



DARDEN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MARKETING INTELLIGENCE

Why take this course?

Food, shelter, and clothing are integral parts of daily life. Decisions regarding these aspects of our life are made often. For example, if we do not grow our own food, we must choose where to purchase the nutrients needed for daily living. We regularly make decisions in regards to what items we want to purchase which may be dependent on other factors. In the food example, our willingness and capabilities of preparing a meal would impact our choices. Decisions made less often, such as whether to rent or buy a home, could be based just as much on economic needs as emotional needs. Regardless, all of these purchase decisions are necessary to sustain life.

In this course, we explore what motivates particular purchase decisions. For example, why does someone purchase a combo meal even though they do not want all the food included? Why does someone purchase a Toyota when she could afford a BMW? Why would a man purchase for his wife a Coach purse without the brand name on the outside of the bag? In this course, you have the opportunity to discover what motivates purchase decisions for the purpose of driving firm decisions.

For the context of this course, you have the opportunity to choose a local entrepreneur to partner with to solve an actual market research problem. From this course, you will learn research methods and analysis to answer the particular problem. But answering the market research problem is useless unless it informs the strategic direction of the firm. This final step relies heavily on you integrating the research you do in this course with your past business experience as well as the hundreds of cases from your First Year courses. The cases you have previously solved have allowed you to vicariously learn from an enormous amount of business contexts. In this course, you have the opportunity to apply these learning to an actual business context – one that could dramatically impact the life of the entrepreneur and the particular firm.

What will I gain?

The mission of this course is to empower you with a research framework to unlock consumers' hidden motivations relatively quickly and effectively. Once you believe you have discovered some aspect of human motivations, you will develop tools to test your hypothesis and analyze your results. Even if your hypothesis is disproved as a result of your analysis, you will discover an aspect of consumer behavior not previously known that will, more than likely, significantly change how the firm marketing decisions are made.

“There is nothing like looking, if you want to find something. You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after.”

J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord and the Ring*

Who will I learn from?

For the purposes of this course, you will be working with a group of your peers on a marketing research question proposed by a local entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial endeavors are probably the most challenging environments to do marketing research. Thus there is no better a place to test out your new framework of discovery and no better reward.

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

Zora Neale Hurston

What will I learn?

This course has 3 main long-term (five years after completing this course) learning objectives (with sub-goals):

- 1. Understand and apply the marketing research process**
 - Learn how to ask a “good” market research questions and generate insightful hypothesis
 - Demonstrate marketing research techniques and analysis to derive firm recommendations

- 2. Couple previous coursework and business experience with the marketing research approach to effectively and efficiently deliver actionable business recommendations**
 - Become highly proficient at developing hypothesis driven work plans, beginning with “Blank Slides” and ending with key insights
 - Be able to communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders at every stage of the project

- 3. Discover, at deeper levels, insights about consumers, firms, and yourself**
 - Generate the ability to understand what firms actually need versus what is being communicated
 - Develop the ability to unearth creatively consumers’ inherent needs rather than simply relying on creating needs
 - Reflect thoughtfully on what motivates your purchase decisions

Assessment

Group Course Project (50%): You are assessed on your course project and not on a final exam. Actual projects tend to incorporate the messiness and murkiness of real life requiring creativity and judgment. The course is quick (3.5 weeks), but in business, speed is critical. From personal experience, it can be frustrating and difficult to not have the resources and time need to do the work well. This course teaches you how to work within these constraints with a group of your peers – using an 80/20 way of getting to the answer while cultivating greater interior business judgment as time progresses. Even if you have all the time in the world, this research approach generally allows you to effectively and efficiently navigate complex problems obtaining workable solutions. The course does not stop at the end of the term – it is the beginning of your adventure in developing good hypothesis driven solutions in real life through an analytical approach and awareness of others.

This course is assessed on a weekly *performance->feedback->revision->new performance* cycle. The process is as follows:

1. *Performance*: You have weekly deliverables due to your entrepreneur.
2. *Feedback*: You meet weekly with your entrepreneur to present your findings as well as receive feedback from your partnering entrepreneur.
3. *Revision*: Based on the feedback, you use the collective judgment of your team to revise your work.
4. *New Performance*: Finally, you will incorporate feedback and course leanings to the next weekly deliverable.

Class Preparation & Participation (20%): Each class will assume that you have done all the readings, are prepared to discuss with your peers, and apply the materials during class learning activities.

Self and Peer Evaluations (10%): Plan to spend a great amount of time with your project team outside of class in a quest to answer your particular marketing research question. See your peers as a valuable source of feedback for your personal development. In addition to the feedback obtain from your peers, you will have numerous opportunities to self reflect on the learning process that you are undergoing including your interaction with your peers.

Firm Evaluation (10%): Through your weekly interactions with your business partner, your liaison will have the opportunity to evaluate the value that your group has brought to his or her business.

Where are the course materials?

All course materials are in electronic form on the Darden Portal. This allows us to update the content of the course real-time as your learning needs evolve over the lifetime of the class.

What are some tips for success in this course? (where “success” implies actual *learning*)

- This course is built, not for passive learners, but for active learners. It assumes that you are actively engaged with your local entrepreneur and are prepared for each class. The preparatory readings assigned will not be “covered” in class. It is assumed that you have read each of the materials and are ready to utilize the information for discussion and application during class.
- You will be given additional opportunities to practice the methods and analysis portions of the course outside of class. The data sets given and suggested analysis are not graded, but doing these practice exercises will, more than likely, make the difference between you being a *deep* learner and just a *surface* learner of the materials. Addressing the particular analytical needs of your partnering entrepreneur may be dependent on you choosing a *deep* learning approach.
- Your instructor is here for feedback throughout the course. If you *begin* to experience a problem please do not hesitate to ask – better at the beginning than at the end of the course when there may be little time to turn things around. She is here for the sake of your learning and development.

Tentative Timeline (“Tentative” means that the daily schedule may change based on your learning needs)

Module	Date	Topic	Readings	Project Deliverables*
Exploratory Research	Pre-Class Session	Exploratory Research Methods	Consumer Benefit Ladder Tech Note	
Research Problem	16-Apr	Market Research Process	HBS Case Document	Assignment #1
	17-Apr	Client Meeting		
Methods	19-Apr	Attitudinal Scales	TBD	Assignment #2
	20-Apr	Perceptual Maps	Perceptual Maps Tech Note	
	23-Apr	Conjoint Design	Conjoint Analysis Tech Note	
	24-Apr	Survey Development	TBD	
	26-Apr	Client Meeting		Assignment #3
	27-Apr	Study Implementation	TBD	
Analysis	30-Apr	Factor Analysis	TBD	
	1-May	Factor Analysis	TBD	
	3-May	Client Meeting		Assignment #4
	4-May	Conjoint Analysis	TBD	
	7-May	Conjoint Analysis		
Demonstration	8-May	Displaying Results	Status Consumption Paper	
	9-May	In Class Presentation		Assignment #5
	Determine with Client	Final Client Presentation		

* Detailed Schedule and Deliverables are Located in the Weekly Course Folder on the Darden Portal