

MGT 4312 – Marketing Research: Tools and Design

Fall 2026

Scheller College of Business, Georgia Institute of Technology

This syllabus is tentative and subject to change.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Sarah Motallebi

Class Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30–4:45 PM, Room 203

Office: 4279/461F

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3:00–4:00 PM, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the principles, tools, and design of marketing research. It examines how research supports marketing decision making, with emphasis on problem definition, research design, data collection, measurement, sampling, data analysis, and the communication of findings. Students will learn how to design and evaluate marketing research studies and how to interpret research results for managerial use.

Prerequisites

Students are expected to enter this course with a solid foundation in core marketing concepts and frameworks. Accordingly, the following course is required as preparation for this course:

- Marketing Management (MGT 3300), or equivalent.

Students who do not satisfy this prerequisite must obtain the approval of the instructor before finalizing registration.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the role of marketing research in managerial decision making.
- Define a marketing research problem and translate it into a clear research approach.
- Distinguish among exploratory, descriptive, and causal research designs and identify when each is appropriate.
- Design effective research instruments, including questionnaires and measurement scales.
- Understand the principles of sampling design and sample size determination.
- Evaluate and apply common methods of data collection and fieldwork.
- Prepare research data for analysis and interpret basic statistical results.
- Use and interpret foundational analytical techniques such as cross-tabulation, hypothesis testing, and ANOVA.
- Draw meaningful managerial implications from research findings.
- Communicate research results clearly and professionally in written and oral formats.

Topics Covered

This course covers the major stages of the marketing research process, from problem definition and research design to data collection, analysis, and reporting. Topics include:

- Introduction to marketing research and its role in managerial decision making
- Defining the marketing research problem and developing a research approach
- Research design formulation
- Exploratory research using secondary data
- Exploratory qualitative research methods
- Descriptive research: survey and observation methods

- Causal research and experimental design
- Measurement and scaling fundamentals
- Comparative and noncomparative scaling techniques
- Questionnaire and form design
- Sampling design and procedures
- Sample size determination
- Fieldwork and data collection management
- Data preparation and preliminary data handling
- Frequency distributions, cross-tabulation, and hypothesis testing
- Analysis of variance
- Research report preparation and presentation

Required Materials

Malhotra, Naresh K. *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation* (6th ed.). Prentice Hall. Purchase is not required.

Course Format and Grading

Grade Component	Weight	Content
Class Attendance and Professionalism ¹	10%	Attendance, punctuality, participation, and professional conduct
Course Exercises ²	20%	Individual assignments and homework submissions
Midterm 1 ³	10%	In-class exam
Midterm 2 ³	10%	In-class exam
Final Exam ³	20%	In-class exam
Group Proposal	5%	Initial group project proposal
Group Project File	10%	Written group project submission (format will be shared)
Group Project Presentation	10%	Oral presentation of the group project
Group Project Peer Review	5%	Peer evaluation of individual contribution to the group project
Total⁴	100%	

1. Students are allowed up to three absences without penalty. Absences beyond this limit require official documentation; otherwise, the student will lose the attendance/professionalism points associated with the course.
2. Homework and other course assignments must be submitted by the stated deadline. Late submissions may be accepted at the instructor's discretion and may be subject to a grade penalty.
3. Exams must be taken on the scheduled date and time. Make-up exams are not permitted except in cases of documented university-approved absences or emergencies.
4. Bonus credit opportunities may be offered during the semester and will be announced as they become available.

Class Policies

Academic Integrity: Georgia Tech's Honor Code reflects a shared commitment between faculty and students to uphold the integrity of the academic process. Students in this course are expected to adhere fully to the Georgia Tech Honor Code. The complete policy can be found at: <https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students who require accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services at <https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/> to arrange an appointment, discuss their needs, and obtain an accommodation letter. This letter will help ensure that appropriate support is provided throughout the course.

Student–Faculty Expectations: Georgia Tech values an environment grounded in mutual respect, recognition, and shared responsibility between students and faculty. A statement of these expectations is available at: <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/21/>. Respect for learning, diligence, and professional conduct will help foster the classroom environment we seek to maintain. All members of this course are expected to uphold these standards in a manner consistent with the values of Georgia Tech.

Use of Laptops and Phones: Please limit the use of laptops, smartphones, and other devices during class. In professional settings, it is generally inappropriate to have a device open during a meeting or conversation unless it is being used for a relevant purpose. Exceptions may arise during case discussions or simulations, when you may need to consult a spreadsheet, graph, or other course-related material.

Tardiness: As in professional meetings, this class will begin promptly. Students are expected to be ready to begin class on time. Please plan accordingly and allow sufficient travel time to reach Tech Square.

Course Schedule

A detailed course schedule will be available on Canvas.