



ECO 595

Applied Business Research

Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Lirong Liu
Office Phone: 903-886-5684
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: Lirong.Liu@tamuc.edu

- The best way to contact me is by email. Please put the course number 'ECO 595.W' in the subject. Missing course number in the subject can seriously delay the response time.
- Please consult your syllabus and the course page in D2L to see if your questions/concerns are addressed before sending me an email. 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.
- You are responsible for joining online class sessions regularly as long as time permits and checking your university email daily. If you cannot attend the live lecture, you should review the recordings as soon as possible. Continuously failing to keep up with the announcements and updates included in emails or lectures can be a sign of lack of class participation.
- Access to a regular PC with a fully functional Excel package is required. Students using a Mac is responsible for finding compatible software packages that can perform tasks that can be accomplished using Excel on a PC.
- Course schedule at the end of the syllabus is temporary and subject to changes. Announcements, updates and other information will be released either during live lecture or via email.

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

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

Optional Textbook:

Paul McFedries, MOS 2016 Study Guide for Microsoft Excel Expert, ISBN 9780735699427

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 using Excel. Particular emphasis is given to using Excel to organize and analysis data, communicating findings to senior managers in a concise written format, and presenting results verbally.

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.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to use appropriate secondary data to solve business problems worldwide.
4. Students will develop an appreciation for the importance of quantifying business decisions.
5. Students will have comprehensive Excel skills that are necessary for performing basic business analysis.

GRADING

Course grading is based on the following assignments:

- (a) Two short-papers (35%)
- (b) Group Projects: (1) Case study (15%); (2) Data analysis (20%)
- (c) Final Exam (25%)
- (d) Class participation and discussion (5%)

Late submission will be accepted with valid documentation and at the discretion of the instructor. A 10% penalty will be imposed for each of the days that the submission is late. Extension for an assignment will be given with valid documentation. Extensions are at the discretion of the

instructor. Extensions may include a late penalty. Documentations submitted after the grade being posted will NOT be considered.

All files submitted must be in word or ppt format, depending on the type of the assignments. No pdf files are allowed. The name of all files should have the following format: lastname_firstname_project for individual submissions and lastname1_lastname2_lastname3 for group submissions. Failure to do so will result in penalty in grading.

All assignment must be formally submitted to the dropbox. If you have difficulty accessing D2L temporarily, you can email me your assignment as a proof of on-time submission. However, you still need to upload it to the dropbox as soon the issue is resolved. Email or any other formats of submissions do not count and will not be graded.

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.

A. Short papers

Short paper 1: You will be assigned a published peer-review research papers and write research proposals based on the paper.

Short paper 2: You will pick a research topic of your own and write an abbreviated version of a research proposal similar to the one on page 124.

More details are provided in the short paper guideline.

B. Group projects

Each student will choose partners (groups of 3) for the two group projects this semester, and notify the course instructor by **September 9**. Students failed to do

so will be required to work individually. Once the group/individual choice is made, it should remain the same throughout the semester. That is, students working in a group for the first project will remain in the same group for the second project. Similarly, students who work individually on the first project will need to work individually on the second project as well.

The choice of working individually is to allow those who have inflexible schedules or who prefer to work individually to be able to do so. Note that assignments will be graded with the same requirement and standard regardless of the group/individual choice.

The two projects will be submitted as voice-over ppt presentations.

- **Case study: 15%**

You will be asked to work on a business case, assigned by the professor, and provide thoughtful solutions. You will present your thoughts through a voice-over presentation.

- **Data analysis project: 15%**

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.

Based on your Excel graph, conduct research to find out how management actually made the decisions in the data. Company annual reports, Wall Street Journal, and trade magazines are good places to start.

Part 2

Conduct statistical analysis of the data using time series analysis and regression analysis.

E. Class participation

Although this is an online course, student should make effort to attend the live lecture if possible or listen to the recording participation. Students are required keep up with class materials and announcement made during live lectures or via emails, including changes to due dates or assignments. Participation will be

evaluated based on attendance (attend or listen to lectures), preparedness (read all articles and materials), and engagement (respectful participation in class reflections on subject matter and applications), and awareness (keep up with all updates and announcement).

Students will be asked to submit two discussions to the discussion board.

Additional notes:

- **At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to work with the writing center to have their writing assignments proofread before submission.**
- **All students are required to watch the videos on giving effective presentations before preparing the voice-over presentations.**

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

This course will be facilitated using D2L, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>. Click on the app tab after logging in. D2L can be found on the app page toward the bottom of the page.

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.

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course

of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version) and the previous major version of

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
			iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
 - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - Speakers or headphones.
 - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site <http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>

- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.
 Pop-ups are allowed.
 JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - Adobe Reader <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Adobe Flash Player (version 17 or later) <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
 - Adobe Shockwave Player <https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/>
 - Apple Quick Time <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/>
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the Live Chat or click on the words "click here" to submit an issue via 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)
<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/)

<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.

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your

event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Tentative Schedule

Week	Text	Details
Week 1 (8/27-8/31)	Syllabus; Chapters 1 and 2	Discussion 1 due
Week 2 (9/3-9/7)	Chapters 4 and 6	
Week 3 (9/10-9/14)	Chapters 8 and 13	Short Paper 1 due Group information due
Week 4 (9/17-9/21)	Chapters 9, 10, and 15	Short paper 2 topic due
Week 5 (9/24-9/28)	Chapter 16, 20	
Week 6 (10/1-10/5)	Case study	Case Study due
Week 7 (10/8-10/12)	Excel I	
Week 8 (10/15-10/19)	Excel II	
Week 9 (10/22-10/26)	Q&A on Short paper 2	
Week 10 (10/29-11/2)	Excel practice	Short Paper 2 due: presentation and written
Week 11 (11/5-11/9)	Chapters 21	Discussion 2 due
Week 12 (11/12-11/16)	Chapters 23 and Time Series	
Week 13 (11/19-11/23)	Chapter 24	
Week 14 (11/26-11/30)	Data Analysis Presentation	Data Analysis Presentation due
Week 15 (12/3-12/7)	Review Q&A	
Final Week (12/10-12/14)	Final Examination	Available 12/7-12/10

Note: 1. We will have live lectures in weeks highlighted in bold.

2. All assignments are due by the end of the weekend, Sunday at 11:59 PM, except for the final, which is due on Monday 12/10 at 11:59 PM.