

MGT 6627 Specialized Study in Management

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PREREQUISITES

1. Completion of Business Research Methods and all core requirements.
2. Either completion of (or simultaneous enrollment in) the final concentration course, **OR** approval of the program director.

OBJECTIVES

Study of a problem or problems using research techniques. Selection of the problem must be approved by the student's adviser and the instructor. On completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Present findings from study of a selected topic in depth in the area of management.
- Demonstrate conversance in the selected topic through appropriate application.
- Discuss how the selected topic may inform strategies to support business objectives.
- Prepare an empirical or conceptual academic paper in a form and format appropriate for formal presentation
- Define and develop a theoretical or practical issue or problem, synthesizing theories and concepts from across the discipline, and displaying sound reasoning and strong critical-thinking skills in advancing recommendations.
- Defend a proposal and presentation persuasively in a formal setting.

TEXT AND READINGS

- Your business research text. Others suggested by instructor.
- My research lecture notes: <http://www.lonesaguaro.com/troy/resnotes.txt>

COURSE CONTENT

The only way to really learn about research is to do it. Thus your grade will be based on phases of completing an independent research project. Projects are to be chosen by students working individually. I would encourage you to select a topic area that applies to your job and that might be of interest to your superiors. Students tend to enjoy the work more if it will help advance their careers. Various components of the project are explained below with the percentage of your final grade. Possible projects include (but are not limited to:)

- **Survey** -- You will prepare a questionnaire or observation plan; a sampling plan for your target demographic unit; and an analysis of your findings. You will be expected to carry out at least a pilot of the actual survey.
- **Experimental Design** -- You must: identify the variables to be studied; prepare a theoretical basis; formulate the research hypotheses; explain how the study variables will be operationalized, and devise a plan for analyzing the data. (This alternative may include work sampling or time studies)
- **Data Crunching** -- Using secondary historical data, prepare a detailed analysis to provide backup or reasons for a change in the way your organization's business is conducted.
- **New Business Start Up** - Complete a business plan for starting a new business. Includes marketing plans, capital requirements, 2 years of cash flow projections, financing plan. My Resource page for business plans : <http://www.lonesaguaro.com/troy/newbiz/>
- **Library/Internet Study** -- This will involve pulling together work by other researchers who have published in periodicals and books; a statistical analysis from a secondary data source; or a forecasting exercise for and industry or company. You must include a formal bibliography.
- **Feasibility Study** - Expansion, new product introduction, or a major reorganization for your firm, or division.
- **Information Management** - System redesign, database creation, application development
- **Operations** - Process flow, users manuals, product redesign, work sampling, time studies etc.
- **Other Options** - We can negotiate

Your project must have a viable business twist. (i.e. affect profits, costs, efficiency or capability). Philosophy, morality and ranting type papers are not research nor are they problem solvers. They have their place - but not in this class. Your project need not change the world, it just needs to be pragmatic and practical.

COURSE EVALUATION

Research Proposal (10%)

Brief description of what you propose to study and how you intend to complete the work. We will discuss your topic and formulate a research question. This is the initial, (and perhaps most critical) stage of the process. **You should phone me at the number above and discuss the project as soon as you have an idea.** I will talk you through the topic until we have an acceptable project.

Final Paper (80%)

All final projects should be done in MS-Word, WordPerfect, .rtf, .pdf or html formats. Graphs, charts and mathematical analysis may be done in Excel. There is no standard for length. The paper should be long enough to completely address the topic but should not present irrelevant information (about 10-20 pages single spaced would be typical plus appendices). You are free to use any format or style guide that you wish. Your paper should be readable, well organized, and complete. Remember, the paper should be directed toward the likely final reader (your boss, the bank, peers, etc...)

Executive Summary (10%)

On no more than 1 page single space, You will prepare an Executive Summary of your findings which will contain all of the most important highlights.

Grading

Students must complete the course with a grade of "B" to ensure that they receive credit for the course. I will evaluate intermediate drafts of the paper and outline until the work is satisfactory to both parties. Part of your grade will be determined by your adherence to your own schedule and deadlines.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR 6627

Communicating with the Instructor

As soon as possible, send me an initial email introducing yourself. (Lcoraggio@Troy.edu) Please include:

- some indication that you are MGT 6627 student
- phone numbers, and acceptable times to call;
- where you are located (so I know what time zone you are in);
- and any alternative email addresses.

I will set up an account for you in my private forum. Since each student must design and complete the project independently <http://www.lonesaguaro.com/troy/studforum/login6627.asp> You may carry on a dialog with me, upload & download files, and generally help me keep all of the students straight in my head.

This will be the "official" record for 6627. I will check it once or twice a day. The forum can even be configured to Email you my replies. Once your account is established, **please use the Forum for electronic communication.** I have far too many students to keep track of you all by email. You may call me at the number above 9AM-8PM MST. I will get back to you, if I'm not here.

You are Responsible for Managing the Project

I will work with you, but you are responsible for initiating contact, managing your time, and controlling the work. This work is entirely your initiative. I am not here for motivation, but I will help you do it right. I don't want hear that you lost your memory stick, your computer crashed, or any other excuse other than death, and /or illness. **USE THE FORUM AND SEND ME DRAFTS & SECTIONS AS YOU COMPLETE THEM.**

Delivery

Based on the term dates, I will give you an absolute deadline when you sign up. If you do not make sufficient progress, or wait until the term is half over before contacting me, don't expect me to extend you. If you wait until the last minute to turn in your work, don't whine about your grade. I will be happy to evaluate intermediate drafts. You can call me too. I'll even call you back on my dime.

The Product

This is your original work. I'm just here to help you do it right. Consider it part of your job seeking/promotion portfolio. The topic does not need to be huge - you just need to do a complete and thorough job. A good paper will be just as relevant 10 years from now as it is today. The more "real" you make it, the better the product. I won't be hovering over you, it will be your responsibility to initiate and complete the job. Keep the subject matter manageable. You won't fix health care in 12 weeks or come up with a workable solution to world peace. I'd much rather see a small, well executed project.

I suggest you try to find something that relates to your job. This becomes a "no lose" situation. You get some slack at work. If it turns out to be something management likes, you're a hero. If not it's just another academic paper. If you're not working, or clueless about where to begin CALL ME!