Background and Class Purpose: Media research is changing rapidly. Traditional media – TV, newspapers, magazines – has been measured primarily by sampling behavior and attitudes. Digital media, being able to measure everyone’s actual behavior, has changed this measurement paradigm. This as well as the need to measure increasing media platforms and integrate measurement is creating a research revolution. The class is designed to provide an overview understanding of: how to solve a media research problem, an overview of media measurement, and opinion and attitude formation. Knowledge of statistics is not necessary.

Class Books
- Not required but recommended.

Class Reading Assignments
- Readings will be assigned each week dealing with media and research related issues. They are listed in this syllabus and will be available on the class blackboard. Note: They are subject to change and you will be notified in advance.

Class Exercises
- In some classes research exercises will be conducted in class. They are noted in the syllabus. Materials will be supplied.

Other
- Media research topics of interest in the news will be circulated for discussion in class. Students are encouraged to do the same.
- Other appropriate research related material, e.g. research terms, questionnaire examples, etc. will be emailed.

Graded Evaluation
- Project: A semester long media research project conducted by student teams
- Mid-term paper
- Final project or paper
- Class participation
Class Schedule (tentative)

Introduction

1. Opinions, embedded respondents and the long tail of media research

2. Embedded media consumers redefine research

Class Reading Assignments


TRUSTe Foundation, “2008 Study: Consumer Attitudes About Behavioral Targeting”

Class Exercise
Research teams will be selected for the research project and TV programs chosen.

Measuring Opinions

3. What's the problem? Answers are easy, questions are hard. Part I.

Class Reading Assignment:
Interview: James Surowieki (author, Wisdom of the Crowds). “Just the sum of us: What crowds can and cannot do?”

Class Exercise
Two media research case studies will be looked at as we try to determine what the research question is. They will be discussed in class.
4. What’s the problem? Answers are easy, questions are hard. Part II

**Class Reading Assignment**


**Class Exercise**
One issue will be explored to explore how different ways of framing a question produces different results.

Each Research Project Team will bring a draft of the moderators guide for qualitative research to be used in class discussion.

5. Research techniques: From questionnaires to presenting data

**Class Reading Assignment**

Sampling article: TBD

**Class Exercise**
Brand X Advertising: Test/control questionnaire discussion
6. Research techniques: From questionnaires to presenting data

Class Reading Assignment


“A Typology of Information and Communication Technology Users,” *Pew Internet and American Life Project*


Segmentation article: TBD

Class Exercise
Research teams will present results from their qualitative research.

7. Research techniques and a look at types of academic media research

Class Reading Assignment


Class Exercise
The class will develop a coding sheet for two musical songs.
Measuring Media Behavior

8. Media Metrics: terms, procedures and trends…the internet vs. tradition.

Class Exercise:
Teams will be asked to bring a draft of their questionnaire for discussion.

Class Reading Assignment:


9. From TV ratings to clickstreams to reality mining: measuring where you go, what you say and what you do

Class Reading Assignment

FTC Reports on Public Hearings: “Behavioral Tracking: Moving Toward Regulation”

Judah Phillips, Media Metrics: “Why don’t the numbers match.” *Media Post* 2008

10. Digital measurement: Coping with data

Class Reading Assignment
Video of panel discussion on measurement issues, International Conference on Online Measurement

11. Digital measurement: Coping with media fragmentation

**Class Reading Assignment**

[http://reality.media.mit.edu/](http://reality.media.mit.edu/) Students are expected to read all the material on the website.


12. Summing up: the long tail of media research and a look back at the history of opinion research.

**Class Reading Assignment**


13. Presentation of Class Project: Research Findings

**Class exercise**
Teams will make an in class presentation of the findings from their research.

14. Presentation of Class Project: Research Findings

**Class exercise**
Teams will make an in class presentation of the findings from their research.
Class Project

Students will be divided into teams. The number and size will be determined by class size. Each team will select a current, scripted TV show to research: to define the problem of a show and to recommend a solution using the comments of a selected sample of respondents. The study project will include the following sequential steps (see below). Some will be presented in class during the course of the class. Others will be presented in a final presentation at the end of class. The purpose is to give students hands on familiarity with conducting research on a media problem.

1. Defining a problem and establishing a hypothesis.

   Conduct secondary research on a program – critic reviews, blogs, fan sites, and ratings data. Identify what the problem is and what your research objective and hypotheses is.

2. Qualitative research: Develop a moderators guide

   Write an outline for questions that you want to explore with respondents to determine whether or not the problem (your hypothesis) is correct.

3. Choosing a sample

   Select the type of respondents needed in the qualitative research and explain why.

4. Conducting qualitative research

   Conduct the qualitative research using the moderators guide. Write an analysis of the results.

5. Quantitative research: develop a questionnaire

   Based on what you learned in the focus groups write a short questionnaire to quantitatively address the questions raised in the groups and the reformulated problem (if there is one).

6. Administer the Questionnaire
Administer the questionnaire to a sample of respondents.

7. Analyze the findings.

8. Prepare a presentation and present the findings with recommendations

**Mid-Term Analysis Paper**

“What do 3-screens mean for video usage and measurement?”

The growth of three screens for video content – TV, internet, and cell phone - may be transforming distribution and viewing of video content. Discuss the following: a) what does research, and video experiments, tell us about possible shifts in viewing, b) how these video platforms might alter content distribution, and, c) the role measurement plays in the success of the platforms and the issues measurement faces.

**Paper Specifics:**

1. 5-page **maximum** (not counting bibliography page). You will not be penalized for brevity and succinct and compelling writing.

2. Double space, 12-pt. type.

3. Footnotes: Use guidelines as found in Chicago Manual of Style or other style manuals you might be familiar with.

**Grading**
The analysis paper will be graded on the following: a) covering the points in the assignment, b) organization, c) clarity of writing/presenting, d) grammar, d) originality of thinking.

1. Covering points in the assignment 40%
2. Organization of thoughts, logic --References to literature, reading 20
3. Clarity of writing and analysis 10
4. Grammar 10
5. Conclusion: How well you pull it all together 20
Final Paper
“What’s Engagement?”

Topic: In media research today a hotly debated topic is “engagement.” Every media is making a case to advertisers what engagement means for their media.

Your paper should discuss the following: a) how media industry research organizations are trying to define it, b) how it’s being defined in specific media – magazines, television and social media, c) your perspective on what media engagement means overall and for individual media, and what industry professionals might learn from academic research.

Paper Specifics:

1. 5-page maximum (not counting bibliography page). You will not be penalized for brevity and succinct and compelling writing.

2. Double space, 12-pt. type.

3. Footnotes: Use guidelines as found in Chicago Manual of Style or other style manuals you might be familiar with.

Grading
The paper/presentation will be graded on the following: a) covering the points in the assignment, b) organization, c) clarity of writing/presenting, d) grammar, d) originality of thinking.

1. Covering points in the assignment 40%
2. Organization of thoughts, logic
   --References to literature, reading 20
3. Clarity of writing/presentation 10
4. Grammar 10
5. Conclusion: How well you pull it all together 20
Class Grading/Administration

Grades will be a combination of the following elements. Each element will be scored on a 100 point basis. Obviously, those points will be weighted to reflect their relative share of the overall calculation of a final grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mid-Term Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Class Research Project</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Final Exam/Paper</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the following administrative guidelines:

1. All students are expected to attend Project presentations. Students who do not attend will receive no points for Class Participation.

2. If a student wants to discuss a class matter, a meeting can be set. It will take place in the Culture and Communication offices. The best meeting time is prior to this class.

3. The Research Analysis, Paper and Project will be handed back in class. If students want (or need it) returned by mail, they must submit a self-addressed stamped envelope. The same holds true for receipt of the Final Exam – a self-addressed, stamped envelope must be given to me.

4. All student works (Papers, Analysis, Projects, Exams) will be kept for only 30 days after the Final Exam is taken.