

COMM 3163

Industry Research Methods

Summer 2019

Instructor: George Pearson

Course Description

Overview of major empirical methods in communication industry research.

This course is designed to get you familiar with and comfortable using research methods often seen in communication industry research. We will cover a range of methods including surveys, focus groups, experiments, and content analyses. We will also explore key research tools such as Google Analytics which are prevalent in industry research.

Classroom:

M/Tu/W/Th – 9:50-11:25
Derby Hall 3176

Office Hours

Tue/Wed – 11:45 – 1:45
Journalism 339G

Contact George

Pearson.325@osu.edu
Or mail through Carmen



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CLASS DESIGN

My aim is to teach much of this class as a 'flipped classroom' design.

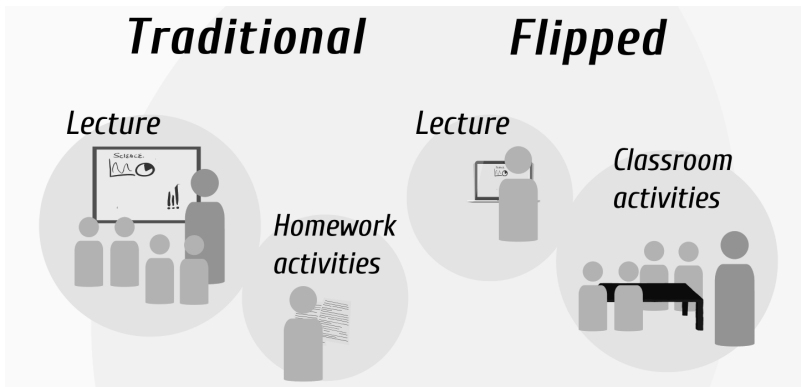
For those unfamiliar with what a flipped classroom is, it reverses the traditional learning environment. Instructional content, such as lectures, will be generally done outside of the classroom. There will be short lecture videos accompanying each class for you to consume.

This frees up time in class to spend on activities and assignments. Essentially, the things that would normally be

done as homework, are done inside the class instead.

I believe doing practical work in class and consuming lecture content out of the class helps students engage with the content and gain more from it.

However, it does mean that you need to watch the lecture videos and do the readings ahead of class. If you don't, you may struggle to keep up with the work and it will very likely hurt your participation score since you will struggle to be involved in conversations.



CLASS COMMUNICATION

I would like to encourage collaboration. Therefore I encourage students to use Carmen as much as possible for communication.

I will have discussion topics on Carmen where you can ask questions; whether that's clarification on class content or checking when an assignment is due. Please use these for non private matters. This is because (a) another student may provide an answer quicker than I can and (b) there is a good chance someone else may have the same question.

If you send me an email that is more appropriate for the discussion boards I will likely respond telling you to post it

there instead. Obviously message me directly for personal/private issues.

I am online most of the time, so usually respond quickly. However, out of work hours I may not respond immediately, so be sure not to leave messages to the last minute.

When communicating with each other on and offline please ensure you are courteous and respectful to others.

While there is no need to be overly formal during class discussions, you should still aim to write using good grammar, spelling etc. Be sure to maintain a supporting learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably.

READINGS & COURSE MATERIALS

Each week there will be a number of materials to study before the class. This is a four-credit class spread across just eight weeks, so therefore you can expect to have a fair amount of material to cover before each class.

For each class there will be readings and videos available on Carmen.

There is no required text for this class, however if you feel additional reading will help you with the class, much of the course materials will be based around content from:

Stacks, D. W. (2016). *Primer of public relations research*. Guilford Publications. ISBN: 1-57230-726-9

You can find the book at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or order check out a copy from OSU library.

ATTENDANCE & GRADING POLICY

You are expected to attend every, or nearly, every lesson of this class. Missing classes will lead to you losing points for participation, as well as missing in-class assignments.

However, I do also understand that University is tough, and therefore students from time to time will need to miss lessons. If you are going to miss a class you must email me BEFORE the class, or you will be counted as absent.

I will judge all absences on a case-by-case basis, and take into account: the validity of the excuse; your previous number of absences; your standing in the course; and your manner.

For assignments, all late assignments are graded as 0. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration: the validity of the excuse; the size of the assignment due; the time till the deadline; your standing in the class; and your manner.

However, all extensions must be arranged BEFORE the deadline. No retroactive extensions will be granted. You cannot make-up small in-class assignments.

I generally aim to be flexible with students. I understand that various issues can get in the way of completing an assignment from illness, to family issues, or even just workload from jobs, internships etc. If you are struggling to complete an assignment on time I would much rather you spoke to me rather than not completing the assignment (the worst I can do say is no).

All grades granted are final. I do not review grades on appeal. The only circumstance where I will review a grade given is for objective error (for instance if I gave you a 0 for not completing the assignment when in fact you had). I will however, provide feedback on all work you submit.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The Writing Center

If you need further help with your writing I strongly advise you to contact the writing center. The Writing Center offers free help with writing at any stage of the writing process. Appointments are available in-person at 4120 Smith Lab, as well as for online sessions. They also offer walk-in hours.

You do not have to bring in a piece of writing in order to schedule a writing center appointment.

You can find out more at <https://cstw.osu.edu/writing-center>.

Student Advocacy

If you have any external issues that may have a long-term affect on your ability to participate fully in this class or others, I advise students to contact Student Advocacy.

The Student Advocacy Center is committed to helping students navigate Ohio State's structure and to resolving issues that they encounter at the university. Their purpose is to empower students to overcome obstacles to their growth both inside and outside the classroom

You can find out more at <http://advocacy.osu.edu/>

BEING PROFESSIONAL

I am a big believer that college is intended to prepare you for the real world, and that for many your undergraduate career is like your first job.

To that end, I will treat you professionally, and need you to do the same. As of such, I will expect you to behave in a professional manner throughout the class. Consequently:

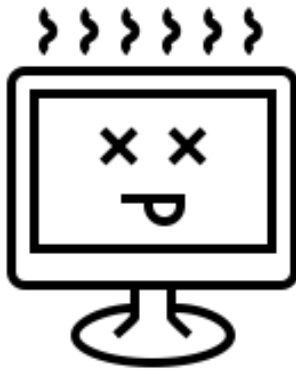
- Factual, and obvious grammar and spelling mistakes stand out to employers. Therefore, they are weighted heavily in this class.
- Be sure to come to to class on time and ready to work on the material for the day. This includes going over the lecture and reading materials in advance.
- You are missed when you are absent. Given the heavy focus on group work in this class, missing class has a significant impact on others in the class. If you are going to miss class I expect you to tell me at least two hours BEFORE class.
- Do not leave or pack up your things early unless you've spoken to me beforehand. It's rude and disruptive.
- Dress sensibly. I aim to have a number of guest speakers in this class and you never know when a potential employer might show up. I really don't want to have to discuss appropriate clothing with you but I will if needs be.
- Treat everyone in the class with respect and keep discussions civil.

IT PROBLEMS?

If you are experiencing problems with any of University IT (such as problems with email, passwords, Carmen etc.) you should contact the OSU IT Support Desk on

**614-688-HELP
(4357).**

Standard support hours are available at <https://ocio.osu.edu/help/hours>, and support for urgent issues is available 24x7.



AVOID TECHNOLOGY DISASTERS

This course, like the communication industry as a whole, relies heavily on access to computers, specific software, and the Internet.

At some point during the semester you will likely have a problem with technology. Your laptop will crash; your iPad battery will die; a recording you make will disappear; you will accidentally delete a file; the wireless will go down at a crucial time.

These, however, are inevitabilities of life, not emergencies. Technology problems are not excuses for unfinished or late work. Bad things may

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

While technology has been shown to hinder learning in many circumstances, technology is a major part of the communication industry.

Therefore, rather than prohibiting technology, you are actively encouraged to bring and use your laptop to use for class work. In fact, you will

need a computer to complete most of the assignments in this course.

However, you are expected to use your computer and smartphone responsibly, and anyone in class caught using technology for non-class purposes can expect to be called out and lose marks for participation.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students are responsible for ensuring they have the technology necessary to complete the course. If you are experiencing any technical difficulties with University software and websites (e.g. Carmen, Buckeyemail etc.) you should contact the IT Service Desk as soon as possible. If you are having problems with external services, such as the Google Analytics training, you should contact me as soon as possible.

If you experience any problems with any OSU IT services, you should also check the system status page on the OCIO website (<https://os-uitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/>

system_status) which logs any widespread existing problems with OSU IT services.

Technical problems will not generally be considered a valid excuse for non-participation or missing a deadline, unless there is an acknowledged problem with the IT systems by the OCIO that would reasonably affect people's ability to complete the work, or if you have raised an ongoing ticket with IT Services (I will expect proof of this ticket, and I may contact IT services to ensure the situation is ongoing).

happen, but you can protect yourself by doing the following:

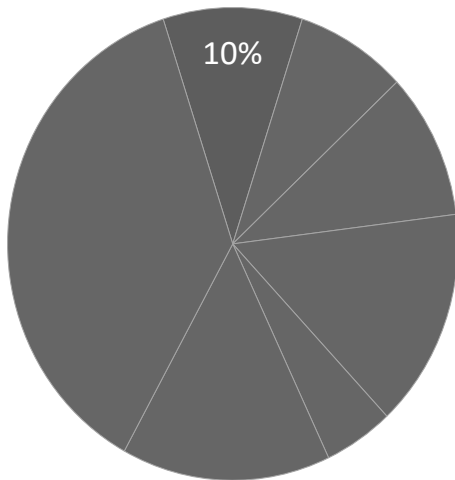
- Plan ahead: A deadline is the last minute to turn in material. You can start - and finish - early. Particularly if challenging resources are required, or you know it will be time consuming to finish this project you should avoid leaving things too late.
- Save work early and often: Think how much work you do in 10 minutes. I recommend autosaving every 2 minutes.
- Make regular backups of files in a different location: Between Box,

Google Drive, Dropbox and others, you have ample places to store and back up your materials. Use them. (Also, Box has unlimited free storage for OSU students, and is a great resource - it has saved me from technology disasters in the past. You can access Box at box.osu.edu.)

- Save drafts: When editing, set aside originals and work with a copy.
- Practice safe computing: On your personal computer, install and use software to control viruses and malware

ASSIGNMENTS

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION



(100 points)

The first rule of any job is to turn up. Therefore you are expected to attend every, or nearly every, lesson this semester (more information on page 3). However, you are also expected to actively take part in the class while you are there by contributing to class discussion.

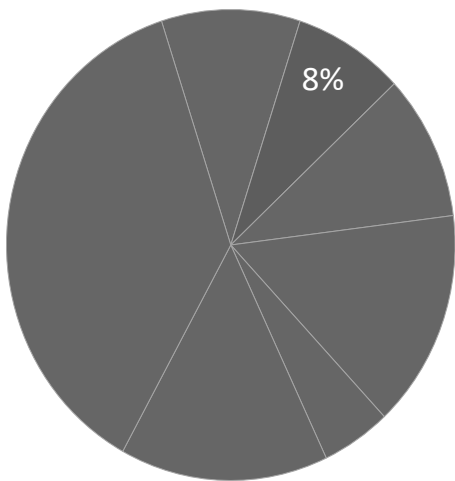
Participation can come in many forms: taking part in class discussion, sharing your work with the class, offering

others feedback, asking questions, or even attending office hours.

Conversely, clearly being on social media or texting a friend during class will hurt your participation score.

You will receive feedback on your attendance and participation grade at three points during the semester. Approximately after week 3, week 6, and at the end of the summer semester.

SCENARIO CHALLENGES



(80 points)

Regularly in class I will give you various scenario challenges. These will involve quickly devising either a research plan, designing a survey, or some other scenario.

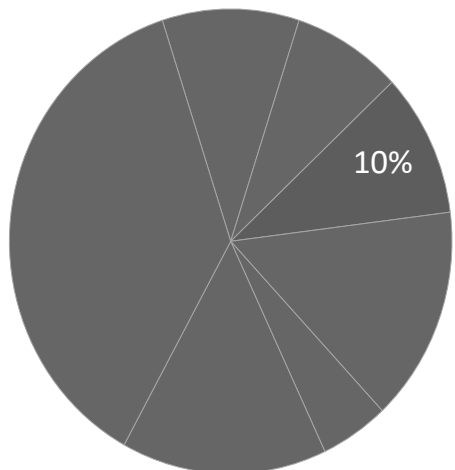
However they are designed to be done in a very limited time span, meaning you will have to act and come to decisions quickly.

These will be done in groups, and you will be in the same team for the whole

semester. You will be graded on the work you submit, however I intend to grade these mostly on effort, so expect to get full or close to full marks if you attend every one.

We will also be competing between teams to have the best score over the semester. After each scenario you will vote for your favorite one by another team, and they will earn points accordingly.

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS



(10 points)

There will be ten small individual assignments over the course of the semester. These will be completed both in-class and in your own time, depending on the assignment.

These will be individual assignments you complete by yourself. They will usually be designed to make you think and reflect on the topics we have covered in class.

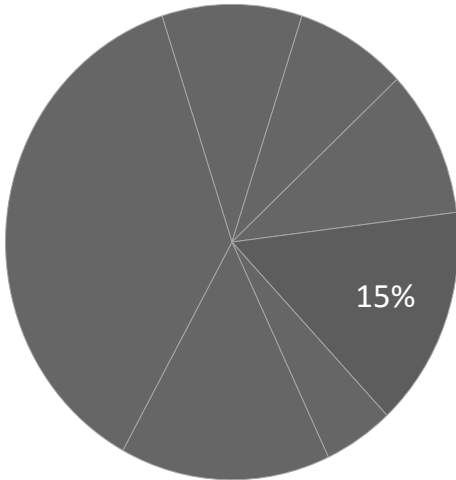
These will generally not be very long (none are more than a few hundred words).

They will be spread out over the course of the eight weeks, with the first due in the first class, and the final due the final class of the semester.

Each assignment is worth 10 points.

ASSIGNMENTS

RESEARCH DESIGN ASSIGNMENTS



(150 points)

Working in groups you will design three studies:

- one content analysis project
- one survey
- and one focus group.

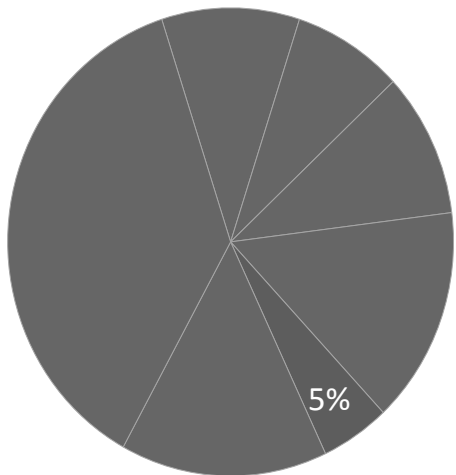
For each one you will be given a scenario and asked to devise a convincing research design for a fictional client. You won't be actually running the research, but you are expected to come up with a complete design.

For instance, for the survey project you will make decisions as to how you would conduct the survey as well as writing the complete survey instrument.

The groups will be randomly assigned for each project so you will work with different people on each one.

Each assignment is worth 50 points.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS CERTIFICATE



(50 points)

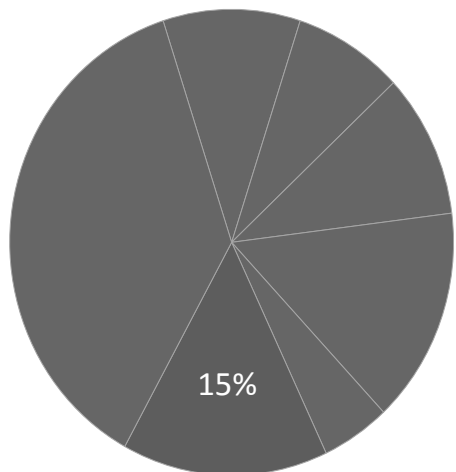
Google Analytics is rapidly becoming a key tool in media research. Google Analytics allows website owners to accurately track users to their mnewebsite.

Google offer a free online course called the 'Google Analytics Individual Qualification'. You will need a Google Account to start the course, however once you have done that you can go to the course here: <https://academy.exceedlms.com/student/path/2938#>

There are two modules available. There is then an assessment exam with a 90 minute time limit.

You will get 25 points for each of the two modules. You can complete the assessment exam for an additional 10 points of extra credit. You will be given a certificate from Google which you can add to your resume. Simply upload the certificate you receive to earn the credit.

MIDTERM



(150 points)

There will be one midterm for the course, completed in one class in week seven.

The midterm will be completely open book, and you can use a computer or other technology. However you will have just the one class period to complete it.

The midterm will come in two parts. The first will ask you a few short questions to reflect on the course. There

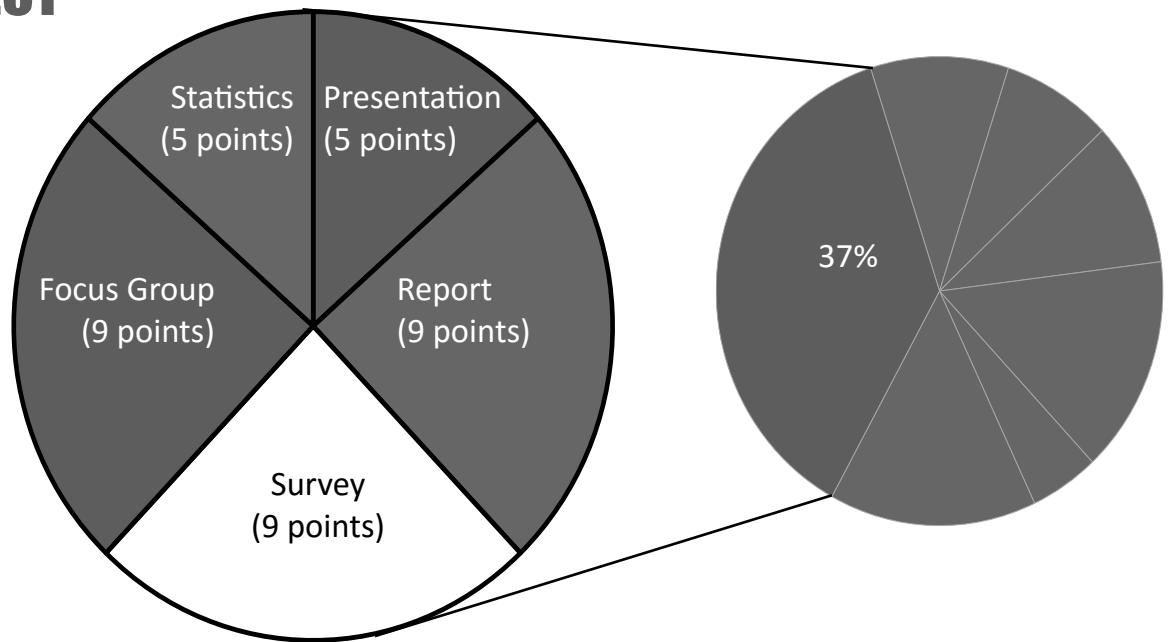
will be three questiones, each worth 25 points.

The second will give you a research scenario and ask you to quickly devise a survey in response. This section will be worth another eighty points.

(This actually totals 155, so there are 5 makeup points available on the exam).

You will have the whole class period on the day to complete the midterm.

FINAL PROJECT



The final project is designed to bring together everything you learned in the course and to allow you to design, implement, and report on your own research.

For this class we will be working with Buckeye Careers from the Office of Student Life. They will come to class and during a Q&A set up a goals for what they would like from market research.

From here you will conduct research on their work, including a literature

review of the topics, and then designing a focus group and a short survey. You will then recruit people (by sending out to your friends and contacts) to participate in both pieces of research. I am hopeful a group of four people should be able to get approximately 100 people to participate.

You will then analyze the data, before creating a report that summarizes your findings.

You will present the research to staff from Buckeye Careers, and your



reports will be given to the department to help guide their work in the future.

You will complete the assignments in groups of three to five. You will be able to decide who you want to work with on the final project midway through the course.

We will begin working on the final project midway through week five, so you will have four weeks to complete the project.

The project is large and daunting, but it will allow you to actually conduct real research and get a feel for how market research is conducted.

Your group will submit a final research report; a report summarizing your decisions and work processes; a group member evaluation form; and give a presentation in class about your research. More information on the final project is available on Carmen.

OSU.EDU Help BuckeyeLink Map Find People Webmail Search Ohio State

Buckeye CAREERS

Home Students Faculty/Staff Employers Alumni Parents

STUDENTS

- Handshake
- Buckeye Internships
- Buckeye OnPACE
- Learn More about Myself
- Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Job Seeker
- Ohio State University Career and Internship Fair
- Career Fairs

CAREER OFFICE SEARCH

Use the following search engine to identify the career services office or professional that most closely addresses your career management needs. (Note: all graduate and professional programs begin with "Grad.")

Buckeye INTERNSHIPS Buckeye ONPACE handshake

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Your written assignments, should be your own original work. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in - but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.

In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

ACCESSIBILITY

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know via email immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu ; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu ; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

SOCIAL MEDIA

If you want to connect professionally on social media, you are more than welcome. I am due to leave OSU sometime in the near future, so feel free to use these to get hold of me for professional references or advice in the future.

DIVERSITY

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

TITLE IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu



twitter.com/gdhpearson



[linkedin.com/in/gdhpearson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/gdhpearson)

LESSON-BY-LESSON CONTENT

Below is a guide to the content we will cover in each lesson this semester. This is however, meant as a guide, and some details may change.

	Date	Major Topic	Lesson Topic	Assignments*
1	3-Jun	NO CLASS		
	4-Jun	Introduction to Research	Introduction & Why Conduct Research?	Individual Assignment 1
	5-Jun		Types of Research	
	6-Jun		Literature Searches	
2	10-Jun		Planning Research Projects	Individual Assignment 2 [#]
	11-Jun		Population and Sampling	
	12-Jun	Analyzing Existing Content	Content Analysis	Individual Assignment 3
	13-Jun		Coding Content Analyses	
3	17-Jun		Market Research Tools	
	18-Jun	Surveys & Experiments	Survey Design	Research Design 1
	19-Jun		Question Design & Measurement Error	
	20-Jun		Total Survey Error	
4	24-Jun		Experiments	
	25-Jun	Qualitative Analyses	Qualitative Analyses	Research Design 2
	26-Jun		Focus Groups	Individual Assignment 4
	27-Jun		Focus Groups	
5	1-Jul		Focus Groups	
	2-Jul		Final Project Setup	
	3-Jul		Guided Interviews	
	4-Jul	NO CLASS - INDEPENDENCE DAY		
6	8-Jul	Data Analysis	Planning Data Analysis	Individual Assignment 5
	9-Jul		Categorical Data Analysis	Research Design 3
	10-Jul		Continuous Data Analysis	Individual Assignment 6
	11-Jul	Midterm	Midterm Review & Final Project Work	
7	15-Jul		Midterm	Midterm
	16-Jul	Issues in Research	Challenges of Digital Technologies	
	17-Jul		Ethical Concerns	Individual Assignment 7&8
	18-Jul		Final Project Work	
8	22-Jul		Writing & Presenting Research	Individual Assignment 9
	23-Jul	Final Project	Final Project Work	
	24-Jul		Group Presentations	
	25-Jul		Class Summary	Individual Assignment 10 [#]
9	Tuesday 30-Jul			Final Project Due

*all assignments are due at 5pm that day unless marked with #, in which case instructions are given on Carmen.

Tentative Nature of the Syllabus

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. Events that transpire over the semester may require me to modify the syllabus. In the event I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification in class. However, it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications.