
Marketing Research

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Course Description

“Methods of Marketing Research” is a second-term course in the MSc in Management at the Barcelona School of Management. It serves as a core course for students specializing in Marketing and Business Analytics. The course, which complements the course on Marketing Analytics, aims to give students a practical introduction to conducting a marketing research study. The course includes several useful statistical methods that are not regularly taught in quantitative method courses but are commonly used in the analysis of marketing and social science data, especially survey data. These methods have a common feature in that their primary results are graphical displays of the data, permitting a visual interpretation of data in an intuitive and synthetic way. The course also includes discussion of study design, questionnaire design and question types in the collection of primary research data.

Objectives

By the end of the course students will

- be aware of different study designs for data collection in marketing research, including principles of sampling,
- have a much broader set of analytical tools,
- know how to choose methods appropriate to the type of data being studied,
- be familiar with software tools to analyse marketing data,
- be more aware of the visualization possibilities to communicate marketing research results,
- know how to interpret the results of analyses of complex data,
- have a quantitative edge over competitors.

Methods covered include clustering and segmentation of medium-sized (in the tens and hundreds of samples) to large (in the thousands) data sets, multidimensional scaling, network analysis, simple and multiple correspondence analysis, methods of nonparametric regression, classification and regression trees and the analytic hierarchical process. Students will also be introduced to the methodological challenges in the area of so-called "big data".

Methodology

The course is highly practically oriented, with many examples and case studies presented using marketing and survey data. Various software options are considered, both package software and powerful programming languages such as R. Two of the classes will be devoted exclusively to hands-on use of statistical software and assistance with individual course projects. Depending on the class enrolment, a real-life marketing research exercise might be undertaken by the class, to collect primary data for analysis for the course projects.

Evaluation criteria

The course is evaluated principally (with a weight of 70%) by a short project undertaken individually by each student in the latter part of the course. Under the supervision of the course leader, a data set of interest is selected by each student, to be analysed using methods learnt in the course. The project's results are written up in a report of about 15 pages, consisting of 1. Introduction, 2. Data description, 3. Methods, 4. Results and interpretation, and 5. Discussion and conclusions. The remaining 30% of the grade is made up of home assignments (20%) and class attendance & participation (10%).

Students are required to attend 80% of classes. Failing to do so without justified reason will imply a Zero grade in the participation/attendance evaluation item and may lead to suspension from the program

As with all courses taught at the UPF BSM, students who fail the course during regular evaluation will be allowed ONE "retake" of the evaluation. Students that pass a retake should get a **5 by default as a final grade for the course**. If the course is again failed after the retake, students will have to register again for the course the following year.

In case of a justified non-presentation of your project by the agreed time, the student must inform the course leader and the director(s) of the program so that they study the possibility of rescheduling the project delivery. In the meantime, the student will get an "incomplete" grade, which will be replaced by the actual grade after the final evaluation is made. The "incomplete" grade will not be reflected on the student's Academic Transcript.

Plagiarism is to use another's work and to present it as one's own without acknowledging the sources in the correct way. All essays, reports or projects handed in by a student must be original work completed by the student. By enrolling at any UPF BSM Master of Science and signing the "Honour Code," students acknowledge that they understand the schools' policy on plagiarism and certify that all course assignments will be their own work, except where indicated by correct referencing. Failing to do so may result in automatic expulsion from the program."

Calendar and Contents

Notice that this course is split into two periods: there are five classes in the first two weeks, followed by a three-week break, and the remaining 15 classes in the last five weeks of the term. Students will be given some reading and exercises to complete in the break, and can also start to look for data for their projects. The course leader will be available online for any queries or consultations during this break. Note that the order of the following contents of the classes might change depending on the decision to embark on the marketing research exercise or not, as mentioned in Methodology at the end of the previous page.

- CLASS 1 (WED, 9 Jan. 2019): Introduction. Objectives in marketing research. Practical exercise on brand comparison. Segmentation and perceptual maps.
- CLASSES 2&3 (THU, 10 Jan.): Fundamental concept of similarity and distance between customers and between products. Clustering and multidimensional scaling. Visualization of distances.
- ASSIGNMENT 1: *You analyse and visualize your own "brand" comparisons*
- CLASS 4 (WED, 16 Jan.): Ratings of brands. Scales of measurement. Data standardization. Measures of distance.
- CLASS 5 (THU, 17 Jan.): Data collection methods in marketing research.
- ASSIGNMENT 2: *You analyse and visualize your own "brand" ratings*

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THREE-WEEK BREAK IN CLASSES: extra reading and exercises in brand and product evaluations and comparison; class exercise in comparison of mobile phones

CLASS 6 (WED, 13 Feb.): Principal components and factor analysis

CLASSES 7&8 (THU, 14 Feb.): Dimensions of perception, ideal points. Biplots and regression

ASSIGNMENT 3: *You biplot your own "brand" ratings, and interpret the results.*

CLASS 9 (WED, 20 Feb.): An interlude: Visualization and presentation of data. Some software possibilities.

CLASSES 10&11 (THU, 21 Feb.): Correspondence analysis: an example from the tourism industry. Multiple correspondence analysis: analysing survey data.

ASSIGNMENT 4: *You analyse and visualize a frequency table of your choice (several will be provided) using (for example) correspondence analysis*

CLASS 12 (WED, 27 Feb.): Classification and regression trees as an intuitive and attractive alternative to classical regression modelling.

CLASSES 13&14 (THU, 28 Feb.): Linear models for all data types. Extensions to nonlinear and additive models. Multivariate models in marketing and advertising. Class computing session.

ASSIGNMENT 5: *You finalize your choice of data set for your course project*

CLASS 15 (WED, 6 Mar.): Large data sets: segmentation

CLASSES 16&17 (THU, 7 Mar.): Class computing and assistance with projects.

ASSIGNMENT 6: *You carry on working with your project*

CLASS 18 (WED, 13 Mar.): Prediction. Random forests. Cross-validation.

CLASSES 19&20 (THU, 14 Mar.): More "Big Data" issues. Recommender systems. Class computing session and assistance with projects.

ASSIGNMENT 7: *You carry on working with your project*

PROJECT SUBMISSION approximately 18 Mar. (to be negotiated with the class)