

Commerce 3MA3  
MARKETING RESEARCH  
Winter 2024 Course Outline

Marketing Area  
DeGroote School of Business  
McMaster University

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### COURSE OBJECTIVE

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Today's marketing environment presents managers with increasingly complex problems and opportunities and the ongoing need for current, accurate, pertinent information about their customers, competitors and the markets in which they operate. The purpose of this course is to provide a fundamental understanding of marketing research methods employed by well-managed firms. The course is aimed at the manager who is the ultimate user of the research and the one responsible for determining the scope and direction of research activities. The key learning objectives of the course are to help you develop skills (a) to become better supervisors and users of marketing research and (b) to conduct marketing research yourself. An overall goal is to develop an appreciation for the potential contributions and limitations of marketing research in making business decisions. This course is relevant to managers in marketing as well as nonmarketing fields (e.g., consulting, HR, buy and sell-side analysis, investment banking).

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### INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Section C03:** Monday 2:30 PM – 5:20 PM

**Instructor: Anomitra Bhattacharya**

Email: [bhatta1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:bhatta1@mcmaster.ca)

Office Hours: After class and by appointment physically or virtually through Zoom (**Please make an appointment for any meeting in advance, otherwise I will not be in the meeting**)

Zoom Link for virtual meeting:

<https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/97146767165?pwd=ai9QVGVmKzJlYlBIZjZPUHBLZ0pGQT09>

**Student TA: Shayan Abbasi**

Email: [abbass44@mcmaster.ca](mailto:abbass44@mcmaster.ca)

Office Hours: By appointment physically or virtually through Zoom (**Please make an appointment in advance, otherwise the TA will not be in the meeting**),

Zoom Link (every Friday 1:30-2:30 PM):

<https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/97163409619>

**Try to resolve your queries by email first. If that does not resolve the issues, office hours can be scheduled.**

**Course Website:** Avenue to Learn (<https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>). Please check the coursewebsite daily for announcements and content.

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## COURSE ELEMENTS

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Credit Value: 3	Avenue: Yes Ethics: Yes	Participation: Yes	Evidence-based: Yes
Leadership: Yes IT skills: Yes Global view: Yes	Yes Numeracy: Yes Written skills: Yes	Innovation: Yes Group work: Yes Oral skills: Yes	Experiential: Yes Final Exam: Yes Guest speaker(s): No

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The course is largely structured to follow the steps in the marketing research process. We first address the more qualitative and conceptual aspects of marketing research. Topics include problem definition, research design, sampling, data collection methods, questionnaire design, and measurement issues. We then focus on causal research and methods of data analysis, with an emphasis on hands-on data analyses and the interpretation and use of these data analyses.

The class sessions will only roughly parallel the text and readings. Rather than merely rehashing concepts discussed in the text, class sessions will be devoted to probing, extending, and applying the text material. Therefore, you must complete the assigned readings and think about them prior to the class session. We will use cases, videos, problems and discussion exercises to illustrate how different marketing research methods have been applied to solve real-world problems. The emphasis will be on the appropriateness and use of the research methodologies and techniques as well as on the larger strategic issues. Additional material (in the form of magazine and newspaper articles of current events) may also be distributed to you through links to websites. This will help you integrate concepts covered in class with real world events.

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Upon completion of this course, you will have had the opportunity and training to:

1. understand the needs of marketing managers for information;
2. develop specific marketing questions that can be addressed through research;
3. determine the specific objectives of the marketing research project;
4. select the appropriate research design to address the research problem and best achieve the objectives;
5. understand and critique various sources of secondary and internal data and be able to assess their quality and usefulness to management;
6. understand the stages of the marketing research process;

7. understand when NOT to conduct primary research;
  8. learn how to design effective questions and questionnaires, using different (and appropriate) measurement scales;
  9. determine how best to analyze survey data;
  10. learn how to turn statistical findings into marketing information that gets attention and assists the manager in making decisions;
  11. learn when and how to conduct causal research;
  12. learn how to write reports and present findings and recommendations that convey marketing information simply and effectively and encourage marketing action;
  13. be aware of and understand ethical issues related to marketing research; and
  14. manage a reasonably complicated research project, work in a team, and make effective oral and written presentations.
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## COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

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### **Required:**

- **Textbook (available at Campus Store, one copy kept at Mills Library for students' use)**
    - *Marketing Research Essentials* by Carl McDaniel, Jr., Roger Gates, Subramanian Sivaramakrishnan and Kelley Main (2nd Canadian Edition). Available as:
      - Paperback (ISBN: 978-1-118-04317-2)
      - Loose leaf (ISBN: 978-1-118-82300-2)
      - An E-text (ISBN: 978-1-118-82336-1)
  - **Additional Materials:**
    - Handouts, problem sets, discussion exercises and other readings distributed in class and/or the course website.
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## EVALUATION

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Learning in this course results from attending lectures, staying current on the readings, coming to class prepared and contributing to class discussions, completing the problem sets, and being an effective team member of your group research project. Course components include work to be completed both individually and as a member of a group. Team members will share the same grade, adjusted by peer evaluation if warranted.

**Missed Tests/Exams:** Missed tests/exams will receive a grade of zero unless the student has submitted and been approved for a Notification of Absence or MSAF.

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments will be penalized one grade level (e.g., from A- to B+) for each day they are late.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<b>A: Class Contribution (Individual)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>B: Midterm Exams (Individual)</b>	<b>40%</b>
a) Exam 1	20%
b) Exam 2	20%

<b>C: Research Project (Group)</b>	<b>45%</b>
<i>a) Research Proposal</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>b) Survey Proposal</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>c) Presentation</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>d) Final Report</i>	<i>20%</i>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

**NOTE: The use of a McMaster standard calculator is allowed during examinations in this course. See McMaster calculator policy.**

### *Communication and Feedback*

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their **official McMaster University email account (not through Avenue to Learn)**. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student.

Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Area Administrative Assistants. Instructors are required to provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #9 in the term. Instructors may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

### *Class Contribution (15%)*

A large part of the benefit that you will derive from this course is related to your willingness to expose your viewpoints and conclusions to the critical judgment of the class, as well as of your ability to build upon and critically evaluate the judgments of your classmates. **Participation in class discussion is extremely important and each student is expected to contribute. Please display your name cards regularly in class.** For discussion exercises, it is strongly recommended that you do the relevant analysis prior to class and be prepared to discuss questions given to you.

This course is a bit technical, particularly at the latter half. **If you miss class, you may struggle to understand the concepts. Prior experience suggests students struggle with the quantitative part of the course.** Hence, it is extremely important you remain focused and up to date with class proceedings.

**I will “cold call” on you during class sessions.** If you do not feel adequately prepared and do not want to be called upon, please let me know at the beginning of class. My intention here is not to embarrass you, but rather to hear from you and incorporate your insights into the discussion. 15 % of your grade depends on class participation, with a greater emphasis on participation in discussions of exercises. **Effective (i.e., quality as well as quantity of) participation can therefore mean the difference between a higher and lower grade.** Some of the criteria used to evaluate class participation include:

1. Do comments go beyond facts and add to our knowledge and understanding?
2. Do comments reflect an understanding of theories and tools presented in class?
3. Are comments relevant to the discussion and points made by others?

4. Do comments move the discussion along through the provision of new perspectives?
5. Are comments concise and clear or are they confusing and rambling?
6. Do comments reflect a concern for maintaining a civil and constructive classroom atmosphere?

**The key to high contribution grades is making quality contributions to every class discussion.**

The participation grades will map to an assessment of the quality of the contribution by the T.A./Professor. Participation marks will be posted on the course website on a regular basis.

Please consult me if your marks are low, or well before if you are concerned that they might be low. There are ways I can help you to participate more effectively. At the end of the term, an overall participation grade will be given according to your participation marks in all classes.

**Please note the following regarding Class Contribution:**

- In calculating your final grade for class participation, your best 10 performances out of all classes attended (including the first class) will be considered. Each class will be marked out of 10, 3 for attendance (1.5 for half class attendance), 7 for class participation.
- Don't be judgmental what others are doing. Be curious and focused and do your best to participate and make the best use of the class time to learn from others and contribute to the discussion. Given this is a class with many students you will not get many opportunity to make comments as the instructor needs to give everybody a chance. Hence, try to make impactful comments. You can get the full class participation marks for each class by making two good comments as judged by the TA and the instructor. The average class participation marks for students attending ranges from 3-8 for each class.
- **Note that as budding managers, it is absolutely essential you are comfortable interacting with others. You must overcome your shyness because not doing so will seriously harm your career.** If you are not comfortable participating in class due to certain disabilities, you need to fill the Student Accessibility Service (SAS) form so that we can make alternate arrangements to grade your class participation. This may require written exercises to be submitted in lieu of class participation.
- If your attendance falls below 10 classes, you will lose participation grades. But if you have a MSAF for a missed class, you can get the marks for class participation for that class with a written exercise that need to be submitted in lieu of class participation.
- I expect you to be punctual. When you arrive late, your action disrupts the class. **Please do not leave the classroom in the middle of class for a few minutes and then return; this also is disruptive.** We will have a break after one and a half hours. When you are present in class, all cell phones should be turned off unless I am notified prior to class of a possible personal emergency requiring them to be on.
- Reading newspapers or magazines in class, sending or reading text messages/email in class, or using your cell phone, tablet or computer for activities other than those related to the day's class, is not permitted. These activities not only impede your learning but also distract and reduce the value gained by your classmates from the course and therefore constitute "negative class participation". You may be penalized for resorting to such activities.
- I expect you to treat everybody in the class with respect and in a professional manner.
- Absence from class is a serious matter, since you obviously can't participate if you're not there. If there are legitimate reasons for you to miss class, you need to follow procedures stipulated in the section '**REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK.**'

**Midterm Exams (40%)**

Both midterm exams are individual, closed-book and non-cumulative. They will be held in class. **There will be no final exam for this course.** Computers, cell phones and tablets are not permitted for the exams. You may use a McMaster standard calculator for each exam; however the calculator must not store text. I will provide you with formulas for each exam – I will discuss with you (in class sessions prior to the exam) about the formulas to be included in the exam. **The exams will be application oriented – they will be designed to assess your understanding of marketing research concepts and your ability to apply these concepts to marketing research problems and decisions.** The exams will include multiple choice questions, quantitative problems, and/or short essay questions. You will be responsible for both the material covered in class and for the material in the text and readings – both will be addressed by questions in the exams. Practice questions will be posted to the course website and discussed in class.

*Please note the dates for the exams. Please do not schedule job interviews or other activities in a manner that prevents you from taking the exams on the scheduled dates. Relief for a missed exam for legitimate reasons (e.g., MSAF) will be in the form of a cumulative make-up exam during the final exam period.*

**Research Project (45%)**

The objective of the term-long research project is to provide you with some hands-on experience in applying concepts and methods of marketing research to a real-world marketing research problem. **The project will be done in self-selected groups of 4-6 persons and requires a collaborative team effort. If you are not able to form your group, approach me and I will randomly assign students to groups.**

**At the middle and at the end of the term, each student will evaluate the performance of each of his/her peers in the team. Peer evaluations will be considered in determining the final project grade assigned to each individual team member.** Above all else, keep in mind that everything you do in the research project reflects on McMaster University, the DeGroote School of Business, your professor and your research team. Over the years, we have developed a good reputation with the business community and the public. Let us enhance it through conscientious work, competence, integrity and total honesty.

In summary, you will:

1. Begin to form a four or five-member team immediately. **Submit to the instructor and the TA by email your team members' names, McMaster email addresses and phone numbers.** The instructor's email is [bhatta1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:bhatta1@mcmaster.ca). The TA's email is [abbass44@mcmaster.ca](mailto:abbass44@mcmaster.ca).
2. Submit a one-page memo (Client Profile) identifying the client and your current understanding of the research problem to be addressed by the project.
3. Ensure that all contact with the client is conducted in a professional, business-like manner. This includes written as well as personal interactions.
4. Submit the Research Proposal for your Team Project. The final version of this proposal must be formally approved by me before being signed by the client.
5. Submit your Survey Proposal for your Team Project.
6. Each team will provide a formal in-class presentation of its research project. All teams

must upload their slides to Avenue before the first presentation.

7. Submit your Final Report and your peer evaluation sheet.
8. See Appendix 1 for further description and details of the Team Project.

It is important that you make progress on your project throughout the term. Waiting till the end of the term to undertake key project activities may put you in a difficult position. A suggested project activity schedule is as follows:

WEEK	ACTIVITY
1, 2, 3,4	Form Groups- Identify potential clients and projects – Select client and projects.
4, 5	Conduct secondary/exploratory research- Define the problem- Prepare the research proposal
6, 7, 8	Select sampling approach – Select mode of data collection Design questionnaire – Pretest questionnaire- Prepare the survey proposal
9, 10	Send out survey – Follow up on survey
11, 12, 13, 14	Code data – Analyze data – Prepare presentation and report

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## POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSES

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. There may be changes to the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that result or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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## **AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION**

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In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>.

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## **REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK**

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Students may request relief from a regularly scheduled midterm, test, assignment or other course components. Please refer to the policy and procedure on the DeGroote website at the link below: <http://ug.degroote.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/misled-course-work-policy/>

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## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

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## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)**

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Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.



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## **COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING**

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Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

**Do not distribute the class lecture slides, quizzes, and in class assignments. It constitutes academic integrity violation. You will be reported to the academic integrity office and the penalty for copyright violation may include your degree being withheld for five years.**

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## **EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES**

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The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labor disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

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## **RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

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All researchers conducting research that involves human participants, their records or their biological material are required to receive approval from one of McMaster's Research Ethics Boards before (a) they can recruit participants and (b) collect or access their data. Failure to comply with relevant policies is a research misconduct matter. Contact these boards for further information about your requirements and the application process.

McMaster Research Ethics Board (General board): <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/> Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (Medical board): <http://www.hireb.ca/>

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES**

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Your enrolment in Commerce 3MA3 will be considered as an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

## Class Schedule

**Please note that the schedule may be modified to accommodate student feedback.**

Week / Date	Topic	Activity / Deadline
Week 1 & Week 2 Jan 8 & Jan 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Overview</li> <li>• Role of Marketing Research</li> <li>• Marketing Research Process</li> <li>• Problem Formulation</li> <li>• Internal and Secondary Data</li> </ul>	Readings: Chapters 1,2, 3, and 9 (267-270)
Week 3 Jan 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Design</li> <li>• Exploratory Research: Focus Groups and In-depth interviews</li> <li>• Exploratory Research: Projective Tests</li> </ul>	Readings: Chapter 4 and 9 (271-275) <b>Due Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> by midnight: Team Contract</b>
Week 4 Jan 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> <li>• Survey Research: Survey Methods</li> <li>• Survey Research: Questionnaire Design, Measurement, and Scaling</li> </ul>	Readings: Chapter 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (276-279) <b>Due Jan 29<sup>th</sup> by midnight: Client Profile</b>
Week 5 Feb 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 1:</b></li> <li>• <b>Time and Location: In class during class hours</b></li> <li>• Project Review and team meetings</li> </ul>	
Week 6 Feb 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey Research: Sampling Design and Procedures</li> <li>• Survey Research: Sample Size</li> </ul>	Readings: Chapter 11 and 12 <b>Due Feb 12<sup>th</sup> by midnight: Research Proposal</b>
Week 7 Feb 19	Midterm Recess	
Week 8 Feb 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical Issues in Marketing Research</li> <li>• Data Analysis: Road Map</li> <li>• Data Analysis: Single Variable Analysis, Cross Tabs</li> </ul>	Readings: Chapter 13 and 14 (442-448) <b>Due Feb 29<sup>th</sup> by midnight: Signed Agreement of Intent, Interim Peer Evaluation, Questionnaire Survey Proposal</b>
Week 9 March 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Analysis: Regression</li> <li>• Causal Research</li> </ul>	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 14 (442-461), Chapter 10 (295-324)
Week 10 March 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Statistics and Excel for Data Analysis</li> <li>• Project Review and team meetings</li> </ul>	<b>Hands on in class exercise, bring your laptop to class</b>

Week 11 March 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Exam 2:</b></li> <li>• <b>Time and Location: In class during class hours</b></li> </ul>	
Week 12 March 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Statistics and Excel for Data Analysis</li> </ul>	<b>Hands on in class exercise, bring your laptop to class</b>
Week 13 April 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final Project Presentations</b></li> <li>• Attendance is compulsory</li> <li>• You should be formally dressed</li> </ul>	<b>Due April 1, 2:30 pm (before class starts): Power point Slides</b>
Week 14 April 8	<b>No Class</b>	<b>Due April 12<sup>th</sup> by midnight: Final Report, Peer evaluation, Copy of Client Invoice (if applicable)</b>

**Peer Evaluation:** Peer Evaluation is done by sending an email to the instructor stating all members of a group have contributed equally. Include all group members in the email.

If members are not contributing equally, marks for any group assignment will be assigned depending on the weight of each member's contribution.

If there is problem in group dynamics with some members not contributing their share of the work, report to the instructor as soon as possible so that early intervention can be done. Do not leave the problem till the end of the semester.