

MMC 6402: Mass Communication Perspectives / fall 2012

Periods 7-8 Tuesdays and Thursdays, Weimer 3020

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If office hours are inconvenient, make an appointment. Or if my door is open, drop in.

Welcome to Doctoral Studies

Mass Communication Perspectives is required for doctoral students in the College of Journalism and Communications. Most students take it their first semester. To understand why this course is required, consider the purpose of doctoral studies in our college. Here's my definition:

The purpose of doctoral studies is to enable you to teach yourself how to think like a social scientist.

That statement has two important elements:

1. You're going to *teach yourself* how to think. Although I can help guide you, I cannot teach you how to think. Only you can. And that self-teaching will continue the rest of your life.
2. You're learning to be a *social scientist*. A doctorate is not merely a terminal degree. It is a license to conduct research. And research must be scientific in order to have validity.

Course Description

If the purpose of doctoral studies is to enable you to teach yourself how to think like a social scientist, this course exists to acquaint you with how social science works. This course examines the principles and assumptions underlying the scientific process. It focuses on the philosophy of science and the role theory plays in scientific inquiry in mass communication.

This course asks questions such as: What is truth? What makes the social sciences different from the physical sciences? Is reality independent of our observations? Does good social science require a theory? If theory is important, why does mass communication have so many when physics and biology each have one? Addressing these philosophical questions is a core element of acquiring a Ph.D. - which, after all, is a doctorate in *philosophy*.

For those in legal studies, the course helps situate your branch of study within the larger world of social science research, of which you are a part. Further, many legal studies students have found the concepts discussed in this course to be helpful in their dissertations. And a 2012 graduate, Dr. Kearston Wesner, wrote an outstanding legal dissertation applying social science methods she gleaned from this course. So the course can be useful for all doctoral students in our college.

Course Objectives

The course is intended to enable you to:

1. Improve your ability to write research papers through cogent conceptualization and clear explication, as you apply principles gleaned from examining the philosophy of science.
2. Understand the arc of the development of mass communication theory and the various roles theory plays in academic research.
3. Become socialized in the world of academic research.
4. Write cogent papers exploring the philosophy of science and the development of mass communication theories that can help you prepare for qualifying exams.
5. Write a final paper worthy of acceptance at an academic conference.

Required Textbooks

Baran, S.J., & Davis, D.K. (2012). *Mass communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future* (6th ed.) Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning. ISBN: 0-495-89887-2.

Godfrey-Smith, P. (2003). *Theory and reality: An introduction to the philosophy of science*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago press. ISBN: 0-226-30063-3.

Shoemaker, P.J.; Tankard, J.W., Jr. & Lasorsa, D.L. (2004). *How to build social science theories*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 0-7619-2667-4.

Other Readings

Journal articles and other assigned readings are available through the course website on the University of Florida e-learning system, [Sakai](#). These readings are identified with a “PDF” in the detailed schedule below.

Keeping Up With Readings

Part of doctoral work is learning to acquire information efficiently under an intensive reading load. Some tips:

- Plan ahead. Budget your time over the semester according to due dates.
- Learn how to look for topic sentences and key arguments as well as what you can skim and what needs more attention.
- You have learned when you can summarize an author’s main points in your own words. Write brief summaries for your own use. You may find them helpful for qualifying exams.

Class Participation

Part of becoming a scholar is learning how to engage others to challenge assertions. Thus, class participation is critical. Don’t let shyness or lack of confidence keep you from contributing to discussion, for it is when we engage each other that we learn the most.

In turn, class participation absolutely depends on each student having read the material ahead of class. Therefore, you are expected to have read (or skimmed, as the schedule denotes) the material for each class.

Each student gets one “free pass” from having done the readings for that class to accommodate unexpected circumstances. If you wish to claim that pass, e-mail me ahead of class so I won’t think you’re trying to avoid participating and so I won’t call on you. But do come to class.

Attendance is mandatory unless extraordinary circumstances arise that are discussed in advance. Repeated unexcused absences may result in a grade reduction.

Electronic Devices in Class

Although voice recorders are acceptable, students should turn off and put away all cellphones and iPods. Don’t open your laptop unless it’s how you handle assigned readings.

Electronic devices are disruptive to a seminar atmosphere and ineffective for your learning. Rather than furiously try to take notes on everything said, come to class having marked up readings with questions or comments and be prepared to challenge the author’s arguments. Use class time to synthesize your learning and engage in higher-order thinking through classroom participation.

Besides, cellphone use in class is my pet peeve.

Assignment Weighting

Philosophy of science paper	20%
Development of theory paper	20%
Conceptualization paper introduction	5%
Conceptualization paper	55%

Grading Scale

A	100 to 90
B+	89 to 87
B	86 to 83
B-	82 to 80

Course Papers

What makes this course 4 credit hours instead of the usual 3 is the range of material and the three required papers. Two of those are shorter (8 to 10 pages) papers on assigned topics. The third is the major paper for the course, a conceptualization paper of 20 to 25 pages that is of sufficient quality to be accepted by an academic conference. All three are explained below.

Why Two Topical Papers?

You will write two overview/summation papers, each on a core element of the course: philosophy of science and the development of mass communication theory. These papers are designed to help you prepare for potential qualifying exam questions. Your exact question, of course, will depend

on your dissertation prospectus as well as your adviser and committee members. Here are some examples of exam questions that draw from material covered in this course:

Philosophy of science

- Although rarely acknowledged, all social science research faces limitations in epistemology and ontology. Describe those limitations from a philosophical standpoint and how knowing them can inform and improve your study.
- Drawing from Steven Chaffee's book on the topic, discuss the process of explication beginning with the focal concept, and describe the steps you will need to take to delineate your study's epistemological and ontological assumptions.

Theory

- Identify the benefits and limitations of theory in mass communication research in general, and for your dissertation in particular.
- What does "theory" mean in mass communication scholarship? What criteria determine whether a mass communication theory is "good"?

Therefore, the purpose of these two topical papers is to enable you, two years from now, to pull out these papers from your files so you can begin to prepare your answer for a related qualifying exam question.

Topical Paper 1: Philosophy of Science

This paper will have a title such as "Ways of Knowing: Comparing, Contrasting and Debating the Philosophy of Science." The paper should summarize the key topics covered by the readings and class discussion while sustaining an argument that supports a conclusion.

Although the paper should cover the key topics, up to half may focus on one of the issues we will discuss, such as:

- What is science?
- What is truth?
- What makes the social sciences distinctive?
- How can math mislead us about ontology and epistemology?
- Is science value-neutral?
- Is constructivism a valid paradigm for mass communication scholarship?
- Should mass communication scholarship be more empirical or more rational?

The body of the science paper (excluding endnotes/references or the cover page) must be no less than 8 pages but should not be much more than about 10 pages, double-spaced. You are not obligated to list all sources examined in class. You may cite other references. See the technical details section and rubric for more details. Provide a printed copy and email an electronic version I can submit to a plagiarism detector. The paper is due at noon Friday, September 21.

Topical Paper 2: Theory

This paper will have a title such as “The Historical Development of Mass Communication Theories.” The paper should trace the arc of mass communication theory over the four eras defined by Baran & Davis. It should note how world events and academic achievements in sociology and psychology shaped mass media theory development.

Although the paper must trace the historical arc, up to half may focus on one element in the development of mass communication theory, such as:

- Development of theories in your academic area, placed within the context of overall mass communication theory development.
- How technology in the current era does or does not change how theory is conceptualized.
- The three or four developments in history that were most influential in shaping mass communication theory development.
- The three or four most influential people in shaping the broad development of mass communication theory (“broad” would exclude, for example, the Grunigs).
- Outside academic specialties, such as psychology, that have had the most influence on shaping mass communication theory.

The body of the science paper (excluding endnotes/references or the cover page) must be no less than 8 pages but should not be much more than about 10 pages, double-spaced. You are not obligated to list all sources examined in class. You may cite other references. See the technical details section and rubric for more details. Provide a printed copy and email an electronic version I can submit to a plagiarism detector. The paper is due at noon Friday, October 19.

Conceptualization Paper

Because this is an advanced-level course, the main work product is a paper of sufficient quality to be accepted at an academic conference such as the AEJMC Midwinter Conference or the Southeast Colloquium. Meeting this requirement is necessary to receive an A or a B grade for the course.

The conceptualization paper must be at least 18 pages and not much more than about 25 pages, double-spaced, not counting references, endnotes/references, or the cover page. For more details, see the rubric at the end of the syllabus.

Unless an extraordinary circumstance such as a medical emergency arises, deadlines are firm:

- The first two to three pages of the paper are due at noon Wednesday, November 7. Submit a printed copy only (an electronic version is unnecessary).
- The final, completed paper is due at noon Monday, December 10. Submit a printed copy as well as email an electronic version.

Begin thinking of topics early. Feel free to consult with your adviser. You will submit your proposed introduction (2 to 3 pages) by November 7 so that we can discuss it when we meet individually for 15 minutes before Thanksgiving. However, we can always meet sooner if you wish.

A good example of a conceptualization paper is one that offers a model or a typology:

- A **model** uses standard symbols to help explain relationships and causality among concepts. Examples: identify moderators and mediators that influence how commercial weight-loss advertising is persuasive, show why modalities matter in advertising messages, or explain how transparency in public relations helps nonprofits.
- A **typology** is a parsimonious classification or categorization of a phenomenon. Examples: types of government public diplomacy using public relations theory, types of media literacy, or an examination of who benefits from convergence, all placed along a continuum.

We'll talk more about models and typologies in class on Oct. 30 and Nov. 1, along with examples of such papers (on Sakai, if you want an early look) that have been published in academic journals.

Although a model or typology is not easy to develop, either can benefit you as a new doctoral student. Developing a model or typology builds your conceptual skills, which can improve your ability to get traditional research papers published. Aside from avoidable errors in methodology or data collection, academic journals reject papers most often because of three problems:

1. The paper is not rooted in or does not advance theory.
2. The paper fails to offer conceptual clarity or explication.
3. The paper fails to answer the “so what” question.

A good paper advancing a model or typology will help you avoid all three problems.

Two other possibilities include explication papers that:

- Apply theory. For example: identify theories that explain why synergy is effective in integrated marketing or why social marketing campaigns against HIV/AIDS are ineffective in much of Africa.
- Apply outside research to a mass communication issue. For example: draw from economic research to justify an unconventional argument that an asymmetrical model can be beneficial in public relations.

However, a conference-worthy paper is more difficult to produce using those two approaches. Papers with models or typologies are more likely to be accepted by an academic conference.

Structure of an Academic Paper

The general structure for an academic paper is:

- The first page is the cover sheet.
- The second page is an abstract of no more than 100 words.
- **Step 1** begins on the third page: the introduction of two to three pages. It should:
 - Identify the problem to be solved or issue to be addressed
 - Have a sentence that begins, “The purpose of this study is to ...”
 - Explain how this paper would advance academic knowledge through an original contribution and answers the “so what” question for why the paper matters
 - Identify a theoretical base, if one applies

- **Step 2** is a literature review of 4 to 5 pages that situates the study in related academic studies and lead logically to hypotheses or research questions. However, your paper may essentially be one big literature review, as you organize prior studies into a model or typology. Thus, your “lit review” may be 15 pages or so.
- Also, because your paper creates a model or typology, any hypotheses would be stated as propositions, because you won’t be collecting data to test them. Any research questions would be more appropriate as suggestions for future study.
- After the literature review and hypotheses/propositions/research questions comes **step 3**: the methods section of 2 to 5 pages. Your paper is unlikely to collect any data and thus is unlikely to have a methods section.
- **Step 4** is the finding sections, where data are reported in about 5 to 10 pages. However, your paper is unlikely to have data to report.
- **Step 5** is the discussion/conclusions section. This is where the paper for 2 to 3 pages:
 - Summarizes and explains the primary findings or how the model/typology advances academic knowledge.
 - Identifies the study’s limitations.
 - Suggests future studies.

Technical Details For All Three Papers

- **Cover page:** Include just your name and the title on the cover page.
- **Purpose:** The introduction of each paper should have a sentence that begins “The purpose of this study is to ...” In addition, be sure to address the “so what?” question in the introduction and conclusion.
- **Length:** Topic papers must be 8 to about 10 pages. The final project must be 20 to 25 pages. Those lengths do not include the cover page or the references/endnotes.
- **Sources:** Use proper academic sources. Use the databases available through the library, not solely Google Scholar, which misses a lot of material behind pay walls unless you’re on the wired UF network, or Wikipedia, which could be written by a 12-year-old.
- **Style:** APA (references) or Chicago (endnotes) is acceptable. Legal papers can use Bluebook style (footnotes). Follow your chosen style precisely. Style is an important element of academic writing.
- **Format.** Supply a paper copy and send the electronic document (Word, Pages, etc.) by email so I can submit it to a plagiarism-detection service.
- **Writing:** Clarity is essential in formal academic writing. Be precise in word choice, grammar and spelling. Follow grammar guides and dictionaries. Don’t worry about an occasional mistake; perfection is elusive. However, papers with writing that is obtuse, sloppy in the use of mechanics or hobbled by garbled syntax won’t be accepted for an academic conference.
- **Deadlines.** Unless an extraordinary circumstance such as a medical emergency arises, deadlines are firm.

Academic Integrity

University of Florida students live by an honor code that prohibits academic dishonesty such as (but not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, engaging in unauthorized collaboration, reusing a thesis or paper from another class, writing a similar paper for two classes, drawing too heavily on another's work for your own and having someone else write your paper.

Be aware of the policies in the Graduate Student Handbook. Students have an affirmative obligation to know what is in the handbook and to abide by it.

The handbook includes a detailed description of plagiarism, copies of which are available in Chinese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, and Spanish. If you are unsure of citation rules or what requires attribution, ask me *before* turning in a paper. Ignorance is not an excuse.

My default policy for an academic integrity violation is a failing grade for the course and to recommend the student be removed from the graduate program.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and would like to request disability-related accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) right away. The center will provide the necessary documentation so appropriate accommodations can be made. The center is in Reid Hall, 392-8565.

Writing Assistance

Academic writing is rigorous both in thought and in mechanics. Academics are expected to write in clear, cogent English.

For example, *Media Psychology* journal states, "We encourage submissions from authors in all parts of the world, though all papers are to be written in English. To insure that problems associated with English-language usage do not interfere with reviewers' evaluation of the substantive content of submitted manuscripts, we respectfully ask that our international authors consider seeking the advice of native English speakers in the preparation of their manuscripts."

Books that may help you with English grammar and writing:

- The APA and Chicago style manuals offer helpful advice on grammar and punctuation.
- *A writer's reference* by Diana Hacker (with Nancy Sommers for the latest, 7th edition) is an excellent resource for grammar, punctuation, and clarity. [Amazon](#) sells it for about \$53.
- *The elements of style*, originally by Strunk & White, is a classic reference in its 4th edition. It focuses on sentence structure, not grammar. [Amazon](#) sells it for about \$8.

Also, ESL students can get help from the [UF Reading and Writing Center](#).

Schedule

Part 1: Philosophy of Science			
Thu	Aug. 23	What is science?	
Tue	Aug. 28	How did science evolve?	
Thu	Aug. 30	Why do Kuhn and Popper matter?	
Tue	Sept. 4	What makes the social sciences different?	
Thu	Sept. 6	Can math mislead us?	
Tue	Sept. 11	What is truth?	
Thu	Sept. 13	Is reality independent of our observations?	
Tue	Sept. 18	Explication	
Thu	Sept. 20	No class; work on science paper	Science paper due noon Friday, Sept. 21
Part 2: Theory			
Tue	Sep. 25	Does theory matter?	
Thu	Sep. 27	What makes theory good?	
Tue	Oct. 2	Theory arc: Mass society	
Thu	Oct. 4	Theory arc: Limited effects	
Tue	Oct. 9	Theory arc: Cultural/critical	
Thu	Oct. 11	Theory arc: Meaning making	
Tue	Oct. 16	Theory arc: Social media & "prosumers"	
Thu	Oct. 18	No class; work on theory paper	Theory paper due noon Friday, Oct. 19
Part 3: Conceptualization paper			
Tue	Oct. 23	Building theory 1	
Thu	Oct. 25	Building theory 2	
Tue	Oct. 30	Models	
Thu	Nov. 1	Typologies	
Tue	Nov. 6	Legal studies (Guest: Dr. Calvert)	Introduction due noon Wed., Nov. 7
Thu	Nov. 8	No class; individual meetings with students 1	
Tue	Nov. 13	No class; individual meetings with students 2	
Thu	Nov. 15	No class; individual meetings with students 3	
Tue	Nov. 20	No class; work on conceptual paper	
Thu	Nov. 22	No class; Thanksgiving	
Tue	Nov. 27	Conceptualization paper presentations 1	
Thu	Nov. 29	Conceptualization paper presentations 2	
Tue	Dec. 4	Conceptualization paper presentations 3	

Final paper due noon Monday, Dec. 10

Detailed Schedule, Readings, and Study Questions

PART 1: PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Thursday, August 23: What is science?

No readings assigned

Tuesday, August 28: How did science evolve?

Godfrey-Smith, Chapter 1, introduction

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Articulate why the philosophy of science matters
- Trace the historical development of scientific thought

Study questions:

1. Why study the philosophy of science?
2. Critique the argument that science is the objective pursuit of truth.
3. Why is science so tightly associated with math?
4. What are some flaws with equating science with math?

Godfrey-Smith, Chapter 2: Logic plus empiricism

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Differentiate empiricism from rationalism
- Describe why positivism arose and how it contributed to empiricism

Study questions:

1. How does empiricism differ from rationalism?
2. What is positivism and why did it arise?

Godfrey-Smith, Chapter 3: Induction and confirmation

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Grasp the challenges in understanding how observation can confirm theory
- Identify shortcomings in deduction and induction

Study questions:

1. Differentiate between deduction and induction, and identify the significant strengths and weaknesses of each.
2. How do scientists respond to assertions that “evolution is just a theory”?
3. What types of theories can the social sciences prove?

Thursday, August 30: Why do Kuhn and Popper matter?

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 4: Popper: conjecture and refutation

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Summarize and critique Popper’s falsification premise.

Study questions:

1. Why was Popper worried about the “problem of demarcation”?
2. What is the essence of Popper’s falsification premise and what are its limitations?

Godfrey-Smith, chapters 5 & 6: Kuhn and normal science; Kuhn and revolutions

What you should glean from these chapters:

- Understand the lasting impact of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

Study questions:

1. What did Kuhn mean by paradigm, normal science, crisis, puzzle-solving, and scientific revolution?
2. How did Kuhn and Popper differ in their understanding of whether science is truly open-minded, and which view do you find more convincing?
3. How did Kuhn's work change our understanding of how science is practiced?

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 7: Lakatos, Laudan, Feyerabend, and frameworks (skim)

What you should glean from this chapter: That Kuhn is not the last word on how science works.

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 8: The challenge from sociology of science (skim)

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Appreciate the Mertonian view (from sociology) that reward structures govern science communities.
- Appreciate the influence of *Laboratory Life* (using a social science method, phenomenology) in crafting a mechanized view of how science works.
- Appreciate that these sociological perspectives portray science as influenced by social forces.

Tuesday, September 4: What makes the social sciences different?

PDF: Machlup, F. (1961). Are the social sciences really inferior? *Southern Economic Journal*, 27(3), 173-184.

Study questions:

1. The author declined to define social science. Would definition have strengthened or weakened his argument?
2. Which of the nine "grounds of comparison" seem most significant to you and why?
3. The author concludes that inferiority is in the mind of the public, a problem that is curable. Why haven't we cured it in the half-century since this speech was given?
4. How might the author's approach have differed if, instead of being an economist, he was a mass communication scholar?
5. How would this 1960 speech be different if he had given it after astronauts walked on the moon in 1969 or after the 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S.?

PDF: Fay, B., & Moon, J.D. (1977). What would an adequate philosophy of social science look like? *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 7(2), 209-227.

Study questions:

1. How do the authors define humanism and naturalism?
2. How do intentions distinguish the social sciences from the physical sciences?
3. Why is theory important to the social scientist?

4. What do the authors mean by “in the social sciences, concepts partially constitute the reality we study”? (p. 213)
5. How would you answer the question posed in the title?

PDF: Scriven, M. (1994). A possible distinction between traditional scientific disciplines and the study of human behavior. In Michael Martin & Lee C. McIntyre (Eds.), *Readings in the philosophy of social science* (pp. 71-77). Cambridge, MA: Bradford.

Study questions:

1. Evaluate this statement: “The difference between the scientific study of behavior and that of physical phenomena is thus partly due to the relatively greater complexity of the *simplest phenomena we are concerned to account for* in a behavioral theory” (p. 72, his italics).
2. Critique this statement: “I would venture to say that it is extremely improbable that anything remotely corresponding to the simplicity and importance of the concept of universal gravitation can possibly be found in the field of psychology” (p. 75).
3. When the author says (p.76, point 2) that there is a difference between solving a problem and making progress, is he diminishing the work of social scientists?

PDF: Clarke, K.A., & Primo, D.M. (2012, April 1). Overcoming “physics envy.” *The New York Times*.

Study questions:

1. What gets lost when social scientists focus their gaze on what can be measured?

Thursday, September 6: Can math mislead us?

PDF: Ritchie, D. (2003). Statistical probability as a metaphor for epistemological probability. *Metaphor and Symbol* 18(1), 1-11.

Study questions:

1. What does the author mean by this statement (p. 2): “Epistemological probability first served as a metaphor for statistical probability, but the wide-spread adoption of statistical methods as a basis for scientific argumentation has reversed our understanding, so that we now use statistical probability as a metaphor for epistemological probability”?
2. What are some of the embedded, often unacknowledged and potentially problematic assumptions in standard hypothesis testing?
3. What elements of social science research are beyond our ability to measure?

PDF: Lehrer, J. (2010, December 13). The truth wears off. *The New Yorker*, pp. 52-57.

Study questions:

1. Although the term was not used in this article, the phenomenon described has been dubbed the decline effect. What is the decline effect and under what conditions is it most likely to occur?
2. (Note: In July 2012, Lehrer admitted to fabrication and resigned from *The New Yorker*. However, no evidence had surfaced by early August to question this story.)

PDF: Schooler, J. (2011, February 24). Unpublished results hide the decline effect. *Nature* 470(7335), 437.

Study questions:

1. The cause of the decline effect is unknown. Would the author's solution resolve it?
2. What would have to change to allow the author's suggested solution to become reality?

Listen online: WNYC On the Media 18-minute broadcast about the decline effect, available through this [link](#). Aired June 29, 2012.

Study questions:

1. What lessons from the decline effect can you apply to your research?

PDF: Stevens, J. (2012, June 24). Political scientists are lousy forecasters. *The New York Times*.

Study questions:

1. The author notes that "many" published studies "offer trivial confirmation of the obvious and policy documents filled with egregious, dangerous errors." Although "many" may be overstated, her point is valid. Why do such systemic flaws persist?
2. Defend or rebut the author's presumption that prediction is important for social science.

PDF: Krugman, P. (2009, September 6). How did economists get it so wrong? *The New York Times Magazine*, pp. 36-43 (only pp. 36-37 copied here).

Study questions:

1. Economics is considered the most "scientific" of the social sciences, yet the author asserts that its focus on math led it astray by failing to see the great recession coming. Is his argument valid or an indication of hindsight bias?

PDF: Zimmer, C. (2011, June 26). It's science, but not necessarily right. *The New York Times*.

Study questions:

1. How does this article dispute the notion that one of the hallmarks of a scientific study is empiricism through replication?
2. What does this study suggest about arguments that science is a pure pursuit of knowledge?

PDF: Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T.W. (1944/2002). *Dialectic of enlightenment*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. [Chapter 4, pp. 94-136. Translated from German.]

Study questions:

1. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, written between 1939 and 1944 by Jewish German exiles, is considered one of the most important critical evaluations of mass media ever written. What is your immediate reaction when you read this chapter?
2. This chapter is devoid of statistical analysis. Is it empirical? Is it scientific?
3. Is this chapter primarily rooted in World War II pessimism or is it a timeless critique of mass communication?

4. Which do you think is a more likely explanation for the authors' views: audience passivity or industrial manipulation?
5. Critique the last sentence: "The triumph of advertising in the culture industry is that consumers feel compelled to buy and use its products even though they see through them."

Tuesday, September 11: What is truth?

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 10: Naturalistic philosophy in theory and practice

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Define the naturalist view of the philosophy of science.
- Distinguish between coherence and correspondence theories of truth.
- Describe the "theory-ladenness of observation."

Study questions:

- How does the author describe a naturalist view of how science operates?
- What is the correspondence theory of truth? When is it most applicable?
- What is the coherence theory of truth? When is it most applicable?
- What is the "theory-ladenness of observation" and why does it matter?

PDF: Anderson, J.A., & Baym, G. (2004). Philosophies and philosophic issues in communication, 1995-2004. *Journal of Communication* 54(4), 589-615.

Study questions:

1. In your own words, what do epistemology, ontology, praxeology, and axiology mean for mass communication scholars?
2. The authors argue from a perspective that combines interpersonal and organizational (or mass) communication. Do those two branches share philosophic perspectives about the nature of truth, or is mass communication different?
3. The authors conclude that we must choose which type of communication scholar we are. Which of the four types offered best fits you and why?
4. On page 606, the authors assert that "journalism studies appears to be the wing of the discipline most explicitly interested in contemporary epistemological thought." Do you agree or disagree, and why?

PDF: Haig, B.D., & Borsboom, D. (2012). Truth, science, and psychology. *Theory & Psychology* 22(3), 272-289.

Study questions:

1. What are the differences among correspondence, coherence, pragmatist and deflationary theories of truth?
2. This paper takes a normative view, that the correspondence theory of truth is preferable. Did the authors cherry-pick examples that support their viewpoints or is their argument sustainable in most settings for the social sciences? And if the authors are so confident, why did they hedge their bets in the conclusion?
3. The chart on page 280 delineates a hierarchy of truth statements. Which of the four does most research address? Which is the most important? If those two answers are different, what does that say about social science research?

Thursday, September 13: Is reality independent of our observations?

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 9: Feminism and science studies

What you should glean from this chapter:

- Describe the impact of feminism on perspectives on how science works.

Study questions:

- How has feminism influenced views about the philosophy of science?
- How would you respond to the argument of the author (p. 143) that feminists struggle to show that women go about science in a substantially different way?
- Which do you think is a more likely explanation for the Alan Sokal 1994 science paper hoax: postmodernism run amok or systemic flaws in the peer review process?

Godfrey-Smith, chapter 12: Scientific realism (skim)

What you should glean from this chapter: Discern how scientific realism differs from constructivism.

PDF: Bhaskar, R. (1998). *The possibility of naturalism: A philosophical critique of the contemporary human sciences* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge. [Chapter 1, pp. 1-24]

Study questions:

1. (Warning: Bhaskar is exceptionally dense. But he offers a viewpoint, known as critical realism, that is seen in some parts of the world as the only viable alternative to positivism and post-modernism.)
2. How does Bhaskar answer the core question of whether social sciences can be as “scientific” as the physical sciences?
3. What makes societies irreducible, as something that cannot be reduced to an atomistic or individual level?
4. Theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking asserts on page 5 of the “The Grand Design” (published in 2012) that “philosophy is dead” because questions about life and reality can be answered through science. Bhaskar argues that philosophy and science are intertwined. Whose viewpoint is more convincing and why?

Tuesday, September 18: Explication

PDF: Chaffee, S.H. (1991). *Explication*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Study questions:

1. How is explication different from other forms of definition, and why is explication important for mass communication scholars?
2. Who among the people in our philosophy of science timeline would endorse the author’s attempt to demarcate science (last paragraph p.3)?
3. How does reliability differ from validity, and why is validity different from truth? (pp.10-14)
4. What is a focal concept? (pp. 14-18)
5. What does the author mean by “The literature review is often a study in itself”? (p.21)

6. Why does communication study usually measure elements that are *sufficient* rather than *necessary* (p.32), and what's the difference between those terms?
7. Restate this statement (top p.38) in your own words: "Formal operations, such as measurement, scaling, and statistical techniques, do not constitute definitions of concepts in themselves. It is safe to assume that no statistical formula was ever created with a concept of human communication in mind."
8. The author says (p.43), "The choice of method should flow from the definition we are reaching." What implications are embedded in that statement?
9. Most of the time, we're looking for correlations between variables. Why, then, should we care about univariate research? (pp. 51-62)
10. Evaluate whether age (chapter 11) is a valid example for explication or an example of the malleability of language.

Thursday, September 20: No class

PART 2: THEORY

Tuesday, September 25: Does theory matter?

PDF: Neuman, W.R., Davidson, R., Joo, S., Park, Y.J., & Williams, A.E. (2008). The seven deadly sins of communication research. *Journal of Communication*, 58(2), 220-237.

Study questions:

1. Carefully evaluate the final paragraph on page 221, beginning with "From the broader literature." What do these data and anecdotes tell us about the application of the scientific method to social science research?
2. The authors conclude that "theory is king" (p. 230) but then note that "theory" is rarely explained. What does the rest of the paper tell us about the state of theory in communication research?

PDF: Chaffee, S.H., & Metzger, M.J. (2001). The end of mass communication? *Mass Communication & Society*, 4(4), 365-379.

Study questions:

1. Has the era of mass communication been replaced by media communication? What evidence supports your position?
2. Reconsider Table 2 (p. 373) in light of today's media reality. What would you change in the table and why?
3. Should the rise of the Internet, social media, and mobile communication change how we theorize about mass communication?

PDF: Bryant, J., & Miron, D. (2004). Theory and research in mass communication. *Journal of Communication*, 54(4), 662-704.

Study questions:

1. The study found that 32%, or about one-third, of articles published in three top journals in the 20th century referenced theory. Of that third, half (48%) were mere references. So is theory really king, as Neuman, et al., concluded?
2. Baran & Davis will tell us that four of the most important developments in the development of mass communication theory are the Chicago school, Vienna circle, Frankfurt school, and British cultural studies. Yet the study found those four schools were mentioned in only 3% of 1,806 articles. What does that result suggest to you?
3. What does the list of most popular theories in Table 1 tell us about how social sciences differ from the physical sciences?

PDF: Anderson, C. (2008). The end of theory: The data deluge makes the scientific method obsolete. *Wired*, June 23, 2008. Includes *On the Media* interview on July 18, 2008.

Study questions:

1. Do you agree that powerful computers with enormous linked data sets render the scientific method obsolete?
2. How could you rebut the argument that theory is irrelevant, that we can skip hypotheses and go straight to finding statistically significant correlations?

Thursday, September 27: What makes good theory?

Baran & Davis, chapter 1: Understanding and evaluating mass communication theory

Study questions:

1. Is a smartphone a mass communication device? Why or why not?
2. The authors cite four reasons for why applying the scientific method to the social world is difficult. Which of the four is the most significant and why?
3. Critique the authors' definition of theory (p. 11) as "any organized set of concepts, explanations, and principles of some aspect of human experience."

PDF: Berger, C.R. & Chaffee, S.H. (1987). What communication scientists do. In C.R. Berger and S.H. Chaffee (Eds.) *Handbook of communication science* (pp. 99-122). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Study questions:

1. The authors note researchers "bemoan the fact that there is not more good theory in the field" (p. 100). Later (p. 105), the authors say theory and research are related. If there's little good theory, is it because there's little good research?
2. In evaluating theories (pp. 104-105), which of the seven attributes do you think is most important and why? Which is least important and why?
3. The authors list several analytical issues, starting on page 108. Which do you think is most important for your area of research?
4. In the final sentence, the authors assert they are outlining "the work of those who are within the scientific tradition" (p. 119). Whose work would be excluded?

PDF: Neuman, W.R., & Guggenheim, L. (2011). The evolution of media effects theory: A six-stage model of cumulative research. *Communication Theory* 21(2), 169-196.

Study questions:

1. How do the authors seek to redeem communication theory?
2. How do you interpret the authors' observation (p. 179) that few of the key theories in communication are cited in other disciplines?
3. Inter-coder agreement was low (p. 180) in trying to discern whether a journal article was implicitly relying on a theoretical tradition. What does that finding suggest about how communication scholars utilize theory?
4. How does the authors' central point, that theory evolves, square with Thomas Kuhn's view of how science works?

PDF: Davison, W.P. (1996). The third-person effect revisited. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 8(2), 113-119.

Study questions:

1. What is the third-person effect? (You'll need to look elsewhere; this brief essay presumes you already know.)
2. Bryant and Miron found the third-person effect is one of the field's most-cited theories, yet its origins were inauspicious. What does this article tell you about the development of mass communication theory?
3. What makes the third-person effect good theory?

Tuesday, October 2: Theory arc: Mass society

Baran & Davis, chapter 2: Four eras of mass communication theory

Study questions:

1. Compare and contrast this overview with the six-stage model argued by Neuman and Guggenheim.
2. Is the communication technology revolution fundamentally changing human interaction? Why or why not?
3. Is the concept of a mass media still valid when, for example, combined viewership of the three network (ABC, CBS, and NBC) nightly news shows has fallen from 55% of America in 1980 to 22% today? (Source: Pew Research Center)
4. Is the concept of a mass *audience* still valid in an era of Netflix, TiVo and Hulu?
5. Consider whether concurrent historical events and trends in related fields of sociology and psychology influenced the arc of mass communication.

Baran & Davis, chapter 3: The rise of media industries and mass society theory

Study questions:

1. The Fearful Reaction to New Media box on pp. 53-54 demonstrates that fears about media influence are not new. Fair enough. But why do these fears persist?
2. In many countries, broadcasters are seen as a public service that should be publicly owned. The U.S. has always seen broadcasting as a business. Does the ownership of "big" media (private or public) affect how people view those media?

3. Compare and contrast the Tönnies and Durkheim views of society.
4. Critique this statement on p. 67: “Attacks on the pervasive dysfunctional power of media have persisted and will persist as long as dominant elites find their power challenged by media and as long as privately owned media find it profitable to produce and distribute content that challenges widely practiced social norms and values.”
5. From a mass society perspective, how are new media such as Google different from legacy big media? How are they similar?

Baran & Davis, chapter 4: The rise of media theory in the age of propaganda

Study questions:

1. Can propaganda be good? Are anti-smoking commercials propaganda?
2. The authors cite (pp. 78-79) the sale of the Iraq war as an example of engineering consent. Is this the same as propaganda?
3. Is Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly (p. 89) a propagandist?
4. Do straight-news journalists and broadcasters engage in propaganda?
5. Are advertising and public relations a kinder and gentler form of propaganda?

Baran & Davis, chapter 5: Normative theories of mass communication

Study questions:

1. Is the authors' definition of “normative theory” (p. 99) consistent with theory definitions discussed earlier in this class?
2. Which normative theory of the press do you embrace and why: marketplace of ideas or social responsibility?
3. Is journalism a profession?

Thursday, October 4: Theory arc: Limited effects

Baran & Davis, chapter 6: The rise of limited-effects theory

Study questions:

1. What are the three most salient causes for the shift to a limited-effects perspective?
2. What is a primary flaw in the limited-effects perspective?
3. Is the two-step flow applicable to today's social media world? Or is the two-step flow merely a restatement of the third-person effect?
4. What is the most lasting contribution of the limited-effects perspective?

Baran & Davis, chapter 7: Moving beyond limited effects: functionalism & children

Study questions:

1. What does functionalism bring to mass communication theory?
2. Why did systems theories gain acceptance?
3. Which social learning theory seems strongest to you, and why?
4. Is television harmful to children? Violent or misogynist video games?
5. Overall, which paradigm seems most valid to you: mass society or limited effects?

Tuesday, October 9: Theory arc: Cultural/critical

Baran & Davis, chapter 8: The emergence of critical and cultural theories of mass comm.

Study questions:

1. What are the primary reasons why cultural/critical studies developed?
2. Critical and cultural studies offer a perspective distinct from normative, data-driven mass communication scholarship. Are the viewpoints equally valid? Why?
3. The authors note (p.215) that a critical theory's power is in its popularity. What would Kuhn or Popper say about that?
4. The field of critical studies has always been embraced more in Europe than in the United States. Why?
5. Which of the branches or schools of critical/cultural studies do you find most attractive, and why?
6. How would you respond to the criticism that critical/cultural studies are filled with people who always seem to find what they're looking for?

Thursday, October 11: Theory arc: Meaning making

Baran & Davis, chapter 9: Audience theories: uses, reception, and effects

Study questions:

1. What are the primary reasons why audience-centered theories arose?
2. Defend or debunk the central tenant of these theories: media do not do things to people; instead, people do things with media.
3. Why were (and are) researchers reluctant to study the audience?
4. How do these theories differ from limited effects theories?
5. Because multiple versions of these audience reception theories (such as cultivation and uses and gratifications) exist, are they really theories?

Baran & Davis, chapter 10: Media and society: the role of media in the social world

Study questions:

1. The authors assert that social responsibility theory is the dominant normative theory (p. 280). Do you agree or disagree? How would your view of these theories about news media performance vary according to which theory (social responsibility or marketplace of ideas) serves as your dominant paradigm?
2. Respond to the assertion that some of these theories are largely a more polished interpretation of mass society theory.
3. Agenda-setting theory, perhaps one of the most studied in mass communication, is directional – asserting that media dictate what people think about. However, many journalists assert that their reporting is dictated by their readers/viewers. So who is really setting the agenda?
4. Do the news media manufacture consent or can consent come only from readers, listeners and viewers?
5. Which if any of these theories best explain the rise of social media described in the opening of the chapter?

Tuesday, October 16: Theory arc: Social media and “prosumers”

Baran & Davis, chapter 11: Media and culture theories: meaning-making in the social world

Study questions:

1. The theories in this chapter take two perspectives. Culture-centered theories presume that culture influences our world and the role media play. Meaning-making theories presume that media influence how we understand our world and the role of culture. Which perspective do you find most persuasive?
2. Is framing a theory or a method?
3. The authors summarize Gerbner’s assertion that cultivation theory affirms television’s impact on society, even though the effect “might be beyond clear-cut scientific measurement” (p. 343). Defend or rebut Gerbner’s assertion.
4. Is the focus of cultural critics on advertising (p. 350) justified?

Baran & Davis, chapter 12: Afterword: the future of media theory and research

Study questions:

1. The authors conclude on page 363 with a sweeping statement about the future of mass communication theory: “Future theories – whether we call them mass communication or media theories – will need to address the full spectrum of mediated communication, from cell phones to the Internet.” Using everything you’ve learned in this course, critique that statement.

PDF: Ritzer, G., & Jurgenson, N. (2010). Production, consumption, presumption: The nature of capitalism in the age of the digital “prosumer.” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 10(1), 13-36.

Study questions:

1. In early August, this was the only journal article available that addressed the rise of the “prosumer,” and it does so from an economic perspective. Use this article to stimulate your thinking from a mass communication theory perspective. Is the “prosumer” merely another take on the active audience or does it represent a new era in mass communication theory?
2. Can existing theory explain Facebook, which arose from a college student rating the “hotness” of women to become an addictive, international communication tool in which people share the details of their private lives? If not, what’s your theory?

Thursday, October 18: No class

PART 1: CONCEPTUALIZATION PAPER

Tuesday, October 23: Building theory 1

Shoemaker, Tankard, & Lasorsa, preface through chapter 6

Preface and chapter 1:

1. What does it mean to “build” theory?

2. Critique the authors' assertion (p. 3) that the scientific method does not differ substantially between the physical and social sciences, and evaluate how that presumption would apply to theory-building.

Chapter 2:

1. What are the differences among a construct, concept, and variable, and why can a concept never be measured completely (p. 28)?
2. What distinguishes a dependent variable from an independent variable?
3. What are the four types of variables?
4. Why do the authors assert (p. 22) that theory building is best done with continuous-level variables?
5. What are the types of validity and why do they matter?

Chapter 3:

1. When would you use a hypothesis? A research question? An assumption? A proposition?
2. Why is parsimony important in building theory?

Chapter 4:

1. What do the authors mean by "theoretical linkages"?
2. Does it matter whether research statements such as hypotheses are sprinkled through a literature review or grouped at the end of the lit review?
3. Most statistical tests presume a linear relationship between variables. Is that a fair assumption?

Chapter 5:

1. How can a theoretical statement with three variables be more powerful than one with two variables?
2. What are the types of three-variable relationships?

Chapter 6:

1. Four or more variables often result in models, such as on page 101. Why are models valuable in building theory?
2. Why is multiple regression important to use with four or more variables?

Thursday, October 25: Building theory 2

Shoemaker, Tankard, & Lasorsa, chapter 7 through appendix B

Chapter 7:

1. What makes Lasswell's pithy statement ("who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?") a model?
2. What are the primary functions of a model?
3. What are the steps in building a model?

Chapter 8:

1. What is the proper role of creativity in science?
2. Which of the authors' creativity techniques (p. 150) seem most relevant to your research?

Chapter 9:

1. Apply the authors' 10 steps to building theory (p. 170) to your own research interest and describe how those steps can help you improve your conceptualization.
2. Of the various methods listed to evaluate theory, which is the most scientific? Which would you guess is used the most often? If those are not the same, what does that say about the state of building mass communication theory?

Appendix A & Appendix B:

1. Hint: these appendixes can be very useful in writing research papers.

Tuesday, October 30: Models

PDF: Baron, R.M., & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173-1182.

Study questions:

1. What is the difference between a moderator and a mediator?
2. What types of statistical tests are useful to measure a moderator? A mediator?

PDF: Bucy, E.P., & Tao, C.C. (2007). The mediated moderation model of interactivity. *Media Psychology*, 9(3), 647-672.

Study questions:

1. Why does the placement of the moderator matter?
2. Note how the model is built on a typology (p. 648) and explication.

PDF: Puntoni, S., Schroeder, J.E., & Ritson, M (2010). Meaning matters: Polysemy in advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 39(2), 51-64.

Study questions:

1. How do the authors make a case for their theoretical paper?
2. What kind of model is offered in this paper?

PDF: Hallahan, K. (2001). The dynamics of issues activation and response: An issues processes model. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 13(1), 27-59.

Study questions:

1. How does this model differ from those in the other two papers?
2. How does this paper offer a "so what" for the proposed model?

Thursday, November 1: Typologies

PDF: Kalyanaraman, S. & Sundar, S.S. (2008). Portrait of the portal as a metaphor: Explicating web portals for communication research. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 85(2), 239-256.

Study questions:

1. How do the authors justify the use of metaphor as an organizing tool?
2. How does Table 1 advance the typology?

PDF: Domingo, D., & Heinonen, A. (2008). Weblogs and journalism: A typology to explore the blurring boundaries. *Nordicom Review*, 29(1), 3-15.

Study questions:

1. Although this paper is a bit dated, how does its typology contribute to academic understanding today?
2. The suggestions for future research are a bit thin and could have benefitted from testable propositions. Write two propositions this paper could have advanced.

PDF: Holbert, R.L. (2005). A typology for the study of entertainment television and politics. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(3), 436-453.

Study questions

1. How does this paper's typology differ from those of the other two papers?
2. Does this paper flow from a theoretical base or does it create theory?

Tuesday, November 6: Legal studies

Guest presenter: Dr. Clay Calvert, professor and University of Florida eminent scholar in mass communication, and director, Marion B. Brechner First Amendment Project

PDF: *Brown vs. Entertainment Merchants Association*, 08-1448, U.S. Supreme Court, decided June 27, 2011.

Study questions:

1. Identify three of the well-defined and narrowly limited classes of speech that, according to Justice Scalia's majority opinion, may be restricted without raising any constitutional concerns under the First Amendment.
2. According to the majority opinion written by Justice Scalia, there are several flaws with the social science evidence offered by California to support its law. What are those weaknesses? What are specific examples of the problems with the research, according to Justice Scalia?
3. In the 1950s, the U.S. Congress considered an effort to restrict minors' access to what specific form of content? What does this suggest about how legal issues can help to influence the research agendas of communication scientists?
4. When you read Justice Thomas's dissenting opinion, consider the ways in which it represents the judicial philosophy known as historicism or original intent. Under this view, what type of speech does Justice Thomas conclude is not protected by the First Amendment?

5. How does Justice Breyer differ from Justice Scalia in his view regarding the relevance of social science data in supporting California's law?

PDF: Calvert, C., Bunker, M., & Bissell, K. (in press). Social science, media effects, and the Supreme Court: Is communication research relevant after *Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association*? *UCLA Law Review*. [You have the AEJMC paper version.]

Study questions:

1. What is meant by the term "legislative facts" as it applies to social science data? What are early examples of cases involving social science research to supply such legislative facts?
2. How much deference should judges grant to social scientists when it comes to questions of media effects? What are the ramifications of courts granting or denying deference to social scientists?
3. Explain the apparent inconsistency on the part of Justice Scalia when it comes to requiring social science evidence to prove harms allegedly caused by speech or speech products.
4. What suggestions do the authors provide for communication researchers after *Brown* who want to influence the law as it affects media products? How can communication research (and researchers) remain relevant after *Brown*?

PDF: Smolla, R.A. (1993). *Free speech in an open society*. New York, NY: Vintage. [Chapter 1]

Study questions:

1. For each of the three different theories of free speech analyzed in this chapter – marketplace theory, human dignity and democratic self-governance – be able to describe:
 - a. The goal or goals of free speech under the theory.
 - b. The strengths of the theory.
 - c. The weaknesses of the theory.

Thursday, November 8: No class; individual meetings with students 1

Tuesday, November 13: No class; individual meetings with students 2

Thursday, November 15: No class; individual meetings with students 3

Tuesday, November 20: No class

Thursday, November 22: No class (Thanksgiving)

Tuesday, November 27: Conceptualization paper presentations 1

Thursday, November 29: Conceptualization paper presentations 2

Tuesday, December 4: Conceptualization paper presentations 3

Science Paper Rubric

	100-90 Excellent	89-80 Good	Less than 80 Unsatisfactory
Topic (20%)	Focuses on an element of the philosophy of science in a fresh and creative manner	Addresses an element of the philosophy of science	Does not address the philosophy of science or does so too broadly
Sourcing (20%)	Demonstrates proficient mastery through superior sourcing that powerfully supports the paper's main arguments	Demonstrates competence in grasping the fundamentals with sufficient sources to maintain an argument	Subject is treated in a cursory manner and sourcing is insufficient to sustain an argument
Analysis (20%)	Expertly draws from a core body of evidence using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject	Competently evaluates applicable material with some analysis, if not synthesis	Material is presented without analysis or synthesis
Rhetoric (15%)	Unambiguous, compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization	Though the paper may falter at times, the point is clear and supported by competent writing	Point is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments
Writing (15%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling result in a lucid and intelligible paper	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding
Style (10%)	Consistently follows APA, Chicago or Bluebook style	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is generally followed, and any errors do not retard readability	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is applied so inconsistently that readability is affected

Theory Paper Rubric

	100-90 Excellent	89-80 Good	Less than 80 Unsatisfactory
Topic (20%)	Adroitly describes and contextualizes arc of mass media theory development	Capably describes arc of mass media theory development with some context	Covers less than the whole arc of mass media theory development or fails to contextualize it
Sourcing (20%)	Demonstrates proficient mastery through superior sourcing that powerfully supports the paper's main arguments	Demonstrates competence in grasping the fundamentals with sufficient sources to maintain an argument	Subject is treated in a cursory manner and sourcing is insufficient to sustain an argument
Analysis (20%)	Expertly draws from a core body of evidence using both analysis and synthesis to illuminate the subject	Competently evaluates applicable material with some analysis, if not synthesis	Material is presented without analysis or synthesis
Rhetoric (15%)	Unambiguous, compelling and persuasive argument offered through superior writing and conceptualization	Though the paper may falter at times, the point is clear and supported by competent writing	Point is unclear, either through faulty conceptualization or inadequate framing of arguments
Writing (15%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling result in a lucid and intelligible paper	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding
Style (10%)	Consistently follows APA, Chicago or Bluebook style	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is generally followed, and any errors do not retard readability	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is applied so inconsistently that readability is affected

Conceptualization Paper Rubric

	100-90 Excellent	89-80 Good	Less than 80 Unsatisfactory
Topic (10%)	Purpose stated clearly on a focused topic that fills a gap in knowledge	Purpose stated clearly; topic addresses gap in academic knowledge	Purpose is unclear or topic fails to fill a gap in knowledge
Sourcing (10%)	At least 25 journal articles, mostly from top journals	At least 25 worthwhile journal articles	Less than 25 worthwhile journal articles
Explication (10%)	Terms and scope of the project are clearly defined	Most terms and the scope of the project are defined	Terms and scope of the project are unclear or undefined
Conceptualization (25%)	Models, typologies, etc., are unambiguous, compelling and persuasive	Models, typologies, etc., are clear and coherent but may omit a few concepts	Models, typologies, etc., are vague or incoherent, or omit crucial concepts
Significance (20%)	Clearly contributes to academic knowledge by advancing theory, identifying key propositions, exposing latent relationships, linking typologies to important variables or clarifying ambiguities in the literature	Somewhat contributes to academic knowledge by advancing theory, identifying key propositions, exposing latent relationships, linking typologies to important variables or clarifying ambiguities in the literature	Fails to advance academic knowledge or answer the “so what” question
Writing (15%)	Precise syntax and superior usage of grammar, punctuation and spelling result in a lucid and intelligible paper	Syntax is clear and the relatively few grammar, punctuation or spelling errors do not impede understanding	Syntax is sometimes garbled and errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling disrupt understanding
Style (10%)	Consistently follows APA, Chicago or Bluebook style	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is generally followed, and any errors do not retard readability	APA, Bluebook or Chicago style is applied so inconsistently that readability is affected