



ECO 595.81E

Applied Business Research

Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Lirong Liu

Office Location: UCD

Office Hours: Monday 5:40-6:10 at UCD or by appointment

Commerce Office Phone: 903-886-5674

Email: Lirong.Liu@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication:

- The best way to contact me is by email Please put the course number 'ECO 595.81E' in the subject. Missing course number in the subject can seriously delay the response time.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required:

Textbooks Required: Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. Business research methods, 9th edition ISBN 9781111826925

Course Description

This course is designed to investigate the techniques of the research process as applied to business, finance and economics. Experience is gained in defining research problems, designing a research project, and in collecting, analyzing, recording, and interpreting data. Particular emphasis is given to communicating findings to senior managers in a concise written and or verbal format.

Course Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a research plan including a problem statement, hypotheses, related literature, and methodology.

2. Students will learn how to write concise digests of the key insights from research findings in a manner that senior managers will be able to use. An opportunity to conduct verbal presentations of such findings will be done in the weekly online Webinars.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate secondary data to solve business problems.
4. Students will develop an appreciation for the importance of quantifying business decisions.

GRADING

Course grading is based on the following assignments:

- (a) Research prospectus, three to five pages: 45% of total grade
- (b) Data analysis project: 20% of total grade
- (c) 4 short papers, half to one page. You will need to do ppt presentation on one of the short papers : 30% on the highest three grades on papers and 5% on presentation

For all writing assignment, you should keep the following assumptions in mind:

1. Assume you have been asked by a senior VP of the company to prepare research documents.
2. The VP is interested in numerous and varied issues facing the company but does not have the time to keep up with them all. You will be required to present your findings in varied formats listed above
3. You are a senior researcher for the company and your opinion is valued and sought after.
4. Spelling and grammar matter to her and you should follow standard writing conventions. She expects a succinct format that is business like.

Research Prospectus

You will select a research problem and prepare and turn in a prospectus indicating the background of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the study's hypothesis (es), the methodology to be employed in the study and a review of the literature pertaining to the problem. In a Prospectus--a plan to do research--you do everything except collect and analyze the data.

The paper should be double-spaced using Times New Roman 12 font. It is highly recommended that you follow APA style. However, keep in mind that the senior VP of the company is NOT impressed by APA style as the major outcome of your work.

- a. Identify the issue that you want to study. What in the business changes as a result of the issue? This is what we call the dependent variable or objective variable.
- b. This objective variable must relate directly to company performance and thus impact cost, revenue or both in the long run and short run. These are often called the independent variables.
- c. Perform a literature review to refine your thinking or hypothesis regarding the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.
- d. Given changes in the independent variables, what choice alternatives is the company faced with.
- e. Decide your methodological approach. You might consider surveys, engineering cost studies, focus groups, or statistical analysis.
- f. Write your research prospectus. This is your contract with senior management as to what, when, how, cost and how much you are doing.

You should consider the following elements when preparing Chapter I of the prospectus (all elements may not be required). You may also wish to look at pages 123-125 of the 9th edition of your text.

1. Background
2. Problem Statement
3. Purpose of Study
4. Study Hypothesis(es)
5. Study Delimitations
6. Study Limitations
7. Definitions
8. Cost

Data analysis project

You will be assigned by your professor a specific company with actual data from the Bloomberg database. This project has two components.

Part 1

Produce an Excel graph of the company data assigned to you by your professor. Using this data ONLY explain what the graph tells you as a manager about the trend, seasonal, cyclical, and random factors in this company data. Explain this in a half-page report.

Part 2.

Based on your results from part 1, now do actual research to find out how management actually made the decisions in the data you used in part 1. Company annual reports, Wall Street Journal, and trade magazines are good places to start. Present your results in a 10 minute or less ppt presentation.

Short papers

You will be asked to write four half-page to one-page summary papers on current economics/business issues. Articles will be provided by the professor. In the papers, you will need to summarize the issues and discuss how it is related to certain business/industry. This is NOT a book report. You need to put your own thoughts in it. Remember that this is to be reported to the senior VP of the company. You need to be concise and clear.

You will be asked to presentation one of the short papers using ppt slides. The presentation should not be more than 10 minutes. All class members are required to do the presentation. The objective of the presentation is for you to practice and get feedback on verbal communications of business issues.

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%	B = 80%-89%	C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%	F = 59% or Below	

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to myLeo. <http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at [myLeo](https://leo.tamuc.edu). <https://leo.tamuc.edu>

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

- The best way to contact me outside the classroom is by email or come by my office during office hours. I will reply emails as promptly as I could. Please put the course number 'ECO 595.81E' in the subject. Missing course number in the subject can seriously delay the response time.
- Please allow up to 24 hours during weekdays and 48 hours during weekend for me to reply. If you do not hear from me within that time frame, you can resend your email or call me at 903-886-5674 (leave a message if not answered).
- Please consult your syllabus, the course page in eCollege to see if your questions/concerns are addressed before sending me an email.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance in Webinar or through email.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

ADA Statement

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

Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Tentative Schedule

Week	Text
Week 1 (8/31-9/4)	Chapters 1, 2
Week 2 (9/7-9/11)	Chapter 4
Week 3 (9/14-9/18)	Chapter 3
Week 4 (9/21-9/25)	Chapter 3
Week 5 (9/28-10/2)	Chapter 5
Week 6 (10/5-10/9)	Chapter 7
Week 7 (10/12-9/16)	Chapter 8
Week 8 (9/19-10/23)	Chapter 8
Week 9 (10/26-10/30)	Chapter 9
Week 10 (11/2-11/6)	Chapter 13
Week 11 (11/9-11/13)	Chapter 16
Week 12 (11/16-11/20)	Chapter 15
Week 13 (11/23-11/27)	Basic data analysis
Week 14 (11/30-12/4)	Basic data analysis
Week 15 (12/7-12/11)	Data analysis Presentation
Finals Week (12/12-12/17)	No Final