**COMM 3000: Communication Research**

**Syllabus – Fall 2018**

**Instructor:** Ruonan Zhang

**Class Meeting:** T&TH 2:30pm – 3:45pm, Kuhlin Center 208

**Office:** 405 Kuhlin Center

**E-Mail:** ruonanz@bgsu.edu

**Office Hours:** Friday 9:30am – 6:00pm by appointment

**Required Textbook:**

Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2013). *Mass media research*. Cengage learning. <https://www.amazon.com/Mass-Media-Research-Roger-Wimmer/dp/143908274X/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1515318174&sr=8-2&keywords=mass+media+research>

Additional reading materials will be posted on Canvas.

**Course Expectations:**

* Enhance your knowledge and understanding of communication research process
* Enhance your knowledge and understanding of major communication research approaches, including both quantitative research approaches and qualitative research approaches.
* Enhance your knowledge and understanding of applications of communication research on interpersonal communication, organizational communication, communication psychology, and international communication.
* Help you become helpful reference on matters of communication research to people around you.

**Assignments (1000 points in total)**

***Attendance and Participation (160 points)***

Attendance and participation are the foundations of success in this class. You should attend all class meetings throughout the semester once you are enrolled in this course. You should not be late and should not leave the room before the class is dismissed. Also, attendance is not equal to participation. Therefore, you should actively participate in the discussions and answer in-class questions. Each week of course is worth **10** points. Since we have three meetings per week, each class meeting is worth **5** points. Students who attended all class meetings but didn’t participate in any in-class discussion will not earn full points for their weekly attendance and participation. The instructor will use Canvas Roll Call to mark attendance at the beginning of each class. Late attendance will receive 70% of attendance grade.

Since attendance is an important part of final grade, student missing more than 6 class meetings (3 weeks) cannot receive an A, regardless of their final score; students missing more than 12 class meetings (6 weeks) cannot receive a B or higher, regardless of their final score.

***Chapter Quizzes (130 points)***

Completion of assigned reading materials before attending class is critical to ensure good learning outcomes. Throughout the semester, 10 chapter quizzes will be given to students on Canvas to test their understanding of reading materials. Each chapter quiz will contain 1 to 4 multiple choice questions. Each quiz is worth **13** points. Students are expected to answer the quiz questions after reading correspondent chapter materials.

***Communication Research Projects (410 points)***

Students are expected to apply learned knowledge of communication research on two projects: qualitative research project and quantitative research project. Qualitative research project is an individual project. Quantitative research project is a group project conducted by 4 – 6 students. Detailed requirements for each project will be posted on Canvas. For both qualitative and quantitative media research projects, students are expected to construct research reports (individual report for qualitative research and group report for quantitative research) and prepare presentations. Visual aids (e.g. PPT, Prezi, pictures, audios, or videos) are required to assist the presentation and should be submitted on Canvas, not sent through email.

Qualitative media research project is worth **180** points (150 points for research report, 30 points for presentation) and quantitative media research project **230** points (200 points for research report, 30 points for presentation).

***Exams (300 points)***

Students are expected to complete two exams throughout the semester. Both are closed-book exams with multiple choice questions. The first exam will cover materials from chapter 1 to 4. The final exam will cover all learned materials of the semester. The first exam and the final exam are both worth **150** points.

***Initial Assessment***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Attendance & Participation | 10 \* 16 weeks | 160 |
| Weekly Quizzes | 10 \* 13 chapters | 130 |
| First Exam |  | 150 |
| Qualitative Research Project | 150 + 30 | 180 |
| Quantitative Research Project | 200 + 30 | 230 |
| Final exam |  | 150 |
| Total |  | 1000 |
|  |  |  |

**Grading**

Once the initial assessment is completed, your final score will be calculated by counting your absences. If the number of absences does not exceed 9, a letter grade will be given according to the following criteria: *A ≥ 900, 750 ≤ B < 900, 600 ≤ C < 750, 450 ≤ D < 600, F < 450.*

**Course Policies**

***Attendance***

Attendance will be taken by sign-in sheets. Students are responsible for making sure they have signed the attendance sheets. Excused absence will only be given to students who are attending university-sanctioned events or students with medical excuses. Proper documents must be submitted within seven days of the excused absence.

***Assignments via E-mail***

Assignments turned in via e-mail will NOT be accepted. Research project reports MUST be submitted via *Turnitin* on Canvas for plagiarism check.

***Late Work***

Except for the two exams**, I accept late works within two weeks after the due date.**However, **late works will only receive 70% of the points you earned.**For example, if your grade for a chapter quiz is 8 points out of 13, but you submitted the quiz late, you only receive (8 \* 70% = ) 5.6 points. For late research project report, if you received 100 points out of 150, you only receive 70 points. Excessive late works that are submitted more than two weeks after the due date will not be accepted.

***Communicating with Your Instructor***

Students are advised to contact the instructor via [ruonanz@bgsu.edu](mailto:ruonanz@bgsu.edu). Students’ emails are expected to be professional and courteous. Please put COMM 3000 in the subject line, use proper greetings, and sign your name to your emails. Emails regarding questions that can be answered by the syllabus will not be replied.

***Codes of Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy***

The instructor and students in this course will adhere to the University’s general Codes of Conduct defined in the BGSU Student Handbook. The Code of Academic Conduct (Academic Honesty Policy) requires that students do not engage in academic dishonesty. For details, refer to:

BGSU Student Handbook (http://bgsu.edu/downloads/sa/file15768.pdf)

The Academic Charter, B.II.H (http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/facsenate/page471.html)

Student Discipline Programs (http://bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/index.html)

***Disability Policy***

According to the University policy, students with documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Students can contact the instructor via email or by face-to-face meeting. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services for Students (http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability/).

***Religious Holidays***

In accordance with the University policy, each student should be able to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. In such cases, students should contact the instructor to inform the dates they will be absent. However, students who are absent for religious reasons are responsible for completing required work (paper or exam) missed. (As stated in The Academic Charter, B-II.G-4.b at: http://www.bgsu.edu/downloads/bgsu/file919.pdf).

***University Closure***

The University will close for winter conditions only when the Wood County Sheriff’s Department declares a Level 3 emergency. Information about University closures is communicated by the Office of Marketing and Communications. Students can get the information from University Fact Line, local FM & AM radio stations and the four Toledo television stations (see Weather Policy for lists).

***Indicator of Support for Student Success***

COMM 3000 requires a positive and supportive environment for all students. It’s the instructors job to make sure that all students are provided a safe learning environments. Therefore, some rules need to be made clear. No racist, sexist, homophobic, or any other type of oppressive, prejudiced language will be tolerated in this classroom. Students are expected to respect other students’ opinions, even with disagreement. Healthy, logical, and thoughtful debates are expected, instead of disrespectful insults. The instructor reserved the right to ask students who violated these rules to leave the classroom with no credit for attendance. Students who feel victimized by the above prohibited activities can contact the instructor via ruonanz@bgsu.edu or interpersonal meetings. My office hour is Thursday from 9:30am to 6:00pm.

Students are expected to use grammatically correct and word-processed in 12-point Times New Roman or Helvetica font for research reports, and double-spaced, spell-checked, grammatically correct, and word-processed in 12-point Times New Roman or Helvetica font with 1-inch margins for papers. For papers, please use introductions, transitions, and conclusions in accordance with standard academic writing. Students are expected to use APA or MLA style of academic writing. If students have any questions about any assignment, please contact the instructor via email. Students are also advised to use writing assistance (The Learning Commons, 140 Jerome Library, 419-372-2823).

**Pedagogical Efforts that Engage Students in the Learning Process**

Students are expected to read required readings before class and complete weekly quizzes on Canvas. Students are also encouraged to bring other related materials to share with the class. For papers and exams, if students encounter any difficulty, they are advised to contact the instructor through email or set up face-to-face meetings.

**Schedule and Methods of Assessment**

***Week 1: Introduction & Why Conduct COMM Research***

**TU 8/28:** Introduction to the Course, Syllabus, Methods of Knowing

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Thursday before class: Chapter 1 (Soft DDL, in case students haven’t received their textbooks. Hard DDL on 9/4 before class.)*

**TH 8/30:** Scientific Media Research Methods, Research Procedures

***Week 2: Key Elements of Research***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Tuesday before class: Chapter 2*

**TU 9/4:** Concept, Construct, Variables, Measurements

**TH 9/6:** Scales, Reliability, Validity

***Week 3: Research Ethics and Sampling***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Tuesday before class: Chapter 3*

**TU 9/11:** Media Research Ethics

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Thursday before class: Chapter 4*

**TH 9/13:** Population, Sampling, Probability Sampling Procedure

***Week 4: Sampling Procedure and Review for First Exam***

**TU 9/18:** Nonprobability Sampling Procedure

**TH 9/20:** Review of Key Learning Materials

***Week 5: Qualitative Research Approaches***

**TU 9/25:** **First Exam**

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Thursday before class: Chapter 5*

**TH 9/27:** Qualitative Research Methods

***Week 6: Qualitative Research Project***

**TU 10/2:** Qualitative Research Methods

**TH 10/4:** ***Assign Qualitative Research Project***

***Week 7: Content Analysis***

*Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Wednesday before class: Chapter 6*

**TU 10/9:** Content Analysis (uses, limitations)

**TH 10/11:** Content Analysis (reliability, validity, coding book)

***Week 8: Survey Research***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Tuesday before class: Chapter 7*

**TU 10/16:** Descriptive and Analytical Surveys

**TH 10/18:** Questionnaire Construction and Data Collection

***Assign Quantitative Research Project***

***Week 9: Longitudinal Research***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due before class: Chapter 8*

**TU 10/23:** Types and Uses of Longitudinal Research

**TH 10/25:** Case Study – Harvard Happiness Study

*\* Qualitative Research Project Report and PPT due on 10/30 before class*

***Week 10: Qualitative Research Presentations***

**TU 10/30:** Presentations – part 1

**TH 11/1:** Presentations – part 2

***Week 11: Qualitative Research Presentations***

**TU 11/6:** Presentations – part 3

**TH 11/8:** Presentations – part 4

***Week 12: Experimental Research***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Tuesday before class: Chapter 9*

**TU 11/13:** Uses and Limitations of Experimental Research

**TH 11/15:** Experimental Design

***Week 13: Communication Research Applications***

*\* Reading and weekly quiz* *due on Tuesday before class: Quiz 10*

**TU 11/20:** Communication research applications

**(11/21-11/23: Thanksgiving Break, NO CLASS)**

***Week 14: Workshop and Review***

**TU 11/27:** Quantitative Research Project Workshop (Bring your laptops)

**TH 11/29:** Review of the semester

***Week 15: Group Presentations***

*\* Quantitative Research Project Report and PPT due on 12/4 before class*

**TU 12/4:** Presentations – part 1

**TH 12/6:** Presentations – part 2

***Final Exam: Thurs, Dec 13, 11:30-2:00 pm***