject. You should visit this area at least once a week to read the material and respond appropriately. You may add information at a later time as you would in a regular discussion.

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Publishable Paper

This paper should adhere to the APA Publication Manual 6th Edition. It should be typewritten. Quality is the issue, not quantity. **All major points should be supported** with citations from **peer reviewed** literature. It needs to be uploaded to the appropriate drop box on eCollege.

The following is the rubric that will be used to grade the papers by.

Criteria	Points Possible	Points Awarded
Support (20% of Grade)		
Appropriate Support	100 points	_____
Clarity of Presentation (60% of Grade)		
Strategy, organization	75 points	_____
Completeness, Accuracy	75 points	_____
Clarity, coherence	75 points	_____
Fluency, written expression	50 points	_____
Overall effect, originality	25 points	_____
APA Publication Manual (15% of Grade)		
Adheres to 5th Edition	75 points	_____
General English Mechanics (5% of Grade)		
Mechanics	25 points	_____
Bonus points		_____
Total Points	***500***	_____

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Textbook(s) and Other Materials:

Required:

Business Research Methods. Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. 9th edition, 2013. ISBN: 1-1118-2692-7

Digital edition: http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/932765/9781111826925?__hdv=6.8 ($164.49)

Recommended:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-8

100 Statistical Tests. Gopal K. Kanji. 1999, Sage Publications. ISBN: 0761961518

Mastering APA Style, Student's Workbook and Training Guide. Gelfand, Harold; Walker, Charles J., & the American Psychological Association, 2001.

The Least You Should Know about English. Wilson, Paige & Glazier, Teresa Ferster, 8th edition, 2003. ISBN: 015506225-5 **(This book will prove to be very helpful for any who do not have a very strong mastery of written English)**

Asking The Right Questions. Brown, M. Neil & Keeley, Stuart, 6th edition, 2001. ISBN: 013089134-7 **(This book is highly recommended, you will find it very helpful in completing project 1)**

Research Methods For Managers. J. Gill & P. Johnson, 3rd Edition, 2002. ISBN: 0761940022 **(This book will provide you with some of the greatest help in understanding the basics of research in the business world. It may be required in later classes.)**

Grading:

Grading Percentages	
A =	90= percent of total points
B =	80-89 percent of total points
C =	70-79 percent of total points
D =	60-69 percent of the total points
F =	59- or less percent of the total

Discussions	400
Project 1	100
Project 2	100
Project 3	100
Project 4	500
Project 5	100
Essay 1	100
Essay 2	100
Essay 3	100
Total Points Possible	**1,600**

Late assignments and tests may have points deducted from the final score.

Using someone else's words or ideas as if they were your own is plagiarism. The way to avoid this is to give credit to the author. If you quote anything that another says, you must enclose it in quote marks or use a block indent if the quote is 40 words or longer. Use citations to give credit to the author; you will gain the respect of other professionals, and you will also avoid an automatic F on the paper and most likely for the course.

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Course Outline and Assignments: This is only a proposal to guide you in your efforts to stay up with the course.

Unit	Date	Reading Assignment	Projects or Exams
1	January 21	Chapters 1 and 3	
	January 28	Chapter 4	**Project 1: Business Problem**
	February 4	Chapter 6	(Recommend completing Essay 1)
2	February 11	Chapter 2	**Project 2: Research Proposal Presentation**
	February 18	Chapter 5	
	February 25	Chapters 7 and 8	**Project 3: Bibliography**
3	March 4	Chapter 9	
	March 18	Chapter 10	(Recommend completing Essay 2)
	March 25	Chapters 11 and 12	
	April 1	Chapter 13	**Project 4: Publishable Paper**
4	April 8	Chapter 14	
	April 15	Chapter 15	(Recommend completing Essay 3)
	April 22	Chapters 16 and 17	**Drop Dead Date: all work due from the first four units. Access to those Units' work will be closed at 11:59 pm today.**
5	April 29	Chapter 18 & Chapter 25	**Project 5: Statistical Tests** **Extra Credit**
	May 6		**All remaining work is due (Nothing accepted after this date)**

+ **Assignments are due 2400 hours (midnight) of the date that they are assigned.**

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