

**C & J 301: Communication Research Methods (Sec. 2)**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Tues. & Thurs. 5:00-6:15**  
**C & J 119**

**Dr. Judith Hendry, Instructor**

**Office Location: C & J 221**

**Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 12:30-1:30 and 3:30-4:30**

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**Course Description & Objectives**

We are confronted everyday with research findings. If we are to be knowledgeable, critical consumers of this research, we must understand the processes used to conduct it. The field of Communication employs multiple approaches and methods of inquiry in its exploration of the complex process of human communication. The primary goal of this course is to give students an understanding of the kinds of research used in communication studies and the standards and rigors demanded of “good research” in order that they may be better equipped to comprehend and critically evaluate research. The course focuses on five main learning objectives:

- To gain a basic understanding of the methods used to conduct research
- To learn how to create a research question and develop a research plan
- To learn how to use various data bases of published research
- To learn to comprehend, synthesize, and report published research
- To become critical consumers of research through critical evaluation of the methods and procedures used in conducting the research

**Required Textbook**

John Reinard (2001). *Introduction to Communication Research* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Students will also be required to purchase a *Supplemental Materials Packet*. The cost of this packet is less than \$5.00 and can be purchased from Education Printing Services.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

The following criteria will be used to determine your final grade based on straight percentage of a possible 230 points. In addition to the graded assignments, students are expected to attend class, participate in classroom discussions and exercises, and keep up with the assigned readings.

4 quizzes @ 25 points each (lowest score will be dropped)	75
Introduction and Problem Statement Paper	20
Sample Literature Review	15
Review of Literature	50
Final Paper	25
APA Source Citation Assignment	15
Qualitative Study Analysis Assignment	15
Quantitative Study Analysis Assignment	<u>15</u>
Total points	230

\*The final grade will be calculated by straight percentage of earned points to the total points.

Grade scale:

- 230-223 = A+
- 222-215 = A
- 214-207 = A-
- 206-199 = B+
- 198-191 = B
- 190-184 = B-
- 183-176 = C+
- 175-168 = C
- 167-161 = C-
- 160-153 = D+
- 152-145 = D
- 144-138 = D-

## **Description of Graded Assignments**

### Introduction and Problem Statement Paper (20 Points)

This is the first of three papers that will be combined to create the rationale and design for a research project. While you will not actually conduct the research that you discuss in these three papers, the study must be set up in such a way that it could actually be done. This first paper will introduce your research and the research question(s) you will explore. This section of the research project also discusses the relevance of your chosen topic to the field of communication and will justify its significance. This paper is expected to be 1-2 pages in length.\*

### Sample Literature Review (15 points)

For this assignment you will summarize only one of the studies that will later be included in your literature review. You should also include the reference list citation for this study. This will serve as a “practice run” for correcting errors before you turn in the full literature review. This will probably be one page or less.\*

### Review of Literature (50 points)

This paper will summarize the relevant research that has already been done in the area of study you have chosen to explore for your own research. This paper fundamentally answers the question, “what do we already know about this subject?” This paper is expected to be 4-6 pages in length and should include a complete reference list at the end\* **as well as the revised Introduction & Problem Statement.**

### Final Paper (25 points)

The final paper discusses methodology and details how you will carry out your research. This section includes operational definitions, the sampling plan, and a discussion of the methods of data analysis that you will employ. The methodology section is expected to be 2-4 pages in length. \*

\*All papers should follow APA source citation format.

\*Papers must be typed and attention should be paid to the crafting of the paper (typos, spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, organization, etc.)

\*Please turn in papers stapled and without plastic cover or folder—**no emailed papers please!**

\*We will be discussing these assignments in more detail in class and you will be given ample opportunity to ask questions to insure that you understand the assignment and what is expected of you.

### APA Source Citation Assignment (15 points)

This assignment is geared to give you working experience with the somewhat complicated source citation format that is used in our academic journals. Since most of the communication journals use the American Psychological Association (APA) format style, this is the one we will use for this assignment as well as in the papers

described above. For this assignment, you will be given a list of different types of sources (book, journal, magazine, Web site, etc.) and asked to correctly site these as if they were in the text of a paper or on a reference list.

#### Study Analysis Assignment (2 @ 15 points each)

You will be asked to read a study published from a communication journal (one qualitative and one quantitative study) and analyze this research using the concepts and terms we have learned throughout the class. In your reading packet are the questions to answer that will require short or one-sentence answers as well as a copy of the study you are to analyze.

#### Quizzes (25 points each)

There will be no midterm or final exams but there will be 4 quizzes covering the material in the textbook, handouts, lectures, and class discussions. You will be allowed to **drop your lowest quiz score. There will be no make-up for missed quizzes.** However, you may arrange to take a quiz prior to the class period in which it will be given if you know you will be unable to attend class that day.

### **Policies**

Attendance: Because this course requires the students' involvement in class exercises and discussions, attendance is essential. Students are allowed **4 free absences**. After that, **3 points will be deducted for each absence** from the student's total points at the end of the semester. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period and late arrivals are responsible for insuring that their name gets on the attendance sign-up sheet.

Graded Assignments: Students are expected to complete all assignments and turn them in by the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Due dates for graded assignments are printed in **bold letters** on the daily course schedule. Points will be deducted for late submissions.

#### ADA Accessibility

Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative accessible formats upon request.

#### Diversity

This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors as gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant cultural identities. This course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating.

#### Ethics

The course emphasizes ethical practices and perspectives. Above all, students and instructors should strive to communicate and act, both in class interactions and in assigned coursework, in a manner directed by personal integrity, honesty, and respect for self and others. Included in this focus is the need for academic honesty by students as stated by the *UNM Pathfinder*. Students need to do original work and properly cite sources. For example, be aware of plagiarism—directly copying more than 3 or 4 words from another author without quoting (not just citing) the author is plagiarism.

Daily Schedule: We will be following the course as it is outlined in the daily schedule. However, Dr. Hendry reserves the right to make minor adjustments to the schedule as necessary. Students will be given ample, fair notification of any necessary changes.

**Welcome to the Class!**

## Daily Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b> (To be completed by the corresponding class period)
<u>Jan.</u>	
T. 17	Introduction to the Course: Why Study Communication Research Methods?
Th. 19	Types of Qualitative Studies <span style="float: right;">Chapter 1</span>
T. 24	Types of Quantitative Studies
Th. 26	Problem Statements & Hypotheses <span style="float: right;">Chapter 2</span>
T. 31	Dependent and Independent Variables <b>Qualitative Study Analysis due</b>
<u>Feb.</u>	
Th. 2	Examining Your Research Questions
T. 7	Theoretic Conceptualizations <span style="float: right;">Chapter 3</span>
Th. 9	Levels of Measurement <span style="float: right;">Chapter 4</span> <b>Introduction &amp; Problem Statement Papers Due</b>
T. 14	Reliability and Validity
Th. 16	Catch-up and Review
T. 21	<b>Quiz 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4)</b>
Th. 23	Sources of Communication Research (Meet in Zimmerman, room 254)
T. 28	The Research Argument <span style="float: right;">Chapter 5</span> <b>APA Assignment due</b>
<u>Mar.</u>	
Th. 1	Textual Analysis <span style="float: right;">Chapter 6</span>
T. 6	Participant Observation <span style="float: right;">Chapter 7</span>
Th. 8	Catch-up and Review <b>Sample Literature Review due</b>
T. 13	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS!
Th. 15	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS!
T. 20	<b>Quiz 2 (Chapters 5, 6, &amp; 7)</b>

Th. 22	Content Analysis	Chapter 8
T. 27	Descriptive Empirical Research <b>Literature Review due</b>	Chapter 9
Th. 29	Experimental Designs	Chapter 10
<u>Apr.</u> T. 3	Factorial Design	
Th. 5	Catch-up and Review	
T. 10	<b>Quiz 3 (Chapters 8, 9, &amp; 10)</b>	
Th. 12	Sampling	Chapter 11
T. 17	Normal Curve & Standard Deviation <b>Quantitative Study Analysis due</b>	Chapter 12
Th. 19	Correlations	
T. 24	Faculty Research <b>Final Paper due</b>	
Th. 26	Catch-up and Review	
<u>May</u> T. 1	<b>Quiz 4 (Chapters 11 &amp; 12)</b>	
Th. 3	Breathe and Debrief	
T. 8	FINALS WEEK—NO CLASS	