

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

COURSE OUTLINE

1. COURSE TITLE

Approaches & Methods in Comm Research

2. COURSE CODE

COMM7020

3. NO. OF UNITS

3 Units

4. OFFERING DEPARTMENT

MA in Communication

5. PREREQUISITES

Nil

COREQUISITES

Nil

6. MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

English

7. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

This course is intended to be a lab where students can execute their critical thinking and creative abilities in exploring the world of mass communication research. While the main purpose is to expose students to the fundamentals of social scientific research methods and to familiarize them with a variety of research techniques in mass communication research that are useful to media professionals (e.g., surveys, experiments, content analyses), students will also be required to critically evaluate published research articles and creatively design their own research project.

8. COURSE CONTENT

1. Introduction to mass communication research and research resources
2. Research procedures
3. Research ethics
4. Research questions, variables, measurement, reliability, validity, hypothesis testing

5. Sampling
6. Experiments
7. Survey research
8. Longitudinal research
9. Content analysis
10. Quantitative data analysis: Using SPSS
11. Qualitative methods

9. COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (CILOs)

CILO	By the end of the course, students should be able to:
CILO 1	Describe the foundational principles of social research;
CILO 2	Assess the significance and competence of research publications;
CILO 3	Identify relevant research methods for communication problems; and
CILO 4	Apply basic skills in conducting mass media research and utilize appropriate statistics for data analysis.

10. TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES (TLAs)

CILO alignment	Type of TLA
1	Students will acquire understanding of the foundational principles of social research through lectures and assigned readings. They will demonstrate their understanding by taking quizzes and examinations.
2	Students' critical mind will be enhanced through research work critique, class discussion, and lectures.
3	Students' ability to identify and implement relevant research methods to communication problems will be enhanced through a term project, class discussions, and lectures.
4	Students will acquire research and statistical skills through SPSS workshops, class discussions, lectures, and the term project.

11. ASSESSMENT METHODS (AMs)

Type of Assessment Methods	Weighting	CILOs to be addressed	Description of Assessment Tasks
Class participation	20 %	1-4	Students will take part in informed and meaningful class activities after completing the assigned readings and assignments prior to class.
Individual assignment	20 %	1,2	Students will do an individual assignment to evaluate an empirical research article.

Group research projects	30 %	3,4	Students will need to write a research report to demonstrate their ability to design and implement a research to a communication problem. Both conceptual thinking and specific research skills/ability will be assessed.
Final exam	30 %	1-4	The final exam will integrate what have been gone through in the course. It will include factual, analytical and application type questions.

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