

COMM 4484-01-Mass Media Research
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30 pm – 1:50 pm
Nursing 115
Spring Semester 2015

Instructor: Dr. Patrick Hadley
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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Fridays: By appointment only

Overview

A survey of qualitative and quantitative research methods, data analysis and reporting procedures, and a critical analysis of research applications for print, telecommunication, electronic media, public relations, and advertising research.

You are responsible for learning all material presented in lectures and assigned readings. You are also expected to complete assigned readings prior to class, and to be prepared to make informed contributions to discussions. Lectures will focus on central concepts in assigned text, and will occasionally draw on information from additional sources. If you have questions at any point concerning course expectations or material, I encourage you to e-mail or visit me during office hours.

Learning Objectives

To explain the role of research in mass media, public relations, and advertising decision-making

To explain the research process and define the elements of research, particularly concepts, constructs, variables, measurements, reliability and validity

To define the primary research methods and explain similarities, differences, advantages, and disadvantages

To compare and contrast similarities and differences between industry and academic research

To conduct, analyze, evaluate, interpret, and communicate research

Required Text/Readings

Keyton, Joann (2015). *Communication Research: Asking Questions, Finding Answers* (4th Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Other assigned readings, videos, and online content.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Please carefully review the following information at this link (http://www.westga.edu/assets/Dept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf). It contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Attendance/Participation

You are required to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions. Class absence may compromise performance on exams given that exams will cover material presented in lectures and assigned readings. Class absence may also result in incomplete experiential research assignments that are assigned as in-class collaborative assignments. Arriving after class begins or leaving before class ends is discouraged as such behavior may distract the class.

You are allowed **three unexcused absences without penalty**. An unexcused absence beyond the three approved unexcused absences lowers your final grade percentage by one-half point (0.5 percent).

Note: It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to be aware of your attendance. EACH unexcused absence beyond the three approved unexcused absences lowers your final grade percentage by one-half a percentage point (0.5), up to a maximum grade percentage reduction of five percent. Arriving more than ten minutes late for class or leaving more than ten minutes before class ends also may lower your final grade percentage by one-half a percentage point. However, absences, late arrivals, and early leaves are excused in cases of unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. Requests must be made at least two hours before or after the class for which you are absent, arrive late, or leave early. The Google Voice number is available for urgent situations. To request an early or make-up exam under normal circumstances, contact me or leave a message and contact number at my office phone number of 678-839-4931.

CourseDen (D2L)

During the online component of the course, we will primarily use CourseDen (D2L) Discussions, Dropbox, Quizzes, Email, and Grades tools. You are expected to log in to CourseDen (D2L) regularly throughout the week, but especially within 24 hours of each scheduled class session. For CourseDen (D2L) assistance, including orientations and troubleshooting, I encourage you to reference the technical support resources at the bottom of your CourseDen homepage: UWG Online Helpdesk Services (<http://uwgonline.westga.edu/students.php/>), via email at online@westga.edu, or by phone at 678-839-6248.

The *Quizzes* tab is where you will access online exams and review your performance and class statistics.

The *Discussions* tab is where you will go for virtual classroom discussions.

The *Dropbox* is where you will access your assignments for class, where you will submit assignments to be graded, and where you will receive feedback.

Grades

You will use the *Grades* tab to view your grades in the class. Exam scores will typically be posted within three days of an exam. Grades for experiential research assignments will typically be posted within a week of due dates.

Email

The *Email* tool allows the members of the class to exchange emails with each other, and to exchange emails with me. Each time you log in, it is important that you check *Email*, particularly for messages from me. Do not send e-mail related to this course to my UWG e-mail address (unless you cannot access CourseDen).

Exams

You are expected to complete three online exams, which will be available for a 9 - 12 hour window on the assigned exam days. Students will have 80 minutes to complete the exam once they start.

Exams will cover assigned readings, videos, and related content, along with lecture material. Exams may include multiple-choice, true-false, matching, short-answer, and extended answer questions.

To ensure that exams are fair, a question analysis is performed for each exam to compare the responses of students who score in the upper quartile to the responses of those who score in the lower quartile. When the majority of students who score in the upper and lower quartiles perform poorly on particular questions, I give everyone credit for such questions if I find reasonable cause that the questions proved excessively difficult for the majority.

Early or make-up exams will be permitted only in cases of unavoidable situations outside the student's control, substantiated with documentation. Requests for early exams must be made at least 48 hours prior to the exam. To request an early or make-up exam, contact me or leave a message and contact number at 678-839-4931.

Experiential Research Team Assignments

To illustrate the complexity of conducting, analyzing, evaluating, interpreting, and reporting research, you will be required to complete four experiential research assignments in teams. These assignments are designed to explore specific research issues in more depth and to encourage critical thinking and collaborative decision-making skills. Guidelines and grading criteria for these team research assignments will be provided in a separate course handout.

Communication Research Presentations

At the end of the semester, research teams will be prepare a brief 4 - 6 minute overviews of a scholarly research study from the recent communications literature. This presentation can be delivered in-person using visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi) or can be narrated and delivered on a recorded basis using screencasting, animation or other video technology.

Evaluation

Assignments will be weighted as follows:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Exam 3	15%
Experiential Research Assignment #1	10%
Experiential Research Assignment #2	15%
Experiential Research Assignment #3	15%
Communication Research Presentations	10%
<u>Attendance/Participation</u>	<u>5%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Assignment and final grades will be based on the following percentage scale.

A	90% - higher
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	59% - lower

In the interest of academic integrity and fairness, please note that at the end of the semester, I do not offer extra credit opportunities, since grades may already include extra credit for problematic exam questions and bonus exam questions.

I round up final grade percentages, so a final grade percentage of 89.50 would be rounded up to 90. However, a final grade percentage of 89.49 would NOT be rounded up. Each point on every assignment is important to your final grade percentage and final letter grade.

[END OF SYLLABUS]

[CLICK HERE FOR [WEEKLY SCHEDULE IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT](#)]

Weekly Schedule (Subject to change)
COMM 4484 - Mass Media Research
Spring 2015

Week	Lecture/Discussion Topic	Assigned Content
Wk 1 Jan. 6 Jan. 8	Overview and Research Relevance Course Overview/Syllabus Review Discussion of Significance of Research	
Wk 2 Jan. 13 & 15	Introduction to Communication Research	Chapter 1 and online resources
Wk 3 Jan. 20 & 22	The Research Process & Research Ethics	Chapters 2 and 3 and online resources
Wk 4 Jan. 27 & 29	Introduction to Quantitative Research	Chapter 4 and online resources
Wk 5 Feb. 3 & 5	Measurement	Chapter 5 and online resources
Wk 6 Feb. 10 Feb. 12	Assessments *Experiential Research Team Assignment #1 <u>due by noon on 2/10</u> (Guidelines to be announced; post in D2L Dropbox- F2F class WILL MEET) *Online Exam #1 (Covers Chapters 1 - 5 and related content) Accessible on 2/12 via Quizzes link in D2L between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Eastern Time (no F2F class)	

Wk 7 Feb. 17 & 19	Quantitative Research: Populations, Samples, Sample Size	Chapter 6 and online resources
Wk 8 Feb. 24 & 26	Quantitative Research Designs	Chapter 7 and online resources
Wk 9 March 3 March 4 March 5	Assessment/Media Day * Experiential Research Team Assignment #2 due by NOON on 3/3 (Guidelines to be announced; post in D2L Dropbox- NO F2F class meeting) **Media Day** Surveys and Questionnaires (F2F class WILL MEET)	Chapter 8 and online resources
Wk 10 March 10 March 12	Surveys & Questionnaires/Assessment Surveys/Questionnaires * Online Exam #2 (Covers Chapters 5 - 8 and related content) Accessible on 3/12 via Quizzes link in D2L between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Eastern Time (no F2F class)	Chapter 8 and online resources
Wk 11 March 17 & 19	** Spring Break - University Closed**	
Wk 12 March 24 & March 26	Descriptive Statistics/Content Analysis	Chapter 9 & Chapter 12 (and related online content)
Wk 13 March 31 April 2	Content Analysis/Introduction to Qualitative Research Content Analysis/Intro to Qualitative Research	Chapter 12/Chapter 14 (and related online content)

Wk 14 April 7 & 9	Designing Qualitative Research/Qualitative Methods Focus Groups	Chapter 15 & 16 (and related online content)
Wk 15 April 14 April 16	Qualitative Methods: Focus Groups * Online Exam #3 (Covers Chapters 9, 12, 14, 15, 16 and related content) Accessible on 4/14 via Quizzes link in D2L between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Eastern Time (no F2F class) * Experiential Research Team Assignment #3 <u>due by NOON on 4/16</u> (Guidelines to be announced; post in D2L Dropbox- F2F class WILL MEET)	Chapter 16
Wk 16 Thurs. April 23, 11:00 am - 1:30 pm	Communication Research Presentations *Live communication research presentations will be delivered during Final Exam time slot *Links to files of recorded communication research presentations are due by 11:00 am April 23, 2015	

[END OF COURSE SCHEDULE - VERSION 1.0 - 15Jan06]