Course Syllabus
Survey Management (STAT 6238)
Fall, 2015
Thursday, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Alexandria Graduate Education Center, Room 218

Instructor

Joe Garrett
Office Phone:  (703-975-6704 - cell)
Office E-mail:  jgarrett@gwu.edu
Office hours are by appointment.

Course description

The goal of this course is to describe good managerial practice in the conduct and reporting of survey research, with a focus on management of major survey operations. Course material covers the spectrum of survey management activities, from determining project scope and client objectives, through training, field work, data processing, data analysis, report writing, and presentation of results. Professional standards, quality management, and identifying common mistakes and oversights will be emphasized.

This course is focused on the practice of survey research and will develop in students the basic skills necessary to conduct research judged as credible by experts in the industry. Since practice skills are best developed through hands-on experience, a major component of the course is the group survey project. Significant portions of class time each week, and of students’ time commitment to the course outside of class, will be dedicated to this endeavor.

Required text


Additional readings

Student learning objectives

By the end of the semester, students will be able to integrate the major managerial components of survey leadership and survey management, and ensure quality management practices are followed at every stage, including the (1) survey process, (2) survey planning and operations,
(3) project management, (4) survey instrument and sampling design, (5) data collection, and (6) data analysis and reporting.

**Teaching style**

This course will take a seminar-style approach in class, using a mixture of reading assignments and practical hands-on exercises to develop survey management skills. Seminar-style courses require a different learning mindset than lecture courses. Seminar-style courses are fundamental to graduate-level training in all disciplines because they encourage students to develop critical thinking skills in the face of complex course material, the application of which is context-dependent. Such is the case with Survey Management. This type of interaction also mirrors what is required of survey researchers in research team settings, an important skill to develop in its own right.

The first part of each class will be devoted to lecture and class discussion for that week’s topic(s). **It is imperative that students come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings and completed any homework assignments.** The second part of each class will be devoted to working in small groups on the survey project and in presenting to the class. The instructor also will provide advice and guidance to groups during this time.

**Class policies**

*Attendance:*
Due to the fact that graduate courses only meet for 14 sessions, students are expected to be present for all sessions. Students who have to miss a session must obtain prior approval and arrange to turn in any assignments at a mutually agreed upon time.

*Late assignments:*
Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due dates. Students must obtain instructors’ approval in advance if an assignment needs to be turned in late. Points will be deducted for late assignments.

*University policy on religious holidays:*
1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.

**Academic Integrity**

All students are required to abide by the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: [http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html)

**Support for students outside the classroom**
Disability Support Services (DSS):
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

University Counseling Center (UCC): 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
  http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

Security

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. Additional emergency information may be obtained by visiting the Campus Advisories webpage (http://CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu) or calling the GW Information Line at 202-994-5050.

Grading criteria

Students will earn final grades for the semester based on the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group survey project:</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home final</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A = 94 to 100
A- = 90 to 93
B+ = 87 to 89
B = 83 to 86
B- = 80 to 82
C+ = 77 to 79
C = 73 to 76
C- = 70 to 72
D = 69 or below
**Group survey project (30 total points)** — A good way to learn aspects of survey management is to develop, conduct, and analyze the results from a survey you manage yourself. Students will work in small groups to choose a topic, design the sample, develop the instruments, collect and edit the data, analyze the data, and develop a written and oral report. Students will be given the second half of each class period to work in groups on the assignment and the instructor will provide guidance during this time. The written paper (15 points) and presentation (15 points) will be due as assigned. Throughout the semester, students will be asked to provide oral progress reports on their survey projects.

**Class participation (20 points)** — Students are expected to attend every class and fully participate in class discussions. A missed class provides 0 (zero) points for each session missed.

**Mid-term and final (25 points each)** — Students will prepare written essay answers to 4-6 questions that challenge students to integrate the course material and group work.

**GWU Academic Schedule - Fall Semester 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes Begin</th>
<th>Monday, August 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Monday, September 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Break (no classes)</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 25 – Saturday, November 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Thursday</td>
<td>Tuesday, December 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Regularly scheduled Tuesday classes will not meet.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Classes (except Saturday)</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Day</td>
<td>Thursday, December 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Saturday Class</td>
<td>Saturday, December 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations</td>
<td>Friday, December 11 - Saturday, December 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Saturday exams will be held on December 19</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
September 3, 2015

- **Introductions** (and prior courses in program – for setting up project teams)
- **Course Overview and Review of Syllabus**
- **Lecture 1 - Ethical Principles and Practices in Survey Research**
  - Protecting Human Subjects in a Research Setting
  - Ethical Practices (beyond protecting human subjects in research settings)
  - IRBs
- **Assignment:**
  - Read Text (Survey Methodology) – 11.5 through 11.9 (pages 376-400)

September 10, 2015

- **Lecture 2 – Managing RFPs, Writing Proposals, and Winning Survey Projects**
  - Finding Opportunities
  - Assessing Competition
  - Tips for Designing/Writing Winning Proposals
  - Proposal Budgeting
  - Proposal Reviews prior to Submission
  - Types of Contracts
- **Small Group Discussions** – Developing a research topic and initially defining a target population for the group survey project (continues as group homework)
- **Assignment:**
  - Read Text (Survey Methodology) - Chapter 8: Evaluating Survey Questions

September 17, 2015

- **Lecture 3 – Managing Survey Design and Development**
  - Survey Design
  - Defining the Target Population
  - Determining the Sampling Frame
  - Developing the Sample Design
  - Assessing Mode Choices
  - Developing Research Questions
- **Small Group Discussions** – Refining your target population, determining potential sample frames, thinking about the sample design, assessing the best mode to reach your target population; and starting to draft research objectives and survey questions for group survey project (continues as group homework)
- **Assignment:**
o Read Text (Survey Methodology) – Chapter 3: Target Populations, Sampling Frames, and Coverage Error
o Read Text (Survey Methodology) - Chapter 7: Questions and Answers in Surveys

**September 24, 2015**

- **Lecture 4 - Managing Survey Projects and Budgets**
- **Small Group Presentations** – Group survey project topics and target populations presented in class
- **Small Group Discussions** – Continue develop/finalizing survey instrument for group survey project (continues as group homework)
- **Assignment:**
  - Read Text (Survey Methodology) - Chapter 2: Inference and Error in Surveys

**October 1, 2015**

- **Lecture 5 - Managing Survey Data Collection Operations**
- **Small Group Presentations** – Survey instruments for group project presented in class (first set of teams)
- **Small Group Discussions** – Revise survey instruments as appropriate based on class comments
- **Assignment:**
  - Read Text (Survey Methodology) - Chapter 5: Methods of Data Collection

**October 8, 2015 (mention about class on 10/15 possibly being combined with 10/8 class)**

- **Lecture 5 – (finish)**
- **Lecture 6 - Managing Survey Data Processing Operations (start)**
- **Small Group Presentations** – Survey instruments for group project presented in class (second set of teams)
- **Small Group Discussions** – Develop overall survey project plan - includes sample design, data collection, data processing, data analysis, and report writing
- **Assignment:**
  - Read Text (Survey Methodology) - Chapter 10: Post-collection Processing of Survey Data
  - Prepare In-Class Presentation on Survey Project Plan
- **Take-home midterm exam distributed (due at start of class October 22, 2015)**

**October 15, 2015 (personal note about this class)**

- **Lecture 6 – (finish)**
- (Note what is due from class on 10/22)

**October 22, 2015**

- **Take-home midterm exam due at start of class**
- **Lecture 7 - Managing Survey Data Analysis Operations**
- **Small Group Presentations** – Groups formally present their survey project plan in class (1/2 hour each team)
- **Small Group Discussions** – Group survey project work
October 29, 2015
- Lecture 8 - Managing Report Writing and Survey Data Publication
- Small Group Discussions

November 5, 2015
- Lecture 9 – Managing Clients (Initial and Ongoing Client Management)
- Small Group Discussions
- Assignment
  - Read AAPOR Report on Online Panels
  
  http://www.aapor.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=AAPOR_Committee_and_Tas
k_Force_Reports&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=2223

November 12, 2015
- Lecture 10 – Current Topics in Survey Management
  - Online panels
- Small Group Discussions – Work on in-class presentations for 12/03

November 19, 2015
- Lecture 11 – Current topics in Survey Management (TBD)
- Small Group Discussions – Work on in-class presentations for 12/03

November 26, 2015 – NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

December 3, 2015
- In-class presentations on group survey project (1/2 hour for each team)
- Open Class Discussion – Anything related to survey management

December 10, 2015 (Note: GWU calendar has this as December 8 – a Tuesday)
- Lecture 12 - Current topics in Survey Management (TBD)
- Take-home final exam distributed (due Monday - December 14 by noon)