

# In-class Assignment 4: Experimental Design (12 points)

**Objective:** To provide practical experience in designing an experiment within the field of communication studies.

**Submission:** Submit your completed assignment as a PDF on Canvas by the deadline (see Canvas assignment).

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## Part 1: Conceptualizing Your Experiment

### 1. Research Question

Formulate a clear and concise research question related to communication. For example, “How does the use of emojis in text messages affect the perceived tone of the message?” *Note: Do not use this example in your own assignment.*

### 2. Hypothesis

Develop a testable hypothesis based on your research question. For example, “Messages with emojis are perceived as more positive than messages without emojis.”

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## Part 2: Designing the Experiment

### 3. Variables

*Independent Variable (IV):* Identify the variable you will manipulate (e.g., presence or absence of emojis).  
*Dependent Variable (DV):* Identify the variable you will measure (e.g., perceived tone of the message).

### 4. Participants

Describe how you would select participants for your study. Include details about any inclusion/exclusion criteria. How might your choice of sampling bias the results of your experiment?

### 5. Experimental Groups

Explain how you will divide participants into groups (e.g., control group receiving messages without emojis and experimental group receiving messages with emojis).

### 6. Procedure

Outline the steps you would take to conduct the experiment. Include details about how you will present the messages to participants and how you will measure their responses. Think back to the last in-class assignment on survey research and use what you learned in that chapter to answer this question.

### 7. Control Measures

Describe how you will control for potential confounding variables to ensure the validity of your results (e.g., ensuring all messages are of similar length and content). In your own words and using your experiment as an example, explain why it is necessary to control for potential confounding variables.

### 8. Antecedent and Intervening Variables

Determine whether there are antecedent and intervening variables that might affect the outcome of your experiment. List and describe these variables. Be sure to explain why you think they might affect the outcome of your experiment.

### 9. Ethical Considerations

Discuss any ethical considerations you need to take into account when conducting this experiment. How will

you ensure the participants' privacy and consent? Are there other ethical considerations of which you should be aware?