

Comm 3163: Communication Industry Research Methods

W/F, 8:45 am - 10:05 am, Journalism 360

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3105 Derby Hall

Office Hours: W 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm and by appointment

Emily Davidson, Graduate Teaching Assistant

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3055 Derby Hall

Lab: M 8:00 am - 9:50 am Journalism 224

Lab: M 10:05 am - 11:55 am Journalism 224

Office Hours: M 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm and by appointment

Office Hours: T 11:00 am - 1:00 pm and by appointment

Mackenzie Kibbe, Graduate Teaching Assistant

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3056 Derby Hall

Lab: M 12:10 pm - 2:00 pm Derby 3176

Lab: M 2:15 pm - 4:05 pm Derby 3176

Office Hours: M 4:05 pm - 6:05 pm and by appointment

Office Hours: T 12:40 pm - 2:40 pm and by appointment

Enrollment in this course constitutes an agreement to this syllabus and the general course structure. Some aspects of the course may change as necessary.

Course Description:

How do we know if a marketing strategy “works”? Whats the most effective way to determine what consumers like? Can subliminal advertising influence people’s buying behavior and how can we find out? This course answers these and many other questions by providing a broad overview of the methods used in the social sciences and the application of these methods in the media and communication industry (e.g., journalism, PR, advertising). By participating in this class, you will gain an understanding of how to conduct research and have hands-on experience with the research process.

Textbook:

Remler, D. K. & Van Ryzin, G. G. (2013). *Research Methods in Practice* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.

Additional Readings: Any supplementary readings will be posted on Carmen (<https://carmen.osu.edu/>).

Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Become familiar with classic and emerging methods in the social sciences and the application of these methods in the communication industry.
2. Articulate a formal research hypothesis or question.
3. Create a rigorous research design in order to answer your question(s).
4. Conduct, analyze, interpret, and share the results from a quantitative empirical study.
5. Complete a showpiece project that you can use to demonstrate your expertise during job interviews.

Course Format:

The course is composed of lecture sessions and a lab section. During lecture, I will discuss a large amount of information that goes beyond the assigned readings (such information will also appear in the exams). Thus, it is important that you attend each session and take good notes.

Grade Distribution:

This class has 200 possible points. Exams and assignments are weighted as follows:

Exam 1	30 points
Exam 2	30 points
Exam 3	40 points
Research Proposal	30 points
Research Instrument Design	20 points
Research Presentation	20 points
Lab Attendance	30 points

Letter Grade Distribution:

You must attempt each assignment and exam in order to receive a grade. Your final grade will be determined based on the combined score of the course exams and assignments. The grading distribution is as follows:

≥ 93.0	A	73.0 - 76.9	C
90.0 - 92.9	A-	70.0 - 72.9	C-
87.0 - 89.9	B+	67.0 - 69.9	D+
83.0 - 86.9	B	60.0 - 66.9	D
80.0 - 82.9	B-	≤ 59.9	E
77.0 - 79.9	C+		

Exams:

Bring a #2 pencil to each exam. The exam dates are noted on the course schedule (see below). Each exam will include multiple choice and true/false questions. The exams are cumulative in the sense that the course material builds on concepts from previous weeks. However, each exam will only focus on lecture and reading materials for the given time period. The lecture slides for each week will be posted to Carmen.

Assignments:

This class requires that you complete several group assignments. Your grade on each assignment will be determined by the overall quality of your group’s output. Each member of your group will receive the same grade, so it is important that you work together in order to earn the best grade possible. **Detailed instructions for each assignment are posted to Carmen.**

Research Proposal: You will conduct an original research project related to the communication industry. In a group of five students, you will identify a gap in our understanding and propose a research study designed to bridge this gap. This proposal will be no more than seven pages long (excluding references) and must cite a minimum of seven scientific sources. Your study must utilize one of the methods discussed in this course.

Instrument Design: Successful research studies begin with careful planning. It is important to be able to accurately measure the data you're looking for by designing research instruments that can capture it. In this assignment, your group will develop the materials necessary to test your research questions. These materials may include experimental procedures, survey instruments, or other quantitative observation techniques.

Research Presentation: Reporting your research findings is a crucial step in advancing our understanding issues related to the communication industry. Your group will give a 10-minute presentation in your lab section. The presentation must detail: (1) what you found and (2) how it conforms to what you expected.

Lab Section Attendance: A participation grade will be assigned by your lab instructors at the end of the course based on your attendance and active participation in lab activities and discussions. Note that attendance will be taken each lab. Students will be allowed TWO absences for personal matters during the semester. For each unexcused absence after that, you will lose 5 points for every lab session you miss.

Extra Credit:

Participate in a Research Study: Conducting scientific research is crucial to the mission and purpose of the School of Communication at The Ohio State University. You can earn 1 point of extra credit for each 0.5 hours of research participation (up to 4 points total) that you complete in School of Communication research studies. You must sign up for studies at: <https://osucomm.sona-systems.com/>. Be sure to read the detailed instructions on the SONA site. An alternative assignment is available if you do not wish to participate in a research study. Importantly, missing your research appointment or quickly clicking through surveys and giving researchers fake data will not earn participation credit. A non-research participation alternative is available if you wish to earn extra credit, but do not want to participate in a research study.

How to Succeed:

Show up: My lectures may touch on some of the course readings, but will also focus on material that is not in the readings. It would be boring (and an insult to your intelligence) if you read a chapter only to hear me explain it to you again in lecture. You will be tested on material that is only covered in lecture.

Do the readings: Since my lectures will focus on material that is not covered in the readings, it is critical that you do the class readings. The exams will include questions that are only discussed in the assigned reading.

Don't fall behind: We will cover a large amount of material this semester. You will quickly fall behind if you miss lectures or skip readings. Study as you go; do not try to cram before the exam.

Take good notes: Copying PowerPoint slides word-for-word is not effective! Just because you copied

the definition of a key term does not necessarily mean that you understand this term. I will provide examples and context to help you understand the bigger picture. Jot these examples down and synthesize what these slides mean in your own words. To help, I will post my slides to Carmen after each lecture.

Ask questions and participate: This is an interactive class where you will learn from me, your peers, and by playing an active role in producing scientific knowledge. OSU students are very smart and I know you have valuable insights to share with the class. You might not always agree with what I say. EXCELLENT! Speak up and voice your opinion. An honest and frank discussion of ideas is what makes science better (and fun)!

Academic Integrity:

All work must be the original work of the student and not turned in to any other course prior to this one. Cheating on exams is unacceptable and will result in: (1) a zero grade, and (2) a formal report to the School of Communication and the Committee on Academic Misconduct. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at <http://studentconduct.osu.edu>.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

School of Communication Diversity Statement:

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Policy on Selling Course Materials:

Course materials may *never* be shared or sold.

Policy on Late Assignments or Missed Exams:

Each assignment will require a combination of in-class and out-of-class collaboration with your group partners. Assignments build on each other and it is crucial that you have these assignments completed by the due date. Accordingly, assignments turned in after the due date will receive a zero grade. Failure to complete one assignment will also result in a failure to complete future assignments. Therefore, you must complete all assignments, even if you do not turn in all assignments for class credit.

Students are expected to attend class on all posted exam dates. Make-up exams are not allowed, except under the following circumstances: illness, death in the family, participation in an official University activity, or another documented emergency. In such circumstances, the student is required to provide official documentation for the emergency or conflict. In absence of such documentation, missed exams will result in a grade of zero points.

Tentative Course Outline:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class.

Week	Content
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Jan 11: Introduction & Class Schedule • F Jan 13: Importance of Research • Reading: Chapters 1 & 2
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Jan 18: Theory & Hypotheses • F Jan 20: Concepts & Measurement • Reading: Chapters 4 & 11
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Jan 25: Lab Experiments • F Jan 27: Field & Natural Experiments • Reading: Chapter 14 & Bronzaft
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Feb 1: Observational Studies • F Feb 3: Sampling • Reading: Chapters 5, 12, & 15
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Feb 8: Review Session 1 • F Feb 10: Exam 1 • Reading: Study for exam 1
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Feb 15: Surveys Part 1 • F Feb 17: Surveys Part 2 • Reading: Chapter 7 • IMPORTANT: Proposal due Friday
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Feb 22: Response Time Measures • F Feb 24: Psychophysiological Measures • Reading: Gladwell, Oxley
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Mar 1: Brain Imaging • F Mar 3: Content Analysis • Reading: Weber, Dixon
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Mar 8: Qualitative Methods • F Mar 10: Video • Reading: Chapter 3 • IMPORTANT: Research instrument(s) due Friday
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mar 13 - 17 No Class, Spring Break

Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Mar 22: Research Ethics • F Mar 24: Replication • Reading: Mandal, OSF
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Mar 29: Review Session 2 • F Mar 31: Exam 2 • Reading: Study for exam 2
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Apr 5: Applied Topic: Measuring Personality • F Apr 7: Applied Topic: Subliminal Advertising • Reading: None. Focus on your presentations
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Apr 12: Applied Topic: Neuromarketing • F Apr 14: Misinformation • Reading: Chapter 16
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Apr 19: Review Session 3 • F Apr 21: Exam 3 • Reading: Study for exam 3
Week 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W Apr 26: Finals week begins

Tentative Lab Schedule:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class.

Week	Content
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jan 9: Introduction
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jan 16: No Class, Martin Luther King Day
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jan 23: Lab exercise
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Jan 30: Lab exercise
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Feb 6: Lab exercise
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Feb 13: Proposal due Friday
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Feb 20: Lab exercise
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Feb 27: Lab exercise
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Mar 6: Research instrument(s) due Friday
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Mar 13: No Class, Spring Break
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Mar 20: Lab exercise
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Mar 27: Lab exercise
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Apr 3: Lab exercise
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Apr 10: Lab exercise
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M Apr 17: Presentations
Week 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M May 1: Presentations