

Department	International College of Liberal Arts		
Semester	Spring 2026	Year Offered (Odd/Even/Every Year)	Every Year
Course Number	BUSN/DATA271		
Course Title	Marketing Research and Analytics		
Prerequisites	BUSN235 Foundation of Marketing OR ECON260 Marketing		
Course Instructor	LI Jiamin	Year Available (Grade Level)	2
Subject Area	Global Business & Economics	Number of Credits	3
Class Style	Lecture	Language of instruction	English

(NOTE 1) Depending on the class size and the capacity of the facility, we may not be able to accommodate all students who wish to register for the course

Course Description	<p>"I need to know which day of the week has the best sales revenue." "How would consumers comment on our newly released product?" "We need to choose between two colors for our website theme update, but how do we know which one works better?"</p> <p>These are just some of the real-world questions that marketing research can help answer. This course introduces you to the essentials of marketing research and data analysis, focusing on practical skills you can apply immediately using tools like Excel. You' ll learn how to design simple surveys, collect and clean data, and interpret results to make smarter marketing decisions.</p> <p>We focus on understanding customer behavior through numbers, but without overwhelming math. By the end, you' ll confidently analyze marketing data and provide actionable insights that help businesses better understand their customers and improve strategies.</p> <p>Whether you want to work in marketing, business analytics, or simply make data-driven decisions, this course gives you a strong foundation to start your journey.</p>
Class plan based on course evaluation from previous academic year	N/A
Course related to the instructor's practical experience (Summary of experience)	This course is taught by an instructor with practical experience. I will apply my professional expertise in research and statistical analysis to the course, providing students with real-world context for how data analysis is contributing to real-world businesses.
Learning Goals	This course teaches you how to turn raw numbers into clear answers for business problems. You will learn to frame the right questions, design simple surveys, and use Excel to organize and visualize what customers are thinking. By looking for patterns and connections in data, you' ll find the "story" behind the numbers to predict trends and make smarter marketing choices. Ultimately, you will gain the confidence to handle data ethically and present your findings in a way that helps companies take real action.

iCLA Diploma Policy	DP1/DP2/DP3/DP4
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iCLA Diploma Policy

(DP1) To Value Knowledge – Having high oral and written communication skills to be able to both comprehend and transfer knowledge

(DP2) To Be Able to Adapt to a Changing World – Having critical, creative, problem-solving, intercultural skills, global and independent mindset to adopt to a changing world

(DP3) To Believe in Collaboration – Having a disposition to work effectively and inclusively in teams

(DP4) To Act from a Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility – Having good ethical and moral values to make positive impacts in the world

Active Learning Methods	Problem-Based Learning/Discussion, Debate/Group Work/Presentation/Workshop, Fieldwork				
More details/supplemental information on Active Learning Methods	To make sure you learn how to use data in the real world, this course uses a hands-on approach. We start with Problem-Based Learning, where you act as a “data detective” to solve common business puzzles, like figuring out the best day to launch a sale. Through Discussion and Debate, we look at different ways to ask customers questions and argue over which survey styles get the most honest answers. You will work in permanent Group Work teams, sitting together each week to act like a professional research firm and build a full research plan from scratch. This leads to Presentations where your team pitches its plan, explaining who you would survey and why your design will find the truth. Finally, every week features a Workshop called a “Tangible Task,” where you open Excel and use real customer numbers to create charts and find patterns, turning messy data into clear advice that a company can actually use.				
Use of ICT	Videos and interactive polls will be used during class.				
Contents of class preparation and review	To master the power of data, you will spend 5 hours each week on independent work. For Class Preparation (2 hours), you will review the upcoming slides and short tutorial clips to get comfortable with the week’s Excel tools, ensuring you are ready to jump straight into our “Tangible Tasks.” For Class Review (3 hours), you will complete an individual practice task using a provided dataset to solve a real-world business puzzle. By analyzing these numbers, you will practice turning raw data into clear, data-driven strategies that help a company grow.	Hours expected to be spent preparing for class (hours per week)	2 hours	Hours expected to be spent on class review (hours per week)	3 hours
Feedback Methods	To help you get confident with data, we’ ll use a few ways to check your progress as we go. During Class Discussions, I’ ll give you instant feedback on your research questions to make sure you’ re asking things that actually lead to useful answers. After our Excel-based Workshops, we’ ll look at your results together to talk about how to make your findings easy for anyone to understand and fix any common mistakes in your data setup. Finally, think of Office Hours as a “Data Consultation” and it’ s your time to get one-on-one advice on your research plan so your final project is solid and ready for the real world.				

Grading Criteria		
Grading Methods	Grading Weights	Grading Content
Mid-term Group Presentation	20%	Team presentation of a research plan, sampling, and survey design.
Final Exam	40%	Individual Excel analysis turning a provided dataset into strategy.
Active Participation	20%	Weekly “Data Detective” debates and hands-on Excel exercises.
Quizzes	20%	Checks on key data tools and research concepts.

Required Textbook(s)	Principles of Data Science. OpenStax. Freely accessible from https://openstax.org/details/books/principles-data-science
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Other Reading Materials/URL	You probably see market research surveys hitting your inbox all the time from brands like Netflix, Uber, or Airbnb. I really encourage you to actually open them up and look at the logic behind each question. Pay attention to how they phrase their choices and why they use certain scales because these real-world examples are the best way to see how global brands turn your feedback into a real business strategy.
Plagiarism Policy	In the world of data analytics, your reputation depends entirely on the honesty of your work. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited, whether that means "borrowing" a classmate's Excel formulas, submitting AI-generated insights as your own original analysis, or recycling projects from other classes. If you are caught using dishonest data or claiming someone else's research as your own, you will receive an automatic failing grade (F) for the assignment or even the entire course. We also report all violations to the University for formal disciplinary review.
Other Additional Notes (Outline crucial policies and info not mentioned above)	<p>Using AI Wisely: In the branding world, tools like ChatGPT are used daily for brainstorming and research, so we will do the same. Feel free to use AI for class tasks or pitches, but you must show your "workings." Always include your prompts as an appendix so we can discuss how to use these tools to sharpen a brand's voice rather than making it sound generic.</p> <p>Share Your Voice: Branding is a conversation, not a lecture. I want to hear about the cool brand stories or weird ads you see on your feed. Do not worry about "interrupting"—jump in anytime to ask a question or challenge an idea. Your curiosity is what helps us figure out what makes a brand actually work in the real world.</p>

(NOTE 2) Class schedule is subject to change

Class Schedule	
Class Number	Content
Class 1	The Data Mindset Moving from "gut feelings" to evidence-based marketing strategies.
Class 2	Excel Readiness Setting up your workspace and mastering basic data cleaning.
Class 3	Defining the Problem Learning how to ask questions that data can actually answer.
Class 4	Research Briefs Drafting a roadmap for a real-world business challenge.
Class 5	Secondary Data How to find and use information that already exists.
Class 6	Digital Hunting A workshop on using government and industry databases.

Class 7	Qualitative Insights Exploring the "Why" through focus groups and interviews.
Class 8	Text Mining A workshop on finding patterns in customer reviews and social posts.
Class 9	Survey Design 101 Understanding the logic and flow of professional questionnaires.
Class 10	The Question Lab Building your first digital survey using professional scales.
Class 11	Who Matters? Understanding populations, sampling, and avoiding bias.
Class 12	Sampling Simulation A workshop on calculating the right group size for a study.
Class 13	Observation & UX Tracking how people actually behave versus what they say.
Class 14	Eye-Tracking & Heatmaps Analyzing visual data from website interactions.
Class 15	Midterm Prep Refining your team's research plan and survey instrument.
Class 16	Midterm Pitches Teams present their full research design for feedback.

Class 17	Data Integrity Cleaning "messy" data and dealing with missing answers.
Class 18	The Scrub Workshop An Excel lab focused on formatting raw survey data.
Class 19	Descriptive Stats Using averages and spreads to describe a market.
Class 20	Charting Insights A workshop on building visuals that tell a clear story.
Class 21	Testing Hypotheses Using data to prove if a change really made a difference.
Class 22	The T-Test Lab Comparing two groups in Excel to find significant gaps.
Class 23	Correlations Finding the hidden links between different business variables.
Class 24	Relationship Mapping A workshop on identifying what drives customer loyalty.
Class 25	Regression Analysis Predicting future sales based on current marketing spend.
Class 26	Forecasting Lab Using Excel to build a simple predictive sales model.

Class 27	Data Storytelling How to present complex numbers to a non-technical boss.
Class 28	Report Workshop Finalizing the structure and logic of your individual report.
Class 29	The Ethics of AI Discussing the future of data and machine learning in marketing.
Class 30	Final Review A "Data Consultation" session to polish your final project.