

COMM 316-30: Research Methods (Summer III, 2016)

M – F, 9:40 AM – 11:10 AM SK209

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Office hours: After each class for 30 minutes.

Course Description

This course will examine the relationship of theory and methods, research design, and measurement in communication contexts.

Course Outcome

This course will introduce communication research methods from a social-scientific perspective. It will teach the basic vocabulary of research methods and enhance students' understanding of the theory-research link. This course will present the conceptual foundations, principles, practices, and traditions on which communication research is grounded. At the conclusion of this course, students should:

1. Understand the predominant quantitative and qualitative research designs and methods used by communication scholars
2. Understand deductive and inductive analytical processes
3. Understand basic research procedures and techniques
4. Understand basic statistical concepts
5. Be better consumers of communication research literature encountered in other communication classes

Textbook

Keyton, J.: *Communication Research: Asking questions, finding answers* (3rd Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill. (* 2nd Edition of this book, if you can find a copy, will work as well)

Course Requirements

All assignments and exams must be completed and turned in on or before the date assigned.

- **Late work will be accepted but will be graded down 20% per calendar day as a penalty.** A late penalty begins immediately after the class period is over.

Exams

Three (3) exams comprised of T/F, multiple choice, short answer and statistical interpretation will be given from assigned readings and lectures.

Class Participation

You are expected to come to class having read all assigned chapter(s) and ready to participate in discussions. Also, you are expected to FULLY participate in group project.

- **Failure to fully participate in group activity may result in lower grade.**

Attendance

Attendance is required for every class period.

If you miss more than ONE (1) classes without valid excuses, a penalty of -2 points will be applied to your “attendance/participation” scores for every unexcused absence from the 2nd unexcused absence. In other words, from the 2nd unexcused absence, you will lose TWO (2) points per each occurrence (thus, it is possible to earn negative points from the attendance/participation scores, which will be applied to your total score).

Valid excuses of an absence are 1) *participating in University sanctioned events*, 2) a serious illness *that requires hospitalization*, 3) *death in the immediate family*, 4) *birth of your own baby*, or 5) *religious holiday recognized by University*. You must bring authenticated written proof of such incidences to the instructor on your first day back.

- In case of excused absence, you are still responsible for following up the material you miss.

Any form of off campus work and personal travel will NOT be considered as valid excuses.

Doctor’s appointment, court appearance, being in jail, a birth given by your siblings/relatives or friend will NOT be considered as valid excuses. For those occasions, you should utilize those three opportunities you can miss class with no valid excuses.

Assignments

- There is **one group research project** and **two individual assignments** in this course.
- **Any written work must be typed.**

Group Assignment Due Dates

- (1) Hypotheses **July 14**
(2) Questionnaire: **July 22**

Individual Assignment Due Dates

- (1) Statistics Exercise: **July 26**
(2) Cumulative Assignment: **August 5**

Points Distribution

Exams	300 points total
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Group Assignment	
Hypotheses/RQ	10 points
Questionnaire	20 points
Cumulative Assignment	30 points
Statistics Exercise	20 points
Attendance	10 points
Participation	10 points
Total	400 points

Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-66%	D- = 60-62%
F = below 59%		

Make-up Policy

Missed exam or assignment **may not be made up unless the following conditions are met:** (1) the excuse is valid as explained above; (2) the excuse is made in advance if applicable; and (3) the excuse is documented. Otherwise, you will not be able to make up.

Please take time to look at the schedule: if you cannot make it to the exam on the scheduled day, you must try making arrangement to take it **prior** to the scheduled day & time.

In a case involving death in the immediate family or illness requiring hospital care or a birth of a baby for whom you are a parent, a makeup exam will be granted *without prior notice*. Under such conditions, authenticated written documents must be provided to the instructor

Plagiarism/ Academic Dishonesty

Any student engage in plagiarism (i.e., presenting someone else's work as your own or without proper acknowledgement) or any other type of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating on an exam) will receive **a zero for the semester**.

Special Needs

Students with special learning needs are encouraged to discuss accommodations with me early in the semester. Student may be asked to contact the Disability Resource Center to determine academic accommodations (852-6938).

Classroom Decorum:

1. During class, please respect the right of your fellow classmates. Do not carry on conversation in class, and **turn off cell phones**.
2. Also, avoid getting to class late and leaving early, as these are very disruptive.
3. **No laptop or ANY electronic device is allowed in class, unless you have a particular need that require the use of an electronic device to take a note.**
4. For your own protection, you are expected to keep a copy of all assignments submitted to the instructor.

Last Day to Drop/Add: July 8, 2016

Last Day to Withdraw: July 27, 2016

All items in this syllabus are subject to change.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or for similar reasons.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Topic(s)	Chapter(s)
1	July 6	Intro to Quantitative Research	3
1	July 7	Intro to Quantitative Research Intro to Qualitative Research Group Sign-up: Mandatory Attendance	3 4
1	July 8	Intro to Qualitative Research	4
2	July 11	Research Ethics Measurements	5 6
2	July 12	Measurements	6
2	July 13	Sampling, Significant Level, and Hypothesis Testing	<i>7 (& 10, pg 196 – 200: 3rd Edition only)</i>
2	July 14	Sampling, Significant Level, and Hypothesis Testing Hypotheses Due	<i>7 (& 10, pg 196 – 200: 3rd Edition only)</i>
<u>2</u>	<u>July 15</u>	<u>Exam 1. (Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7)</u>	
3	July 18	Quantitative Research Design	8
3	July 19	Quantitative Research Design Survey and Questionnaire	8 9
3	July 20	Survey and Questionnaire	9
3	July 21	Descriptive Statistics	10
3	July 22	Descriptive Statistics Testing for Differences Questionnaire Due	10 11
4	July 25	Testing for Differences	11
4	July 26	Testing for Relationship Stat Exercise Due	12
4	July 27	Testing for Relationship Quantitative Analysis of Text	12 13
<u>4</u>	<u>July 28</u>	<u>Exam 2. (Chapter 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)</u>	
4	July 29	Quantitative Analysis of Text	13
5	August 1	Designing Qualitative Research	14
5	August 2	Designing Qualitative Research Qualitative Methods of Data Collection	14 15
5	August 3	Qualitative Methods of Data Collection	15
5	August 4	Analyzing Qualitative Data	16
5	August 5	Reading and Writing the Quantitative Research Project Cumulative Final Assignment Due	17
<u>6</u>	<u>August 8</u>	<u>Exam 3. (Chapter 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17)</u>	
6	August 9	???	

Group Assignment Outline

1. You will be a part of a 3-person group.
 2. Once your group is formed, immediately start having discussions on which area in the field of communication you and your partner are interested in, doing a quantitative investigation.
 - Areas in communication:
 - mass communication
 - interpersonal communication
 - nonverbal communication
 - computer-mediated communication
 - marketing communication including advertising and PR
 - health communication
 - organizational communication
 - political communication
 - intercultural communication
 - any other general or specific communication
 3. **Hypothesis/Research Question formation**
 - Once your group decides on a specific area, you will need to come up with TOTAL three (3) research questions and/or research hypotheses of ANY combinations to investigate through quantitative research procedure (paper and pencil survey).
 - The chosen hypotheses/research questions MUST be about human communication processes from one of the listed areas above.
 4. **Questionnaire**
 - Once your hypotheses/research questions are finalized and approved, you will need to develop your own survey questionnaire items that will enable you to find answers to your research questions and/or test your hypotheses.
 - Please keep in mind that even though you are not actually collecting data, your questionnaire must be constructed as if it will actually be used in the field. Thus, **the survey items must be as real and scientific/systematic as possible.** There is no requirement on the minimum number of questions you must have on the questionnaire. It all depends on your research questions and/or research hypotheses.
 - Construct your survey questionnaire items by
 - Considering the most appropriate level of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval or ratio) for a particular hypothesis/research question.
 - Referring to the lecture notes on chapter 9.
- **BE SURE TO PARTICIPATE!**
 - There will be participation evaluation by your group members, and the participation score will count toward the 10-point participation grading criterion.

Individual Assignment Outline 1: Statistics Exercise

- A stat worksheet will be handed out in class in July 21. The due date is July 26.

Individual Assignment Outline 2: Cumulative Assignment

- You will be given an assignment that is a cumulative of the course content for this semester. It will be comprised of:

Part 1. Quantitative Study

1. 2 (TWO) quantitative research hypotheses.
2. Survey questions for those two quantitative research hypotheses.
3. Identifying statistical procedures for testing those two quantitative research hypotheses measured through your survey questions.

Part 2. Qualitative Study

4. 1 (ONE) qualitative research question.
5. Identifying the most proper qualitative research procedure your qualitative RQ and explaining why.

More detailed instruction

1. You will need to come up with 2 (TWO) quantitative research hypotheses that were NOT used in the earlier assignment. This has to be YOUR OWN unique hypotheses. This is NOT a group work, but an individual work!
2. For those 2 hypotheses, you will need to generate the most appropriate quantitative survey questions.
3. Based on your hypotheses and survey questions, you will need to identify the most proper statistical procedure(s) – look into the nature of your hypotheses and the types of your variables measured through your survey questions.
4. Next, you will need to come up with 1 (ONE) research question appropriate for a qualitative research.
5. Then you will need to identify the most proper qualitative research procedure for this research question and briefly explain why.

- **Remember, this is an INDIVIDUAL work.**
 - **Copying of someone else's assignment will result in zero (0) grade for this assignment.**
 - **And there should NOT be two or more students with the same hypotheses and/or research question.**