

Communication Studies 505 – Section 1
Human Communication Research Methods
Spring Semester 2016

Meeting Days: Tuesday
Meeting Time: 9:05a – 12:05p
Meeting Place: 264 COM
Instructor: Dr. Michael R. Kotowski

Course Description

This course is a graduate level course designed to introduce research methods and statistical analyses commonly used in communication research. As such, emphasis will be placed on the practice of evaluating and executing social scientific communication research as well as the practice of performing and interpreting basic statistical procedures used to analyze the data that results from the execution of a research design. Although lesser attention will be given to the philosophy underlying particular research methods or analytic techniques students are welcomed to ask should it be desired for a given topic. By the end of the course students are expected to 1) learn how to think like a scientist, 2) gain the skills necessary to critically evaluate the quality of individual studies and bodies of research, and 3) gain the basic skills necessary to conduct social scientific communication research. The course will be taught in lecture/discussion format. **It is therefore essential that students read and study the assigned texts before coming to class.**

Contact Information

A key feature of a quality graduate education is close collaboration between faculty and graduate students. In an effort to foster that collaboration I view the relationship between faculty and graduate students as collegial, much like that between senior and junior partners in a law firm. It is important to point out, however, that with this collegiality comes the fact that I have the same expectations of graduate students that I have of my faculty colleagues. In order to foster this perspective I prefer to interact on a first name basis. If you are uncomfortable with that level of informality, let me know and I will adapt accordingly.

Office: 293 COM

I am willing to meet at places other than my office. If you prefer to meet elsewhere, such as a coffee shop, the library, etc., it can be arranged.

Email: mkotowsk@utk.edu

Email is the best way to contact me.

Office Hours: 12:00p – 1:30p Tuesday

If you cannot make these hours, you are welcome to make an appointment for another time by making the request via email.

Please do not see office hours exclusively as a time to address problems. You can use them to clarify points you do not understand, to get additional reading material, to talk about the subject matter in relation to your other interests, to review work in progress, to offer feedback or input about the course, to talk about employment or research possibilities, or for other reasons. In other words, you do not need a crisis to make productive use of this time.

Texts

Required

Crano, W. D., Brewer, M. B., & Lac, A. (2015). *Principles and Methods of Social Research* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Gravetter, F. J., & Wallnau, L. B. (2013). *Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Recommended

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

The APA Manual will make your life easier in this class and throughout your graduate career. If you do not already own it, make the purchase.

Other useful texts include, *Statistics as Principled Argument* by Abelson, *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, and *A Rulebook for Arguments* by Weston. These three texts will correct most people's deficiencies in how to use statistics, how to write, and how to argue.

Journal Articles

Booth-Butterfield, M., & Jordan, F. (1989). Communication adaptation among racially homogenous and heterogeneous groups. *The Southern Communication Journal*, 54, 253-272.

Darley, J. M., & Latane, B. (1968). Bystander intervention in emergencies: Diffusion of responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8, 377-383.

Festinger, L., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1959). Cognitive consequences of forced compliance. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 58, 203-210.

Hill, R. A., & Barton, R. A. (2005). Red enhances human performance in contests. *Nature*, 435, 293.

Peterson, R. S. (1997). A directive leadership style in group decision making can be both virtue and vice: Evidence from elite and experimental groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 1107-1121.

Word, C. O, Zanna, M. P., & Cooper, J. (1974). The nonverbal mediation of self-fulfilling prophecies in interracial interaction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 10, 109-120.

Evaluation

The purpose of assigning grades in a course is to assess the extent to which the students in the course mastered the material covered. Because it is your job as a student to master the substantive content in the course and it is my job as an instructor to help you master that content, for both of our benefits, I strive to create a valid and reliable method of evaluation. Therefore, you will be evaluated based on your performance on the following assignments.

Paper Assignments

The paper assignments are intended to help students understand and evaluate research.

Paper 1. This paper, worth a maximum of 15 points, involves identifying variables and their relationships in Hill and Barton (2005).

Paper 2. This paper, worth a maximum of 30 points, involves identifying concepts, variables, and relationships in Darley and Latane (1968).

Paper 3. This paper, worth a maximum of 45 points, involves identifying concepts, variables, and relationships in Word, Zanna, & Cooper (1974).

Paper 4. This paper, worth a maximum of 60 points, involves writing a review (summary and evaluation) of Booth-Butterfield and Jordan (1989).

Collaboration between students on Papers 1 through 3 is prohibited. Students may work collaboratively on identifying the components for the summary of Paper 4 but the evaluation and final written document must be completed individually.

Homework Assignments

The homework assignments are intended to allow students to practice statistical analyses.

To be accepted, completed assignments must: 1) be neat and readable (i.e., written responses should be clear and answers to math problems should be circled), 2) show each step to any math problem involving hand computations (this aids the instructor and you in finding how you thought through your answers), 3) provide and label all relevant documents for computer-generated answers (i.e., provide the SPSS output with answers labeled on the printout), and 4) be turned in, in class, on the due date. Homework assignments are worth 10 points each. Homework assignments must be completed individually. Collaboration with other students on any part of the homework assignments is prohibited.

Exams

The exams are designed to test the students' statistical knowledge. The format of both exams is multiple choice/true-false/short answer. Exams are worth 75 points each.

Research Proposals

These group projects will help students learn how to design research. In groups students will design two studies: 1) a laboratory experiment and 2) a field survey. Persuasion will be the topic of the experiment and leadership will be the topic of the survey. The group can choose a unique aspect of each topic to investigate for the respective study and develop their own predictions.

The group will define and provide measurements of their constructs, identify testable research hypotheses, and describe the procedure for conducting the studies. Students are not expected to execute the studies that they propose. Rather, they should provide a literature review, details of the procedures, measurements, and design as in a Method section of a research article, and include accompanying documents in an Appendix (e.g., questionnaire items, experimenter

instructions). Each proposal is worth a maximum of 75 points. Peer evaluations will be used to assess individual contributions to the final products.

Evaluation of Assignments

Page limits refer to text only, excluding title page, references, etc. Work exceeding page limits will neither be read nor graded. All papers must be typed and conform to APA 6 style. All papers will be evaluated on both content (accuracy, validity, insight, etc.) and writing (i.e., spelling, grammar, style, neatness, etc.) Content will count most, but writing style also influences grading. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the due date.

Participation

You are adults, I do not take roll. I shall, however, pass on the benefit of my experience. There is a substantial positive correlation between attendance and course performance. With that being said, students are expected to attend each and **every** class. **All** required reading assignments must be read **PRIOR** to the class date for when they are assigned, and the students must discuss the articles in an informed and thoughtful manner.

The instructor may, at his discretion, add or subtract up to 5% of the total points possible for participation. Students meeting or exceeding the expectations may gain participation points, while students failing to meet expectations may lose points.

Late Work

All work must be turned in at or before the beginning of class on the day in which it is due. Extensions may only be granted before the due date, and will only be granted for (what the instructor believes to be) valid reasons. The instructor may refuse to accept late work. If late work is accepted, it will receive an automatic 10% deduction from the grade given. Work more than 2 weeks late will receive a 25% deduction.

Assignment Schedule

Assignment	Points	Due
Paper #1	15	26 January
HW #1	10	2 February
Paper #2	30	9 February
HW #2	10	16 February
HW #3	10	23 February
Exam #1	75	1 March
Exp. Proposal	75	8 March
HW #4	10	29 March
Paper #3	45	5 April
HW #5	10	12 April
Paper #4	50	19 April
HW #6	10	26 April
Exam #2	75	5 May
Sur. Proposal	75	5 May
Total	500	

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90%-100%
B+	85%-89%
B	80%-84%
C+	75%-79%
C	70%-74%
Failure	0%-69%

Policy

Generally, I do **not** give make-up examinations, accept late work, or give incompletes. I realize that in **rare cases** they are necessary. If circumstances should arise that cause you to miss an examination, submit a paper late, or need an incomplete, then it is your responsibility to contact me and make the request. In the absence of a request you will receive a zero on the examination or the paper, and receive a grade in lieu of the incomplete.

If caught engaging in academic dishonesty in this course you will receive a zero in the course and be reported to your Major Professor, your Department Director, and the CCI Associate Dean. Lest there be misunderstanding, the University of Tennessee policy on academic dishonesty is reproduced in subsequent paragraphs from Hilltopics.

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Students are also responsible for any act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else's words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the University. Specific examples of plagiarism are:

1. Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Faculty members also have responsibilities which are vital to the success of the Honor Statement and the creation of a climate of academic integrity within the University community. Each faculty member is responsible for defining, in specific terms, guidelines for preserving academic integrity in a course. Included in this definition should be a discussion of the Honor Statement.

Student classroom conduct, including academic dishonesty, is the immediate responsibility of the instructor. He/she has full authority to suspend a student from his/her class, to assign an "F" in an exercise or examination, or to assign an "F" in the course. In addition to or prior to establishing a penalty, the instructor may refer the case to an Academic Review Board by notifying the administrative head of his/her academic unit and the Office of the Dean of Students, which shall prepare and present the case to the appropriate Academic Review Board.

For more detail than what is possible here please refer back to Hilltopics.

Approximate Schedule

Week 1

19 January *Topic: Methods and Statistics Overview*

Week 2

26 January *Methods Topic: Variables, Types of Relationships, Hypotheses*
Readings: Crano – Chapters 1 and 2
Paper #1

Statistics Topic: Frequency Distributions
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 1 and 2

Week 3

2 February *Methods Topic: Measurement*
Readings: Crano – Chapters 3 and 4

Statistics Topic: Central Tendency and Variability
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 3 and 4
HW #1

Week 4

9 February *Methods Topic: Experiments*
Readings: Crano – Chapter 5
Paper #2

Statistics Topic: Z-scores and Probability
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 5 and 6

Week 5

16 February *Methods Topic: Laboratory Experiments*
Readings: Crano – Chapters 6 and 7

Statistics Topic: Sample Means and Probability
Readings: Gravetter – Chapter 7
HW #2

Week 6
23 February

Methods Topic: Field Experiments
Readings: Crano – Chapter 8

Statistics Topic: Hypothesis Testing and the t Statistic
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 8 and 9
HW #3

Week 7
1 March

Methods Topic: Quasi-Experiments and Evaluation Research
Readings: Crano – Chapter 10
Exam #1

Week 8
8 March

Topic: Catch-up, Discussion, and Review
Experiment Proposal Due

Week 9
22 March

Methods Topic: Evaluating Experiments: Internal/External Validity
Readings: Crano – Chapter 2

Statistics Topic: The t Statistic for Two Independent Samples and the t Statistic for Two Related Samples
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 10 and 11

Week 10
29 March

Methods Topic: Survey Design and Sampling
Readings: Crano – Chapter 11

Statistics Topic: Introduction to Analysis of Variance
Readings: Gravetter – Chapter 12
HW #4

Week 11
5 April

Methods Topic: Asking Questions
Readings: Crano – Chapters 13 and 15
Paper #3

Statistics Topic: Repeated-Measures and Two-Factor ANOVA
Readings: Gravetter – Chapters 13 and 14

Week 12

12 April

Methods Topic: Observational Research

Readings: Crano – Chapter 12

Statistics Topic: Correlation

Readings: Gravetter – Chapter 15

HW #5

Week 13

19 April

Methods Topic: Measuring Cognition and Affect; Psychophysics

Readings: Crano – Chapters 16 and 17

Paper #4

Statistics Topic: Regression

Readings: Gravetter – Chapter 17

Week 14

26 April

Methods Topic: Meta-Analysis

Readings: Crano – Chapter 19

Statistics Topic: The Chi-Square Statistic

Readings: Gravetter – Chapter 17

HW #6

Week 15

5 May

8:00a – 10:00a

Exam #2

Survey Proposal Due