Communication 3163
Industry Research Methods
Online Summer 2020

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 1:30–2:30pm Eastern Time,
or by appointment

https://osu.zoom.us/j/99936481540
or by phone at 1(312)626-6799, room # 99936481540

Course Description and Prerequisites

What is the best way to introduce a new product into the market? How can politicians, mass media, and corporations maximize their audience reach? Is a PR campaign working? Does advertising on one media modality provide greater return on investment compared to another?

This course provides an overview of the research tools used by communication industry professionals to answer these questions and more. By participating in this class, you will gain an understanding of how to conduct and evaluate scientifically rigorous research through hands-on application.

Statistics 1350, 1450, or equivalent is required to enroll in this class. This course fulfills the research methods requirement for communication majors.

Course Format

This class will be taught asynchronously. Video lectures and assignments will be posted online as described in this document. All times listed in the schedule below and on Carmen are in Eastern Daylight Time (Ohio). Please see https://savvytime.com/converter/edt if you need to convert time zones. You are responsible for watching lectures and completing assignments in a timely manner.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, you will:

- Be familiar with classic and emerging methods in the social sciences — and in communication specifically — and with the application of these methods in an industry setting.
- Be able to articulate a formal research hypothesis or question.
- Create a rigorous research design in order to investigate a hypothesis or question.
- Understand how to conduct, analyze, interpret, and convey results of a qualitative or quantitative study according to the scientific method.
- Complete a research proposal based on real-world examples of consultation requests from marketing and communication industry clients.

Course Materials

Required:

Croucher, S. M., & Cronn-Mills, D. (2019). *Understanding communication research methods: A theoretical and practical approach* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Note: the OSU library has purchased unlimited access to the e-book for the 2nd edition which you can download here: https://library.ohio-state.edu/record=b8833614~S7. The 1st edition may not contain all of the material covered in this course.

Recommended:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

Note: This is the industry standard for report formatting and will be the standard expected of all writing assignments in this course. This edition is very new and is unlikely to be updated for at least a few years, so it's a worthwhile investment.

Course Technology

For help with passwords, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, please contact the OSU IT Service Desk. In-person help is available at the IT Service Desk located in Thompson Library (hours available here: https://ocio.osu.edu/help). You can also get 24/7 help by either emailing servicedesk@osu.edu or by calling (614)688-4357 (HELP). OCIO also maintains a self-help website which addresses many common issues: https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/

Any users encountering accessibility issues with any of the systems or applications described here may contact the OCIO accessibility help line at (614)292-5000.

Carmen

Carmen, Ohio State's learning management system, will be used to host course materials, lectures, and assignments throughout the semester. Lectures will be uploaded (unless otherwise stated in the schedule) at 12:00 am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of each week. Lectures should be viewed within 24 hours of posting to ensure that you are up to date with the course.

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance will be based on your online activity and participation.

To access Carmen, visit https://carmen.osu.edu/. Resources regarding how to use Carmen are available at https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen.

If you require accessible accommodations to use Carmen, please contact the instructor via email or visit https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2061 to learn more about the resources available on Carmen.

Zoom

Office hours will be held through Ohio State's online conferencing platform, Zoom. Students may connect to the Zoom meetings using either a computer with a microphone (video not required), or via phone using the number listed at the top of this document. The Zoom meeting will utilize a waiting room function to protect student privacy; if you join the meeting, but are unable to progress past the waiting room after a few minutes, please send me an email.

For help with Zoom, visit https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenzoom.

Proctorio

Proctorio, an online proctoring tool, will be used for all exams during this course. Proctorio offers you the flexibility to take your exams at the time and location of your choosing. To use Proctorio, students are required to have a webcam (USB or internal) with a microphone and a strong and stable internet connection; for more information about computer requirements, see https://proctorio.com/support#minReqs.

During an exam, Proctorio will record the testing environment. Therefore, students should select private spaces for the exam session where disruptions are unlikely and where recording devices can be enabled. Instructions for Proctorio use will be provided. To use Proctorio, you must be 18 years of age or older. Additionally, the tool has limitations which inhibit the use of accessibility software, such as screen readers and keyboard navigation. If you have concerns about using an online proctoring tool for the reasons listed above or in general, please work with your instructor to

find an equivalent alternative. Information about academic integrity at Ohio State is provided below. <u>Additional proctoring options</u> may be available.

Additional Information

Basic computer and web-browsing skills and familiarity with Carmen are necessary to participate in all facets of the class. You will require daily access to a computer running a modern operating system (Windows 7+, OSX 10.12+, or ChromeOS). Additionally, a reliable internet connection for at least one hour per day will ensure that you are able to watch lectures and complete exams without interruption.

To complete assignments, it is necessary to have access to both a word processing application (e.g., MS Word, Pages, Google Docs, LaTeX, etc.) as well as spreadsheet editing software (e.g., MS Excel, Numbers, Google Docs, etc.). OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products free of charge. OSX and Windows users can download the applications by logging in with their student email address at <u>https://buckeyemail.osu.edu</u>, clicking the profile picture in the top-right corner, selecting "My Account", and then clicking "Install Office".

Assignments and Grading

All assignments must be submitted on Carmen. DO NOT email papers or assignments to me. All documents must be submitted for a plagiarism check provided by TurnItIn. The only exception to this rule is for the draft proposals; for that assignment, you will email your paper to both me and one other student which I will assign. You will then provide your feedback to the student who emailed you their paper, again copying me on the email to receive credit.

Exams [35%]

There will be three exams in this course: one at roughly mid-term, one near the end of the semester, and one during finals. The first two exams are non-cumulative; in other words, the second exam will only cover material taught after the first exam. The third exam will be cumulative, covering all material taught since the beginning of the course. Each exam will consist of roughly 40-45 multiple choice questions. A study guide will be provided at least 72 hours before each exam.

I will drop your lowest exam grade out of the three. In other words, I will calculate the exam portion of your final course grade using only the two highest scores. If you have taken the first two exams and you are satisfied with your grades on those tests, you are not required to take the final exam if you do not wish to do so.

All exams will take place online using Carmen. The exams will go live at 12:00 am on the scheduled test day (see schedule attached) and exams will close at 11:59 pm the same day. You will have 1 hour within that window to

complete the exam once you have started. If you start after 11:00 pm, you will not be afforded extra time! Tests will be graded automatically and answers will go live on Carmen the next day. Although it is not promised, I reserve the right to alter exam grade in students' favor if warranted.

Academic integrity is taken very seriously in this course, and this is especially so for exams. You are expected to complete your exams alone, without the help of others (both Comm 3136 students and non-students).

Research Proposal [35%]

At the beginning of the semester, you will be assigned one of eight research requests which are based on real-world quotes from clients in the marketing and communication industry. Your task is to craft a research design which addresses the problem posed in the quote. This design will be presented in a final paper approximately 8-10 pages in length.

A rubric is provided at the end of this document as well as on Carmen. In general your paper must include: a statement of the problem, a clear and reasoned explication of the chosen method or methods, a target sample and a sampling procedure, detailed instruments such as survey measures or an interview guide, in-depth arguments concerning internal validity, external validity, and reliability of your measures, and a statement concerning participant protections. Although you will not be required to consider a budget for your study, your paper should make a strong case for why your imagined client should fund your study.

Your paper must follow APA guidelines for both document formatting and citations. You will be required to cite at least three academic (peer-reviewed journal article, book, or other scientific source) sources in your final paper. Examples of useful citations include studies which addressed a similar problem to your proposal, or which used a measure of a construct that you would like to include in your design.

The grade for the final paper will be broken down into two parts: draft (15%) and the final paper (20%). For the draft, you will be required to send your manuscript in close to its final form to both myself and one other student (assigned) by noon. You will then have 36 hours to read a draft sent to you by another student and provide a (min.) 2-paragraph response to their paper, emailed to me as well for credit. Responses should be constructive and use course content to identify both strengths and weaknesses of the design. I will also provide feedback to drafts which will err closer to the requirements of the rubric. Grades for the draft portion will be given as follows: 5% for sending a draft in (completion), and 10% for providing feedback (length and quality of comments). **If you do not provide a draft to be reviewed, you will also lose out on the points for feedback provided to others.**

Documentaries [12%]

In lieu of lecture, there will be three days for which you will be required to watch a video or series of short videos which either demonstrate a research method or expand on the topics discussed in a recent lecture. Videos will be embedded in the assignments module on Carmen. After watching the video, you must participate in a discussion board related to the video. You are expected to ask one substantive question (2%) and one substantive response to another student's question (2%). Substantive questions and responses should promote the discussion of course concepts.

For example, if you had watched a documentary about the interview method, a substantive question might read: "I felt really uncomfortable with all of the long awkward pauses while watching this. What kinds of follow-up questions could the interviewer have asked to facilitate more conversation about this sensitive topic?". A substantive response to this question would be "You're right; it's like he forgot how to ask 'why?'. Maybe a more semi-structured approach could have helped him keep the conversation moving. I thought that he did a good job of keeping his opinions out of the interview though, which is an important component of structured interviews (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019, pp. 114)." Other students' questions and responses will be hidden until you provide a question or response (respectively), so it's ok if you end up providing something similar to what someone else posts.

Links to the video and discussion board will go live at 12:00 am the day before the due date and the discussion board will close at 11:59 pm on the due date (48 hours). These assignments will require about the same amount of time to complete as watching a typical lecture, so don't wait until 11:30 pm to start the video!

Training Certificates [10%]

You will complete two online training courses worth 5% each, and will be graded by completion: the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative's (CITI) Human Subjects Protections course, and the Google Analytics for Beginners course. These courses provide sought-after credentials from communication research industry professionals; the certificates you'll receive can also improve your résumé. PDF certificates can be uploaded to Carmen for credit.

Practices [8%]

Two practical assignments will help you get additional practice with constructing and operationalizing some of the methods taught in this course. For the first practice, I will provide you with a prompt similar to one of the client requests for the study proposal. Your task will be to construct a 5-item survey instrument using at least three of the measurement types discussed in class. You may construct your instrument in a word processor

and submit it through Carmen. I will grade this assignment based on three criteria: relevance to the prompt (1.5%), number of questions (1.5%), and variety of question types and scales (see pp. 209 of the textbook; 1.0%).

The second practice will ask you to devise a content coding scheme and conduct a short content analysis using images on a website. This task will require at least two but no more than three people to complete. You may collaborate with other students in the course, or ask a roommate, friend, relative, or coworker to help you code the content. Responses can be filled into the provided spreadsheet and uploaded to Carmen along with a brief (4–5 sentence) interpretation of the reliability coefficient and assessment of the devised coding scheme. I will grade this assignment based on three criteria: completion of the coding document (1.0%), interpretation of reliability metrics (i.e., "good"/"fair"/"poor"; 1.5%), and the assessment of the coding scheme (i.e., why was the reliability good/bad – what would have helped you and your partner code better?; 1.5%). Both assignments should take approximately 40–60 minutes to complete.

Extra Credit

Students may participate in the Communication Research Experience Program (C–REP) to earn extra credit for the course. C–REP is designed to give students direct exposure to the topics, goals, methods, and ethical issues of communication research, so it is a particularly useful experience for this course. Participation may take the form of any combination of the following:

- Completing up to 3 hours of C–REP research studies
- Completing up to 3 alternative writing assignments

Extra credit is earned at 1% per hour of study participation, or 1% per writing assignment, for a maximum of 3%. Studies fill up quickly, so DON'T wait until the end of the semester! You may sign up for studies by visiting https://osucomm.sona–systems.com. Additional information about C–REP can be found on the Carmen course page. Please direct any specific questions to the C–REP manager, Shannon Poulsen, at poulsen.6@osu.edu.

Late Assignments

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at 11:59 pm Eastern on the date listed in the schedule below. A 2–hour grace period will be given for assignments to ease any technology or personal issues that may arise. Late submissions for assignments will not incur a penalty during this grace period. However, assignments turned in after this time will incur a late penalty of 20% for each 24–hour period following the due date. There is one exception to this policy: the proposal draft. Because this assignment requires that you send another student your paper, and their ability to complete the review would be hampered, late submissions will not be accepted for the draft.

Grading Scale

Percentage Grade	Letter Grade
93%–100%	A
90%–92.9%	A–
87%–89.9%	B+
83%–86.9%	B
80%–82.9%	B–
77%–79.9%	C+
73%–76.9%	C
70%–72.9%	C–
67%–69.9%	D+
60%–66.9%	D
<60%	E

Note: I do not round up percentage points at the end of the semester. In other words, the grade you see in the Carmen gradebook will be the final grade I enter into BuckeyeLink. Please keep this in mind throughout the semester.

Additional Course Policies

Feedback and Response Time

I am typically quick to respond to emails that are received during normal business hours (9–5 Eastern). You can usually expect a response within 24 hours. Outside of that time, I may still be close to my email – however, a response is not guaranteed until the next business day. Grades will typically be uploaded within 72 hours of the due date. However, the final papers and drafts may take longer for me to grade.

If you require immediate technical assistance after hours, such as problems with submitting an assignment, please call (614)688–4357.

Academic Integrity

Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. If you make reference to another person's work, you MUST cite the source following APA style. You may ask a trusted person to proofread your writing, however all revisions must be your own work.

In general, the university prohibits you from turning in work from a previous class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you would like to build on your previous research or revisit a topic you wrote about in a previous course, please discuss this with me.

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 https://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/.

Copyright Disclaimer

Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are exclusively for the use of students officially enrolled in this course for educational purposes. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of this course. This includes, but is not limited to: assignments, reading materials, video lectures and associated PowerPoint documents, and other related material. If you are unsure of whether this policy applies to a particular document or circumstance, please contact the course instructor: sweitzer.34@osu.edu.

Student Services

The College of Arts and Sciences' Advising and Academic Services website provides resources for the support of students' academic success. Information on advising, tutoring, transfer credits, academic standing, and contact information for academic advisors can be obtained here: https://advising.osu.edu/.

Additionally, the Student Services Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition, and fee payments. Please visit https://ssc.osu.edu for more information.

Diversity and Inclusion

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.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at https://titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu.

Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting https://ccs.osu.edu or calling (614)292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at (614)292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline [Columbus: (614)221-5445]

Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Requesting accommodations

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health and chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options for you to participate in the course. You are also welcome to register with the Student Life – Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. If you are already registered, or newly registered, please let me know so that I may implement your accommodations in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; (614)292–3307; https://slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 West 12th Avenue, Columbus, OH

Schedule

The schedule below is tentative and subject to change. This document will be updated and an email will be sent whenever changes are made.

	Date	Reading	Assignment
Week 1	6/9/20	Introduction to the Course – No Reading	
	6/10/20	Research and Ethics (p. 3–17)	
	6/11/20	**Documentary #1** – Research Ethics **(11:59 pm)**	
Week 2	6/15/20	Social Scientific Paradigm (p. 19–28)	**Email your topic preferences to Matt (11:59 pm)**
	6/16/20	Interpretive & Critical Paradigm (p. 29–48)	
	6/17/20	Data & Sampling (p. 51–64)	
	6/18/20	Measurement, Validity, and Reliability – No Reading	
Week 3	6/22/20	Evaluating Research (p. 65–75)	**IRB – Human Subjects Protection CITI Certification (11:59 pm)**
	6/23/20	Hypotheses and Research Questions (p. 77–89)	
	6/24/20	Ethnography (p. 93–106)	
	6/25/20	Interviewing (p. 113–124)	**Google Analytics Certificate (11:59 pm)**
Week 4	6/20/20	Focus Group (p. 129–139)	
	6/30/20	**Documentary #2** – Focus Groups in Action **(11:59 pm)**	
	7/1/20	Discourse Analysis (p. 191–201)	
	7/2/20	**EXAM 1 (11:59 pm)**	
Week 5	7/6/20	Surveys (p. 205–219)	
	7/7/20	Surveys (cont.)	**Practice – Survey Instrument (11:59 pm)**
	7/8/20	Descriptive Statistics (p. 227–240)	
	7/9/20	Inferential Statistics (p. 247–270)	
Week 6	7/13/20	Content Analysis, Qual. (p. 161–169)	
	7/14/20	Content Analysis, Quant. (p. 175–185)	**Practice – Content Analysis (11:59 pm)**
	7/15/20	Social Media (p. 147–159)	
	7/16/20	Social Network Analysis – Reading TBD	
Week 7	7/20/20	**Documentary #3** – Both Sides of the Big Data Debate **(11:59 pm)**	
	7/21/20	Psycho-physiological Measures – Reading TBD	
	7/22/20	No reading – Matt available on Zoom	**Draft Project Proposal Sent to Reviewers (noon)**
	7/23/20	No reading – Matt available on Zoom	**Review Comments Due (11:59 pm)**

	Date	Reading	Assignment
Week 8	7/27/20	**EXAM 2 (11:59 pm)**	
	7/28/20	Rhetorical Criticism (p. 291–301)	
	7/29/20	Critical/Cultural (p. 307–315)	
	7/30/20	No reading – Matt available on Zoom	**Final Project Proposal Papers (11:59 pm)**
	8/3/20	**FINAL EXAM (11:59 pm)**	

Name: _____   Topic: _____

COMM 3136 – Industry Research Methods
Final Paper Rubric

Problem Statement			
The problem is well-defined and the research is justified. Relevant concepts and hypothesized relationships are clearly stated and supported with strong arguments. 5.00%	The problem, concepts, and hypotheses are stated, but the arguments about the relevance of the study and justification to the client are weak. 3.33%	The problem is stated, but the concepts are not well defined. Hypotheses and the arguments supporting them are weak. 1.67%	The problem is poorly stated and/or relevant concepts are not discussed. Hypotheses or the arguments supporting them are absent. 0.00%

Instrument Design			
The choice of method and the supporting measurement instrument(s) are clearly defined. Scales, stimuli, coding schemes, or interview guides are thorough. Specifics including names of study administrators are incorporated. 7.50%	Discussion of the method and measures are present, reasonably detailed, and justified, but the specifics of the design are not sufficiently fleshed out. Scales, stimuli, coding schemes, or interview guides require more detail. 5.00%	The chosen method is presented but not justified. Measures are presented, but gaps or flaws in the measurement strategy exist. There are few specifics are provided about the measurement and analysis strategy. 2.50%	The method and measures are discussed in general terms, but instruments are not provided and/or not sufficiently justified. Scales, stimuli, coding schemes, or interview guides –if present– have serious gaps or flaws. 0.00%

Data Collection Plan			
The population of interest and sampling procedures are clearly defined. A specific probability or non-probability sampling method is selected and strongly justified. Specifics regarding data collection and sampling procedures are described thoroughly. Threats to reliability and internal/external validity are detailed. 5.00%	The population of interest and sampling procedure is defined and acceptably justified. Specific information, such as the sampling frame or survey administration method, is insufficiently described. Reliability and internal/external validity are discussed, but not sufficiently detailed. 3.33%	The population of interest and sampling procedures are discussed in cursory terms and lacking specific information. External validity, internal validity, and reliability of the study are each discussed, but the corresponding arguments are flawed. 1.67%	The population of interest is missing and/or the sampling procedure is not discussed in enough detail. Arguments pertaining to one or more of external validity, internal validity, and reliability of the study are missing entirely. 0.00%

Name: _____   Topic: _____

Data Privacy Plan		
Plans to protect the privacy of human subjects' data are presented in great detail, including specifics pertaining to participant consent, data retention, and methods of contact post-study. Any risks to the participants are discussed and sufficiently justified.	Plans to protect the privacy of human subjects' data is presented, but specifics about some plans are missing or inadequately justified. Risks may be presented, but are not reasoned against the benefits of the study.	Plans to protect the privacy of participants are discussed only cursorily. Serious flaws exist concerning the arguments about the presence of risks.
2.50%	1.25%	0.00%

APA References and Formatting		
3+ references are provided and proper APA formatting is followed with only a handful of minor errors	Only 2 references are provided and/or several minor errors in APA formatting are present	1 or no references are provided and/or there are many serious issues with APA formatting
-0.00%	-1.00%	-2.00%

Final Grade: _____ /20.00%

Comments:

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