

Angelo State University
MSC 3332 • Applied Research Methods
Spring 2016
Syllabus

Class Meetings: Section 10: TR, 8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m., RAS 111
Section 20: TR, 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m., RAS 111

Instructor: Rex Moody, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
or by appointment

A note on contacting Dr. Moody / e-mail response times:

Please feel free to stop by during office hours; if you need to see me and can't make office hours, let me know and we can set something else up. Outside of office hours, the best way to contact me is via email. I will work hard to return all emails received during business hours within 24 hours of receiving them (in most cases I will be quicker than that). Emails received on weekends or during holidays will be replied to by the following Monday or the next working day in the case of holidays.

Course Prerequisites: MSC 2331 (Statistics)

Optional Textbook(s)—Only need one:

Business Research Methods, by Donald R. Cooper and Pamela S. Schindler, 12th edition, © 2014, McGraw-Hill Irwin, ISBN 978-0-07-352150-3

or

Marketing Research, by Alvin C. Burns and Ronald F. Bush, 6th edition, © 2010, Pearson/Prentice-Hall, ISBN 978-0-13-607146-4

We will cover the information that you need to complete and do well in this course in class and through the PowerPoint slides. There may also be occasional outside readings. With this in mind, the textbook is optional. If you feel like you need a textbook to do well in the class, by all means you should acquire one of the above texts and read it as you move through the material and then study from it for exams.

Other Course Resource:

We will use Excel to perform our statistical analyses in this course. If you would like to bring a laptop to class that has Excel on it when you do in-class statistical work you may do so. Otherwise, the computers in the classroom all are loaded with Excel.

Course Description

From the ASU Catalog

This course is an overview of the qualitative and quantitative research methods used in the field of business. A special emphasis will be given on the use of computer packages such as SAS and SPSS. The course is intended to cover research design, implementation, analysis, and communication of results.

Note: We will not use either SAS or SPSS (statistical software packages / apps) in this course. Instead, we will use Excel.

ASU CONNECT!

As a designated ASU Connect! Course, MSC 3332 includes learning about and practicing community engagement through Academic Service-Learning. The ASU Community Partnership Handbook defines service-learning as, “a course-based, credit-bearing, educational experience in which students: a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced social responsibility.”

Course Objectives

Business research is an important tool in management. By understanding the research process, the users of business research studies will be better able to judge the suitability, reliability and validity of information from such studies. Having a grasp of the research process and commonly used tools in business research is imperative for a student of any area of business. Therefore, this course aims to:

- ◆ Familiarize the student with the commonly used techniques in the collection and analysis of business research information.
- ◆ Familiarize the student with various ways research information is used in aiding management decisions.
- ◆ Have the student gain perspective and practice in applying one such research data collection technique, survey data collection, and report findings through a research project.
- ◆ Develop within the student an understanding of decision making in management, its inherent difficulties and pitfalls, and the importance of research in managerial decision making.
- ◆ Have the student gain an understanding of, and a familiarity with using Excel to perform statistical analysis.

As an academic service-learning course, MSC 3332 also aims to:

- ◆ Have the student gain an appreciation of the structure and management practices of a large not-for-profit organization through participation in a class research project and the academic service learning process.
- ◆ Have the student attain an appreciation of the intrinsic rewards available through community engagement.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- ✓ Articulate the need and importance of decision making in business, its inherent difficulties and pitfalls, and the importance of research in management decision making.
- ✓ Compare and contrast commonly used techniques in the collection and analysis of business research information.
- ✓ Delineate the steps of the business research process and express what occurs in each of the steps.
- ✓ Apply common statistical and quantitative techniques to aid in management decision making.
- ✓ Describe and explain the various ways research information aids management decision making.
- ✓ Implement the research process as an information gathering technique to aid the management decision making process.
- ✓ Use business research techniques to investigate and report on a business-related problem or opportunity.
- ✓ Show an appreciation for working with not-for-profit organizations and within the community in general and express any intrinsic rewards they feel are available from such work.

Methods of Assessing Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes will be assessed through several exams, the use of a semester long, community-based research project, and a series of homework assignments. Peer evaluations and reflection papers will be used in assessing student learning and participation on the research project.

Readings

As listed in the course schedule, specific chapters from the text are available for those students who desire to complete the readings. In addition to the text chapters, there may be other assigned readings from time to time during the term to enhance the material covered in class. Any readings outside of the text will be provided to you by your professor or available on the World Wide Web.

Required Technology:

No specialized technology is required for this course, though students will need to use a computer with word processing software and a web browser to complete assignments and access course materials on Blackboard. We will also use Excel to conduct statistical analysis in and for class. All of the needed software for this course can be found on computers in the ASU computer labs. Blackboard and university computer lab technical support is provided by the university's Technology Service Center by calling 325-942-2911 or 1-866-942-2911 or by email at helpdesk@angelo.edu.

Class Format

Students will gain their knowledge of business research in this course through lectures, class discussions, a community-based group project, and a number of homework assignments.

PowerPoint lecture slides will be available before each class session for downloading and/or printing through the class page on the ASU Blackboard site.

Graded Activities

Exams

Three exams will be given during the term. Students should expect exams consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. Questions on the exams will test knowledge and application of the student's knowledge. The exams are not cumulative.

The time for the final exam is listed at the end of the course schedule at the end of this syllabus. You should be prepared to take the final exam at the time scheduled. All university regulations will be followed in administering the final exam.

Make up exams will be given only for reasons deemed legitimate by Professor Moody and should be avoided if at all possible. If you have to miss an exam for any reason, you must notify Professor Moody in advance, if you are ill or otherwise incapacitated a short phone message or email will suffice.

Statistical Analysis Assignments

A second component of this class is for students to practice their knowledge of statistics both as a review and in completing a final report for the class project. Throughout the semester you will complete short statistical analysis assignments using Excel and your knowledge of statistics.

Protection of Human Subjects in Research Training

While not graded in the traditional sense, all students in MSC 3332 will complete an on-line learning activity and test on the protection of human subjects in research. This is a mandatory activity for students in MSC 3332, students will get class credit for completing the training.

Group Project

The centerpiece of this class is the group project. We will be working on a survey research project as a class this semester. Students will work in sub-groups of four or five students to practice completing the project. While we will cover every step of the project in class, the main focus of your work on the project will be data analysis and presentation of the results. You will also practice writing a questionnaire as part of your project work.

There are several different project deadlines included in the class schedule. I will explain the exact requirements for each of the deadlines to you in class. Every assignment related to the research project should be completed in a professional manner.

Working in groups can be much more difficult than working individually. Be prepared to face the challenges of group work and avoid finger pointing at the end of the term. Should problems arise within your group, you should contact me immediately. Ask, and you will receive support. Peer evaluations will play a role in each group member's final project grade, as will observations by the instructor.

Reflective Paper

This course can be considered an academic service learning course. The basic premise of such a course is to have students practice what they learn in a way that benefits the community in which they live. Therefore, the project included in this course involves working with an on-campus client (ASU is a not-for-profit organization). Part of the academic service learning process is for students to reflect on what they have learned through their involvement with such groups. This reflection will occur through a paper students will write at the end of the course.

Students will also receive a small amount of class credit for completing a survey on the service-learning aspects of this course at the end of the term.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is expected in this course. However, as an adult it is up to you to attend class. Please keep in mind that the course material that will be covered on the exams is covered in class for this course.

Course Grades

Please keep in mind that in MSC 3332 you are graded on your performance on the graded elements of the course—you are not graded on effort. Your final class grade will depend solely on how you perform on all aspects of the course and no other factors.

The following cutoffs will be used to determine final grades in MSC 3332:

- A 90-100
- B 80-89
- C 70-79
- D 60-69
- F Below

Your semester grade will consist of the following components.

	Points
Exams 3 @ 100 points each	300
Group Questionnaire Assignment	100
Preliminary Group Project Report	125
Final Group Project Report	200
Statistical Assignments:	200
Human Subjects Training	25
Reflection Paper	25
End-of-Term Survey	<u>25</u>
Total	1,000

Note: You must have a passing grade on your exam average to pass the class (your average score on the three exams must be above 60% or your scores on all three exams summed must be 180 or greater).

Other Course Policies

Extra Credit Work

No extra credit work will be available for students in this class. Students should prepare for exams and assignments to the best of their ability. Attendance, participation, and solid work is expected from all students.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the start of class on the days listed in the syllabus or on the assignment handout, they must be turned into Professor Moody and not to the department secretary. **Assignments must be turned in by the deadlines given. Late assignments (even a few minutes) will be docked 20%. Assignments will not be accepted 24 hours or more past the stated due date and time.** Plan ahead and be prepared to turn your assignments in when they are due.

Professionalism / Courtesy and Respect

Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally in all matters related to this class. This means students should act professionally in class and prepare all assignments in a professional manner. Inappropriate verbal comments directed toward others in class and/or inappropriate written comments in assignments will not be tolerated.

You are expected to use your phones, tablets, personal laptops, and ASU computers *for class purposes only while in class*. As a matter of courtesy, check to see that your cell phone is turned off before class begins, texting during class is not allowed. Should I find that you are using your electronic device for non-class purposes or texting during class, I will ask you to leave class for the rest of the day.

Your actions in class such as talking to your neighbor, texting, reading your textbook from another class, or studying for an exam do not go unnoticed by other students in class or the class instructor. The expectation is that you are in class to learn about business research. If you would rather talk to your friends, listen to your iPod, or surf the Internet / play solitaire, you can do so out in the hall. Please, if you have other pressing matters to attend to such as talking, surfing the net, sleeping, or preparing for another class, etc., do not come to class.

Academic Honesty

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the ASU Student Handbook. In essence, the willingness to cheat undermines our purpose at the university.

In general, all students are expected to conduct themselves in this course in a manner consistent with the University Honor Code policy which is at: http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/Honor_Code.pdf

Academic integrity is expected of all. This includes, but is not limited to, any form of cheating, plagiarism (presenting someone else's work as your own), unauthorized sharing of work, or unauthorized possession of course materials. The professor assumes that all students can be trusted. Please do not violate this trust. Violation of academic integrity will result in a failing grade for the course.

If two students turn in the exact same work on statistical assignments in this class, the assignment will be graded and the grade split between all students turning in the same work.

Policy on Disabilities

Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

The Student Life Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, at (325) 942-2191 or (325) 942-2126 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at Student.Life@angelo.edu to begin the process.

Policy on Religious Observances

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Course Drop

To view information about how to drop this course or to calculate important dates relevant to dropping this course, you can visit: http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrar_office/course_drop_provisions.php. April 1 is the last day to drop a course during the spring 2016 semester.

Incomplete as a Course Grade

The incomplete grade, a grade of I is only given when the student is unable to complete the course because of illness or personal misfortune. An I that is not removed before the end of the next long semester automatically becomes an F. To graduate from ASU, a student must complete all I's.

Grade Appeal Process

A student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see Operating Procedure 10.03 at: <http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14196-op-1003-grade-grievance>.

Tentative Course Schedule

While exam dates are set below, minor revisions may be made in other areas of this schedule due to unforeseen circumstances and the pace of the class in general.

Day/Date	Related Chapters		Topic(s)	Due
	B&B	C&S		
Tues., Jan. 19			Course Introduction	
Thurs., Jan. 21	1	1	Research in Business	
Tues., Jan. 26	1/3 p.62	1/2	Research in Business / Ethics in Research	
Thurs., Jan. 28	3 p.62	2	Ethics in Research	Project Group Formation
Tues., Feb. 2	15	15a	Descriptive Statistics	
Thurs., Feb. 4	15	15a	Descriptive Statistics	Human Subjects Training Due
Tues., Feb. 9	2	4	The Research Process	
Thurs., Feb. 11			Catch-Up / Review / Class Work Day	Stats HW #1 Due
Tues., Feb. 16			Exam 1	
Thurs., Feb. 18		16	Exploring and Displaying Data	
Tues., Feb. 23		16	Exploring and Displaying Data	
Thurs., Feb. 25	5	6	Research Design	
Tues., Mar. 1	5	6	Research Design	Stats HW #2 Due
Thurs., Mar. 3	10	11/12	Measurement and Measurement Scales	
Tues., Mar. 8	11	13	Questionnaires / Meet the Client	
Thurs., Mar. 10			Group Work Day	
Tues., Mar. 15			Spring Break	
Thurs., Mar. 17			Spring Break	
Tues., Mar. 22	9	10	Survey Methods	
Thurs., Mar. 24			Catch-Up / Review / Class Work Day	Questionnaires Due
Tues., Mar. 29			Exam 2	
Thurs., Mar. 31	16/17	17	Hypothesis Testing	
Tues., Apr. 5	16/17	17	Hypothesis Testing	
Thurs., Apr. 7	14/20	15 / 19	Data Prep / Research Reports / Project Work Day	
Tues., Apr. 12	18	18	Measures of Association	Stats HW #3 Due
Thurs., Apr. 14	18	18	Measures of Association	Preliminary Projects Due
Tues., Apr. 19	12/13	14/14a	Sampling / Sample Size	
Thurs., Apr. 21			Project Work Day	Stats HW #4 Due
Tues., Apr. 26			Project Work Day	
Thurs., Apr. 28			Project Work Day	
Tues., May 3			Project Work Day	
Thurs., May 5				Final Project Reports Due
Section 10 (8:00 a.m. class): Exam 3, Tuesday, May 10, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Section 20 (9:30 a.m. class): Exam 3, Thursday, May 12, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.				