

CONTENT ANALYSIS
MC 9205 (sec 01). 3 credit hours
Mondays 5:30-8:00 pm, Annenberg 005

Course Info.

Registration Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Graduate.

Repeatability: This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

Pre-requisites: MMC 9001|Minimum Grade of B-|May not be taken concurrently.

Instructor

Dr. Jessica Castonguay
E-mail: Tug11607@Temple.edu
Phone: 215-204-2396

Office: Weiss Hall Room 304
Office Hours: T/Th 2-3:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This seminar-style course explores various approaches to analyzing the content and potential effects of documented communications--written materials (such as news articles, print ads, or transcripts of conversations), audio/visual forms (such as movies, TV programs, commercials, photographs, or videos of nonverbal behaviors), and interactive media (such as gaming and online applications). Content analysis is a systematic way of analyzing message content. In addition to "human coding" of topics such as TV violence, this course introduces you to a number of software options for computer text analysis, an evolving set of techniques for analyzing the written word in an era of unprecedented digital retrieval capability. The course's emphasis is on the design and execution of actual content analysis studies--methods of producing meaningful data to answer critical questions about all types of messages.

COURSE STRUCTURE: The course will be a mix of lecture, discussion and workshops, with the focus on developing and conducting a content analysis study during the semester. In terms of class sessions, workshops will generally be informal, but all students will be expected to attend class and participate in the group activities for the day.

READING: Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). The content analysis guidebook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

[Formats and genres](#)
[Reliability in content analysis](#)
[Potter & Levine-Donnerstein \(1999\)](#)

[Cultural Indicators Project](#)
[National TV Violence Study](#)
[Linkage Study](#)
[Political Ads](#)

Social Network Analysis-https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/35208_Chapter1.pdf

COURSE POLICIES: Any student suspected of dishonesty, including cheating or not doing his/her own work may be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee and risks failure.

GRADING:

7 pts: Participation will be based on how active you are in discussions as well as your completion of assigned coding tasks for an ongoing content analysis project. Each student will be assigned 15-20 episodes to code over the course of the semester.

25 pts: The first half of the semester will be spent learning about content analysis. This will culminate in an in-class exam.

8 pts: The second half of the semester will be spent reviewing published content analyses on a variety of topics. Each student will locate and present a critical review of 1-2 content analyses (2-3 page written review) as well as provide 3-4 discussion questions to the class. Each presentation should last about 30 minutes with an additional 10-15 minutes for discussion.

For each presentation you will identify a content analysis and provide the article to your classmates one week prior to your presentation date. When presenting, review the study critically.

Describe the rationale/theoretical foundation for the study. Identify the communicative process addressed (source to message; message to receiver; purely descriptive) and type of data link used (type A, type B, logical, or none).

State whether it is a traditional content analysis or more similar to other analyses discussed (psychometric, semantic, rhetorical, narrative, discourse, conversation, etc.).

How was the sample selected? What sampling method was used? Was this an appropriate choice? (describe pros and cons) Identify the unit of analysis, unit of data collection and unit of sampling. Are they the same?

What are the IVs and DVs and are they manifest or latent? How are the concepts and constructs defined and operationalized? What is the level of measurement for each variable? Critically assess these choices.

How many coders were used? How were they selected/trained? How was reliability reached?

What are the findings? Assess the validity. Do you agree with the authors' conclusions and interpretations?

What are the limitations of this study and how would you address them? What future research would be helpful in furthering this line of research?

60 pts: The majority of the grades from the class will come from the content analysis project you undertake.

Topic approval (1 pt)- Select the content type and format you and your partner plan to analyze for your final project.

Theoretical Framework Draft (5 pts) Write 1-2 pages reviewing the theoretical framework/rationale that you think best addresses your chosen topic. Explain the theory/rationale and specifically identify the content related variables you will need to measure and any specific aspects of the theory that help define and measure these variables.

Literature Review Draft (15 pts)- Write a 6-7 page review of research on the topic in APA format. Specifically focus on any similar content studies as well as experimental and survey research that justifies the assumed effects of the content under investigation. 3-5 research questions or hypotheses should be firmly supported and woven throughout the literature review.

Codebook Drafts (4 pts)- An initial draft of clear instructions and definitions for coding all variables of interest should be formed and revised following each round of exploratory coding. All definitions and measures should be based on prior research and citations must be provided.

Methods Section Draft (10 pts)- Write 2-3 pages clearly detailing the sampling procedure for the study as well as the process of coder training. Define all variables, citing prior work for justification, and provide reliability coefficients for each variable.

Results/Discussion Section Draft (10 pts)- While you may not have data to analyze, I would like you to be prepared for the data analysis. Please write each research question and identify the specific variables you will analyze in order to address the RQ. Specify the level of measurement for each variable and the specific test you will conduct. Then write 4-5 pages discussing the implications of your potential results.

Final Paper (10 pts) – Incorporate all feedback to create a final draft of the complete manuscript.

Presentation (5 pts)- Present your project to the class in the format of a conference presentation.

You are responsible for all the material assigned, even if it is not covered in lecture.

Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability, including special accommodations for access to technology, resources and electronic instructional materials required for the course, should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation by the end of the second week of classes or as soon as practical. If you have not done so already, please contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS) at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to learn more about the resources available to you. We will work with DRS to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Academic Freedom: Freedom to teach and to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom.

Temple University has a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities:

http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

Course Schedule

Date	Reading	In-Class	Due
8/26	Chapter 9: Contexts	Introductions	
9/2	Labor Day		
9/9	Chapter 1: Defining Content Analysis Chapter 2: An integrated approach	Coding lesson 1	
9/16	Chapter 3: Units and Sampling Formats and genres	Coding lesson 2	Topic selection
9/23	Chapter 4: Variables and Predictions Cultural Indicators Project National TV Violence Study	Coding lesson 3	
9/30	Chapter 5: Measurement and Validity Chapter 6: Reliability	Coding lesson 4	Theoretical framework
10/7	Reliability in content analysis Potter & Levine-Donnerstein (1999)	Coding lesson 5	Literature review
10/14	Chapter 8: Results and Reporting	Exploratory Coding 1	Codebook draft 1 Code set 1
10/21	Linkage Study Political Ads Social network analysis	Exploratory Coding 2	Code set 2
10/28		Exam	Code set 3
11/4	Article presentation 1	Pilot test 1	Codebook draft 2 Code set 4
11/11	Article presentation 2	Pilot test 2	Code set 5
11/18	Article presentation 3	Calculate reliability	Code set 6
12/2	Article presentation 4	Data analysis	Methods draft
12/9	Article presentation 5	Final presentations	Results/Disc draft
12/16			Final paper