

University of Calgary
Department of Communication and Culture

Communication and Culture (CMCL) 313 - Lecture 1
Interdisciplinary Research Methodologies
Spring 2015

Wed., May 20 – Wed., June 24 (no classes Mon., May 18)

Monday/Wednesday
12:00 – 14:45

Instructor: Ofer Berenstein
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Office Hours: Monday 3PM-4PM at SS250 or by appointment

Course Description

This course is about **how** to conduct research in a social sciences context. Students will learn how to choose a research method, design research (including ethical considerations) and employ data collection and data analysis methods including: Archival and textual analysis, basic quantitative methods, empirical experiments, ethnography, and interviews.

Note that this course includes both lecture time and (graded) hands-on class-work assignments time.

Additional Information

- This is a reading, writing and research intensive course.
- This course takes a hands-on approach, **including class work** and work with human subjects.
- Students are expected to generate original research topic ideas and balance meeting with class peers with other coursework.
- Course assessment is based on submitted responses to class-work activities (60%) and a final paper (40%) with no scheduled final exam.
- Please find a tentative schedule of lectures and assigned readings at the bottom of this document. The final course schedule will be discussed in class during the first meeting.

Objectives of the Course

By the end of this course, students will be able to choose a research method fitting the needs of their topic, theoretical perspective and ethical considerations and perform a research project using it. Students will also be able to make use of the data collection methods learnt in class for future, non-academic needs, as well as academic purposes.

Furthermore, students should be able to critically evaluate other social research using the principles learnt during this course.

Textbooks and Readings

This course relies on a combination of readings taken from an assigned textbook and external journal articles and other on-line sources.

The readings are divided into three levels:

- Assigned readings – readings which all the students are expected to read and know in preparation of each meeting, as well as be able to demonstrate knowledge from in graded assignments.
- Elective readings – readings which complement the daily topics discussed in class the day they were assigned. At times they will be referenced in lecture and at times not. Students may choose not to read them. However, they will be expected to demonstrate basic knowledge in their content if and when they are mentioned in a specific lecture, to the extent they were mentioned at that lecture.
- Make Me an Expert readings – supplementary material which, as its title states, is deeply involved in a method or issue. These readings are by definition not mandatory. However, students will be expected to take their content into consideration if and when they choose to use a particular method for their final paper. In addition, experience teaches us that students who regularly read these extra materials are highly likely to get higher grades in this course as they are able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topics through and through.

The course borrows most of the assigned readings from a textbook which is available both in a digital format at a reduced price of \$89.95 and as a physical book at the book store for a full price of \$149.95. (See information below.)

Please note the specific pages assigned for each week as the book is not used in a sequential form nor is it used in its entirety.

All the further readings are available free of charge using the links imbedded in this document or posted to the D2L website.

Assigned textbook:

The Practice of Social Research (14th edition) by Earl Babbie. Cengage learning, 2014.

Please use the following special link to purchase the on-line version:

www.nelsonbrain.com/shop/micro/ucalgary/cmcl313

Elective readings:

Please see the schedule of lectures and reading list at the bottom of this document.

'Make Me an Expert' readings:

Summaries posted to the D2L website. Full text available on-line as:

Social Research: Issues, Methods and Research (4th ed.) by Tim May. Berkshire, GBR: McGraw-Hill Education, ProQuest ebrary. (2011).

<http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary/detail.action?docID=10481018>

Internet and electronic communication device information

All cell phones should be silenced for the entire duration of the class. Laptops, smartphones and tablets can only be used for taking notes or working on the research projects at the allotted times.

All communication devices will be barred from use during class activities. Students will be asked to place their devices in their bags and their bags by the instructors' table. Further information regarding this practice will be given in class.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignments in this course are individual unless explicitly stated otherwise. Some of the assignments will be given as class-work while others are designed as a homework response to activities performed during class meetings. You will be graded based on the following assignments (please see assignments' description bellow):

- Class quiz: Ethics (15%) – Assignment performed in class 27.05.2015.
- Interviews reflection task (15%) – Assignment performed in class 22.06.2015.
- Ethnographic observation report (30%) – Assignment performed in class 15.06.2015 Report due 22.06.2015.
- Final Paper - Research proposal and reflective report (40%) – Due Date 24.06.2015.

All assignments must be completed or a grade of F (zero points) may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

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

Note: Please hand in your work directly to your tutor or 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.

Note: assignments received after 5pm on the due date will be considered as late submissions!

Description of assignments

The purpose of this course is to train students in conducting research in social sciences. This includes planning and designing a project, review of its ethics related aspects, proper execution of data collection method and (when stated) analysis of it. Students are expected to come up with their own research ideas (explanations of expectations will be provided in the first few meetings) and pass ethical screening if and when needed. Further information about assignments will be provided in class and posted on-line to the course's Desire2Learn website.

Individual class-work assignments:

These assignments are designed to evaluate students' ability to reflect on the lecture materials, the assigned readings and the execution of the stated data collection method in question during class practice time. There are two individual graded class-work activities:

Class Quiz - Focused on the subject of *Research Ethics (15%)* - Based on the students' experience in class activities, lecture notes and readings. Students will be asked to discuss the ethical issues arising from either an empirical experiment's design or a survey's questionnaire design. Further information regarding this assignment will be supplied in class.

Interviews reflection task (15%) – students will be asked to assess (in writing) the pros and cons of different interview methods based on the lecture materials and their own class experience. This quiz like assignment is expected to take about 20 minutes. Please contact the course instructor in advance should you use the services of the disability centre during regular quizzes and exams and proper accommodations will be supplied to you.

Ethnographic observation report (30%) - This assignment calls for students to perform an unobtrusive ethnographic observation in a campus setting assigned by the instructor. A report describing the goal of the observation, its execution and the preliminary findings will be submitted following this exercise.

Note: Students will be paired by the instructor. Field notes are to be submitted along with the report.

The observation report field notes will not be returned to the students but kept by the department. They will be available for reviewing in a manner pursuant with the department's exam reviewing policies.

Grading will be based on:

- The observations' rationale (i.e. formulated thesis) – 15%.
- Students' ability to assimilate in their surroundings (including: picking a location, appearance, spatiality, etc.) – 15%.
- Students' note taking style (including: accountability, precision, descriptions' thickness and coding etc.) – 30%.
- Discussion of the observation's execution (including description of actions, reasoning of actions etc.). – 30%.
- Data analysis and discussion of findings – 10%.

The expected length of the report is approx. 5 pages (double spaced, 11 pt. size font, with approx. 1.5" margins). Specific discussion points as well as report work-time will be provided in class.

Final Paper - Research proposal and reflective report (40%) - this is a two part assignment. Part one is designed to supply students with a chance to apply the materials from the course lectures, readings and gained experience during class activities to create a research proposal. Students will formulate a research statement

and design and plan a small scale data collection project using one of the methods learnt in class. Following that, the students will suggest suitable methods for the analysis of the data and a proposed skeleton of the project's sections.

Part two of this assignment includes a reflective section in which students will be asked to comment about the philosophical aspects of their decisions in part one and undergo a self-criticism process regarding their work.

The expected length of the proposal is approx. 8 pages (double spaced, 11 pt. size font, with approx. 1.5" margins). Please use APA citation style in your papers.

The submission of the final paper will be digital only. Further instructions will be supplied during class.

Students may use their final project work for other coursework purposes, following a preliminary written approval by the instructors of both courses in question and a pre-authorized ethics approval, should one be needed.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

All assignments and exams must be completed or a course grade of F may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Submission of Assignments

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at final exams in SS 320 after classes have ended. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Note: For courses in which assignments are submitted electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the correct copy of the assignment is submitted. (Including the version date or version number in your file name may help you avoid submitting the wrong version of your written assignments.) Electronic submission may only be done using an official university email account (i.e. XYZ@ucalgary.ca).

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.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of the course.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface

correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in 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 & Dept of Communication and Culture Grade Scale

Work in this course will be graded using **percentage grades**. The following grade scale percentage equivalents are used in Communication and Culture:

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Department grade scale equivalents	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations
4.00	Outstanding	A+	96 - 100%	98.0%
4.00	Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.	A	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
3.70		A -	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
3.30		B+	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
3.00	Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.	B	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
2.70		B-	70 - 74.99%	72.5%
2.30		C+	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
2.00	Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter.	C	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
1.70		C-	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
1.30	Minimal pass—marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	D+	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
1.00		D	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
0.00	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.	F	00 - 49.99%	0%

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. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in

the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor TFDL, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Academic Misconduct

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

Research 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.

This course requires students to conduct primary research as well as act as participants in primary research conducted by their peers. This includes: surveys, interviews, observations and behavioral non-invasive experiments. This course has obtained course-based ethics approval from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/research/research-ethics>

Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)	SS 102 403-220-3580 artsads@ucalgary.ca
CAMPUS SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calgary Police Service • Emergency Text Messaging • Emergency Evacuation & Assembly • Safewalk Program 	http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/ 403-220-5333 403-266-1234 Emergency: call 911 http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk
DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support	http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT help line 	403-220-5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca
<p>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Support Services • Student Services Mobile App 	http://ucalgary.ca/ssc http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents
<p>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Arts Reps • Student Ombudsman 	https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/ http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds
<p>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Services • Health Services • Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE • Online resources and tips 	<p>403-210-9355 (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</p> <p>403-266-HELP (4357)</p> <p>http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</p> <p>If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.</p>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Date	Topic/Readings
20.05	<p>Course Introduction Ideology, Epistemology and Methodology Paradigms in Social Research</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Shenton, Andrew K. (2004). "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects". <u>Education for Information</u>, Vol. 22, pp. 63-75. http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=13857302&site=ehost-live</p> <p>Ch. 2 (pp. 31-59).</p> <p>Elective Reading: Ch. 1 (pp. 4-30).</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 1 summary on D2L</p>
25.5	Ethics in social sciences - Introduction

	<p>Assigned Readings: Ch. 3 (pp. 60-70).</p> <p>Canadian Institute of Health Research, Natural Sciences, and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2010). “Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans 2nd edition (Ch. 1) http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/</p>
27.5	<p>Ethics in social sciences Including graded class-work – ethics quiz</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Canadian Institute of Health Research, Natural Sciences, and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2010). “Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans 2nd edition (Ch. 3,5) http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 3 summary on D2L</p>
01.06	<p>Textual Analysis (Content and Discourse)</p> <p>Assigned reading: Ch. 13 (381-393, 399-410)</p> <p>Elective Reading: O’Mara, Kathleen. K., & Morrish, Elizabeth (2010). “A Glass Half Full or Half Empty?: A Comparison of Diversity Statements among Russell Group v. US Research Universities”. <u>International Journal Of Diversity In Organisations, Communities & Nations</u>, 10:3, pp. 243-259. http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=65534373&site=ehost-live</p>
03.06	<p>Quantitative Content Collection Take Home Non-Cumulative (un-graded) Activity.</p> <p>Assigned reading: Ch. 5 Ch. 11 (pp. 322-341).</p>

08.06	<p>Quantitative Content Analysis Methods</p> <p>Assigned reading: Ch. 16</p> <p>themetapicture.com (21.07.2013) “People Kept Complaining This Restaurant Sucked, Look What They Found Out...” http://themetapicture.com/people-kept-complaining-this-restaurant-sucked-look-what-they-found-out/</p>
10.06	<p>Quantitative surveys</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Ch. 7 (pp. 182-211) Ch. 9 (pp. 246-261, 278-279)</p> <p>Elective Reading: Seker, Hasan (2011). “Developing a questionnaire on attitude towards school. <u>Learning Environments Research</u>, 14:3, pp. 241-261. http://link.springer.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/article/10.1007/s10984-011-9096-9</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 5 summary on D2L.</p>
15.06	<p>Ethnography Including graded class-work – unobtrusive observation activity (part of the ethnographic observation report).</p> <p>Assigned Readings:</p> <p>Ch. 10 (pp. 298-300)</p> <p>Miner, Horace (1956). "Body Ritual among the Nacirema." <u>The American Anthropologist</u>, vol. 58, pp. 503-507. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/665280</p> <p>Berenstein, Ofer (2012). “Comic Book Fans’ Recommendation Ceremony – A Look at the Inter-Personal Communication Patterns of a Unique Readers-Speakers Community”. <u>Participations – Journal of Audience & Reception Studies</u>, Vol. 9:1 (fall 2012). http://www.participations.org/Volume%209/Issue%202/7%20Berenstein.pdf</p> <p>Elective Reading: Berger, Leigh & Ellis, Carolyn (2007) “Composing Autoethnographic</p>

	<p>Stories”. In M. Angrosino (Ed.), <u>Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection</u> (2 ed., pp. 161-176). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. Posted to the course’s D2L website.</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 7 (in full).</p>
17.06	<p>Interviews - Non-Cumulative (un-graded) class activity Class Work Time Work towards the ethnographic observation report. Personal meetings to discuss the final paper.</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Ch. 9 (pp. 267-274)</p>
22.06	<p>Interviews and Focus groups Including graded class-work – interviews reflection task</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Ch. 10 (pp. 307-315)</p> <p>Elective Reading: Elliott, Charlene D. (2009). ‘Healthy food looks serious’: How children interpret packaged food products. <u>Canadian Journal of Communication</u>, vol. 34:3, pp. 359-380. http://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/docview/807509037?accountid=9838</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 6 summary on D2L</p>
24.06	<p>Interviews (Data Analysis Methods) The future</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Graneheim, U.H & Lundman, B. (2004). “Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness”. <u>Nurse Education Today</u>, 24:2, pp. 105–112. http://www.sciencedirect.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/science/article/pii/S0260691703001515</p> <p>Make Me an Expert Reading: May, Ch. 11 (in full).</p>