

Communication and Culture (CMCL) 313, L01
Interdisciplinary Research Methodologies
Fall 2012
Wednesdays and Fridays, 12:30 to 13:50

Instructor: Liz Pirnie
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Office Hours: Wed. and Fri. – 2:00 to 3:00
Or by appointment.

Course Description

This course will present a critical introduction to interdisciplinary research methodologies. Students will explore, practice, and critique various quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and various perspectives on the processes of knowledge production.

Objectives of the Course

- (1) To become familiar with the concepts and vocabulary of interdisciplinary research common to the social sciences at large, but with particular consideration to communication research.
- (2) Understand the relationship between theory and research methods.
- (3) Understand the stakes of ethical considerations made by researchers in conducting and presenting research.
- (4) Understand the nature of quantitative and qualitative research, their points of difference, and compatibility.
- (5) Develop basic skills necessary for conducting communication research.
- (6) To become an intelligent and critical consumer of academic research, i.e. be able to read, understand, explain, and critically evaluate scholarly research as reported in peer-reviewed journals, the media, and other sources.
- (7) To locate one's own research interest within the interdisciplinary field of communication research.

Additional Information

Course updates, additional required readings, and assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Be sure to log in frequently to check for messages and course documents.

Internet and electronic communication device information

While students are permitted to use laptops for the purpose of note taking and for specific instructor led class exercises, out of consideration for your instructor and your fellow classmates, please take care to avoid cell phone interruptions and/or other distractions

caused by non-course related activities. This includes talking in class at inappropriate times. Thank you.

Textbooks and Readings:

Merrigan, G., C.L. Huston and R. Johnston (2012) *Communication Research Methods*, Canadian Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada.

(Although available at the campus bookstore, this textbook can be ordered from Amazon.ca or directly from the publisher for approximately \$10.00 less).

Links to ADDITIONAL REQUIRED readings will be posted on Blackboard at least two weeks before being addressed in class.

Assignments and Evaluation (See assignment details below.)

<u>Component</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Weight (%)</u>
1. Journal Article Review	Sept 26	10
2. Quiz 1: In-Class	Oct 03	10
3. Literature Review with Annotated Bibliography	Oct 12	15
4. Quiz 2: Take-home	Given Oct 26, Due Oct 31	10
5. Quiz 3: Take-home	Given Nov 16, Due Nov 21	10
6. Research Proposal	Dec 07	25
7. Reflection Journal	Dec 07	10
8. Participation	Throughout	10

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Brief Assignment Descriptions

Expectations for each assignment or quiz will be posted in much greater detail on Blackboard as the term progresses. However, below you will find a brief introduction to each assignment.

1. Reflection Journal: Throughout the term, students are expected to keep a reflection journal as they develop their major term assignment, a research proposal. For each course reading, reflection questions will be posted and students are asked to address these questions in light of their research interest and the theoretical and methodological considerations being introduced. For each reading, a minimum of ½ page, double-spaced typed is expected. The journal will be handed in on the last day of class with the final Research Proposal assignment

2. Journal Review Article: Students will choose and examine one article describing an empirical research study from a peer-reviewed communication journal, in the area of their particular interest. Students will then write a 2-page double-spaced typed review of the article that responds to questions outlined in the assignment.

3. Quiz 1: In-class: Cumulative This first quiz will consist of multiple choice, true and false, and short answer questions covering all the readings and lecture material up to this point. (Chapter 1-4 and 6 plus additional Blackboard and lecture material).

4. Literature Review with Annotated Bibliography: Students will begin to locate their research within the academic literature. This brief 2-page single-spaced typed report should be **supplemented** with an annotated bibliography with 6 academic sources.

5. Quiz 2: Take-home, Quantitative Research: Non-Cumulative: This second quiz will consist of multiple choice, short answer and calculation questions. (Covers chapters 5, 7,8, 13 and 14 plus additional Blackboard and lecture material). The exam will be handed out on a Fri. and will be due the following Wed. (See dates above.)
Expected time to complete: 1 hour.

6. Quiz 3: Take-home, Qualitative Research: Non-Cumulative: This third quiz will consist of multiple choice, short answer and one long answer question. (Covers chapters 9-12 plus additional Blackboard and lecture material). The exam will be handed out on a Fri. and will be due the following Wed. (See dates above.)
Expected time to complete: 1 hour.

7. Research Proposal: Drawing on their own work and feedback received throughout the term, students will follow a specified research proposal outline provided by the instructor. Length of proposal is approximately 6-pages double-spaced typed.

8. Participation: Students are encouraged to ask questions and participate in discussions throughout the term. Additionally, students will be asked to work in pairs and in groups throughout the term to, for example, discuss and apply the text readings to related Blackboard posted articles, or get feedback from fellow students regarding the development of their research proposals. Participation in these paired and group work activities will be recorded and contribute to your participation mark.

Although attendance is not mandatory, **one must be present to earn participation marks.**

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

(Revised, effective September 2008)

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99

D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link;
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site:
<http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>

or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>