MMC 6421 Applied Research Methods in Mass Communications
Summer 2019

Instructor: Judith Donohue

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Contact Guidelines:
You can call me any day, 7 days a week, between 8 a.m. and **8 p.m**. PLEASE do not call after 8
If I am not available when you call, leave your name and phone number and I will return your
call within a few hours if possible**.** Whenever possible, I will respond to emails as soon as I
read them. Note that there is a place in the discussion section called **Course Questions**
where you may ask questions of general interest to the class.

Office Hours:

Since this is an online course, I do not have fixed office hours. However, I am always willing to
meet with people via phone, FaceTime or other electronic means by appointment.

Instructor Bio:
Judith Higgins Donohue brings more than 25 years of professional communication experience to
the classroom. She holds a B.A. in Sociology and an M.S. in Organizational Communication, both
from Regis College in Massachusetts. Donohue started her career as a journalist, first as a reporter
for daily newspapers in Connecticut and the Washington, DC area and then as a journalist for
McGraw-Hill's business and trade books.

After 10 years in journalism, Donohue switched to the field of public relations and joined Della
Femina McNamee agency. She has also done public relations writing and media relations for
Ketchum and Burson-Marsteller, two of the nation's leading public relations agencies. Her clients
have included Bayer, Stouffers, Nestle, US Steel, Pennsylvania Coal Association, Alcoa and Phillip
Morris. In the course of her agency work, Ms. Donohue was involved in research work on behalf of
her clients. She also worked extensively in the field of reputation management and crisis
communication.

In the year 2000, Donohue switched from the agency side to the corporate side and spent the next
nine years leading the New England public affairs team at Hewlett-Packard. In the past 10 years
Donohue has applied her communication skills and experience in the classroom, first at Regis
College in Weston, MA and University of South Carolina, and currently at University of Florida
where she teaches Applied Communication Research and Reputation Management.

She consistently earns top ratings from students and faculty alike. Over the years Donohue has won many prestigious awards for her writing and public relations work, including the highest honors from such organizations as the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD). At HP, her internal communication work has been cited throughout the company as a "best practice." She is also an active mediator, certified by the Florida Supreme Court and a Guardian ad Litem, appointed by the court to represent the interests of children who have been abused or neglected.

Course Website and Login:

Your course is Canvas (UF e-Learning). Go to http://lss.at.ufl.edu. Click the blue e-Learning button. Login with your GatorLink account. Your course will be in the Courses menu on the left navigation. You might have to click All Courses at the bottom depending on how many courses you have taken at UF.
Contact UF Helpdesk http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/ (352) 392-HELP (4357) if you have any trouble with accessing your course.

Course Description:

This 12-module course provides an overview of common mass communication research methods. We will discuss quantitative and qualitative research, including content analysis, interviews, case studies, experiments, surveys and focus groups. In addition, students will be introduced to SPSS, a software program used to analyze data.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Analyze and discuss the various types of research methods and tools, including their benefits and shortcomings

- Recognize and articulate ethical issues surrounding communication research

- Experience the practical applications of research methods in the field of mass communication

- Design and execute a research project using the methods learned in the class.

Course Expectations/Overview:
This is a 12-week/12 module online course. All sessions are asynchronous, meaning there are no "live" sessions. Each module will have assigned reading. The course consists of a combination of readings, videos and lectures. In addition to the assigned reading, there will be online eight group discussions, seven written assignments, and five quizzes based on the reading to ensure that students are comprehending the material and a final research project (16-20 pages). Work is expected to be completed on time. Participation in class discussions is expected to be carried on

in a professional matter, respecting the instructor and fellow students.

Ownership Education:

As graduate students, you are not passive participants in this course. All students in this program have a background in marketing, advertising, public relations, journalism, or similar fields. This class allows you to not only take ownership of your educational experience but to also provide your expertise and knowledge in helping your fellow classmates. The Canvas shell will have an open Q&A thread where you should pose questions to your classmates when you have a question as it relates to an assignment or an issue that has come up at work. Your classmates along with your instructor will be able to respond to these questions and provide feedback and help. This also allows everyone to gain the same knowledge in one location rather than the instructor responding back to just one student which limits the rest of the class from gaining this knowledge.

Required text/materials:

1. Wimmer, Roger D., and Dominick, Joseph R., *Mass Media Research: An Introduction (*10th Edition), Wadsworth, Cengage Learning: Boston MA.

2. **Articles from Harvard Business School Course Pack.**
    Occasionally, we will read articles from the Harvard Business School. A link will be provided to get you to the Harvard Business School site. You will need to register to get the reduced student rate of $4.25 per article**.**

    You will also be exploring mass communication professional journals and as well as other trade and academic publications which are available online through the UF Library. http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/

My Teaching Philosophy:

As a communication professional who has spent several decades working in journalism and public relations, I understand the importance of being able to articulate ideas and information clearly and accurately. Thus, teaching students to write succinctly is a top priority. It matters little how much one knows if one cannot communicate it well. I encourage "plain talk," free of inflated language, clichés, buzzwords and corporate-speak. You should be advised that I am particularly opposed to the use of unnecessary, vague and judgment words, such as VERY, RATHER, SOMEWHAT, EXTREMELY. I deduct points for these useless words. (Be specific. If it is "very" cold, perhaps it is frigid.)

I believe I have an obligation to apply the highest standards of writing excellence in my classes. To that end, I spend a significant amount of time correcting and commenting on written assignments. Discussion postings should adhere to the same high writing standards.

I focus on engaging students through interesting, informative lectures and stimulating discussions. I encourage students to read the work of professionals in the field and to build on that knowledge, continually looking for ways to extend learning. Students are also encouraged to share their ideas and learn from their peers, exploring and applying new ideas and methods.

I am committed to being both approachable and available, ready to offer guidance and

encouragement as needed. I believe that learning should be a pleasant experience, both for the teacher and the student. My ultimate goal is to create an environment where students are inspired to be excellent business communicators, guided by sound ethical principles. Communication ethics are woven throughout these lessons. I believe it is my job to create an awareness of the ethical issues inherent in every aspect of communication.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy:

In general, **late work is not accepted in this course,** and there are no extensions. Exceptions may occasionally made in case of emergency, as explained in the Course Policies section below.

Assignment will be weighted as follows:

- 8 online **discussions,** with "substantive" posts - **20 percent.** (Individual discussions are not graded. There will be one overall grade, based on participation and content, for the semester.) Refer to the discussion rubric for specifics. Rubric for discussions⬚

  - 7 **written assignments - 45 percent**. This includes two short papers (2-3 pages) @10 percent each and the remaining five assignments @ 5 percent each, for a total of 45 percent.

  - 5 **quizzes** - **10** percent (2 percent each)

  - 1 **research project (final assignment) 25 percent** *(See final project description at end of Module 1)*

 Grading is based on 100 points. Here is the grading scale:
The final grade will be awarded as follows:

A	100%	to	92.5%
A-	< 92.5%	to	89.5%
B+	< 89.5%	to	86.5%
B	< 86.5%	to	82.5%
B-	< 82.5%	to	79.5%
C+	< 79.5%	to	76.5%
C	< 76.5%	to	72.5%
C-	< 72.5%	to	69.5%
D+	< 69.5%	to	66.5%
D	< 66.5%	to	62.5%
D-	< 62.5%	to	59.5%
F	< 59.5%	to	0%

Course and Assignment Details:

This 12-module course consists of lectures, short videos, discussions, written assignments, quizzes and a final project. The lectures and videos vary in length. It is your responsibility to watch each of the videos and lectures and to be ready to discuss them with your classmates.

Course Policies

Attendance:

Because this is an online asynchronously delivered course, attendance in the form of calling roll will not occur; however, students are expected to sign onto the course site at least once each day, Monday – Friday, to check for course updates in the announcements and discussion sections of the site.

Issues with uploading work for a grade is not an excuse. If a student is having technical difficulties with Canvas, there are other means to submit completed work. Student may email .zip files or even links to Dropbox folders to Instructor via UF email. Students should compensate for technical difficulties by not waiting until the last minute to submit work.

Technical issue policy: A reliable computer and good internet access is an absolute requirement for this course. Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up or submit late work. Contact UF helpdesk (352) 392-HELP.

Emergency and extenuating circumstances policy: Students who face emergencies, such as a major personal medical issue, a death in the family, serious illness of a family member, or other situations beyond their control should notify their instructors immediately.
Students are also advised to contact the Dean of Students Office if they would like more information on the medical withdrawal or drop process: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/care/medical-withdrawal-process/ .

Students MUST inform their academic advisor before dropping a course, whether for medical or non-medical reasons. Your advisor will assist with notifying professors and go over options for how to proceed with their classes. Your academic advisor is Tiffany Robbert, and she may be reached at trobbert@jou.ufl.edu .

University Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.
Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

Class Demeanor:

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class, be on time, and meet all deadlines. Work assigned in advance of class should be completed as directed. Full participation in online and live discussions, group projects, and small group activities is expected.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct you and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing your performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for you to have confidence that you have mastered the material and for me to determine that you are meeting all course requirements.

At all times it is expected you will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that you will treat your fellow students and me with respect, and that you will contribute to the success of the class as best as you can.

Other Resources:

Other are available at http://www.distance.ufl.edu/ getting-help for:
- Counseling and Wellness resources
  - http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/ 352-392-1575
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please contact your program director and/or student support coordinator at distancesuppport@jou.ufl.edu or visit http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints to submit a complaint.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

- Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php

  All graduate students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:
- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others. A thorough understanding of plagiarism is a precondition for admittance to graduate studies in the college.

- **Cheating**: Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes, in physical or electronic form, in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.
- **Misrepresenting Research Data**: The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.
- **Any violation of the above stated conditions is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and will result in revocation of the degree if the degree previously has been awarded.**
- Students are expected to adhere to the University of Florida Code of Conduct https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code
- If you have additional questions, please refer to the Online Graduate Program Student Handbook you received when you were admitted into the Program.

Honesty and Integrity:

The highest standards of ethical behavior and integrity are expected in this class. Students are expected to comply with the letter and the spirit of the UF Honor Code which reads as follows:

Student Honor Code Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Academic Honesty Guidelines All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University. The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty

in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty
Guidelines

will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017).

For more information about academic honesty, contact the Dean of Students Office. You can review UF's academic honesty guidelines in detail at: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php
(University of Florida Honor Code, 2008)

You are assumed to be the sole author of all work presented. Submitting work written by another or stolen from another (i.e. plagiarized) is not only unethical, it is foolish, embarrassing and may result in course failure. When quoting the work of others, be sure to credit the author properly. I will be using software to detect plagiarism.

Inclusiveness

Every attempt is made to make all courses non-sexist, diverse and multicultural in content. Please visit with me should you feel this goal is not being met.

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Mental Health or Emergency Resources

You can reach the University Counseling Service at 352-392-1575 or go to this link.
http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx

(For emergencies, call 9-1-1)

Netiquette: Communication Courtesy:

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf

It is important to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

Security

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it

Guidelines

When communicating online, you should always:

- Treat instructor with respect, even in email or in any other online communication
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name.
- Use clear and concise language
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you"
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 pt. font
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or ☺
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or offensive
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's)

Email Netiquette

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line
- Be brief
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text
- Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address
- Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all"
- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "forward" button

Message Board Netiquette and Guidelines

When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should:

- Make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material
- Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending

- Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment
- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying
- Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point
- Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks
- Be open-minded

When you need technical HELP!

Please note that there are several good places to go for help. There are tutorials posted on the e-learning Support Services site, https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help/Student_Faq . You can also call the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or visit http://helpdesk.ufl.edu . Often you can get help from your classmates on the course discussion board. **I will not be your source for technical help.**

All email should go through the Canvas tool. No private emails will be exchanged. I will respond to your email within 48 hours, and probably within 24 hours.

In the unlikely event of a UF system-wide technology failure, any quizzes or other deadlines will be postponed until the system is up and running again. Otherwise, internet problems and computer problems on your end will not be considered as an excuse for missing deadlines.

Other policies: Online tests will be timed and once a test is posted, you may not go back and make changes. You will get test scores immediately.

Schedule

Weekly Module Dates

In this course, weeks run from **12 a.m. Sundays through 11 p.m**. **Saturdays.** (note: The first week of the course is an exception to this, since it starts Monday instead of Sunday.) Please note that the course **ends** on FRIDAY, not Saturday. Here are the weekly dates for **SUMMER 2019** term:

Week	Dates
Week 1	May 13-18
Week 2	May 19-25
Week 3	May 26-June 1
Week 4	June 2-8

| Week 5 | June 9-15 |

Week 6	June 16-22
	June 23-29 BREAK WEEK
Week 7	June 30-July 6
Week 8	July 7-13
Week 9	July 14-20
Week 10	July 21-27
Week 11	July 28- August 3
Week 12	August 4-**9 (Friday)**

Week 1 - Introduction

In this first module, we will review the syllabus for the course and spell out the expectations. We will also define what research is and how it plays a role in our everyday lives. We will consider several different ways of knowing, focusing on the scientific method. We will look at research being done by some leading communication organizations/agencies.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 1.1 Summarize the syllabus and the course requirements.
- 1.2 Describe the characteristics of the scientific method and how it differs from other ways of knowing.
- 1.3 Identify the steps in the research process.
- 1.4 Define some basic terms in the research field, such as variables, operational definition, replication, algorithm, internal and external validity.
- 1.5 Locate and examine professional journals and trade publications in the field of mass communication.

Readings & Videos

FIRST familiarize yourself with the , reading it from beginning to end.

- Chapter 1, Wimmer and Dominick
- Spend some time on the UF Library website, perusing at least three of the mass communication professional journals, research summaries and trade publications listed on page 16-17 of the Wimmer and Dominick textbook.
- Your assignment this week will ask you to suggest a hypothesis or research question for your final project. This is not as easy as it sounds. The attached slide presentation may be helpful. (**SLIDES 1-12.)** There will be plenty of time to tweak your hypothesis/research question later.

Watch: Research Methods in Mass Communication (13:25)

Discussions

Discussions are an important part of this course. You are expected to read all the comments of your classmates and to respond to at least two with substantive posts. As noted in the rubric, your discussion posts should specifically include the reading materials as well as outside resources or your own personal workplace experiences. **INITIAL POSTS ARE DUE WEDNESDAYS by 11 p.m. Two responses are due Saturdays by 11 p.m.**

Discussion #1 Introduce Yourself: Post a couple of paragraphs to the "Introduce Yourself" discussion.

Assignment #1

Think about a topic in the field of communication that you would like to research for your final project and form a research question or hypothesis around that topic. T**he narrower the focus, the better**. (**A HYPOTHESIS** is an "educated guess," a tentative prediction about the nature of the relationship between **two or more variables**.) You will have plenty of time to modify or completely change your topic, but the sooner you choose, the more you can apply the weekly assignments. Post your first pass at the research question here. Module 1: Research Question and Hypothesis

Assignment Rubric
(5 point assignment

Quizzes

Click here for Quiz 1

Final Project

Due by end of week of Module 12

You will design and execute a research project on a topic of your choice **within the field of communication.**

Rubric for final project:

Your paper should start with an **abstract** which includes your hypothesis or research question and a statement about whether your hypothesis was proven or disproven-- or, the answer to your research question. This should be a **succinct** summary.

Your paper should be between 3,000 and 4,000 words and should include these elements, each in a separate section:

1. a brief **abstract** (**with** r**esults**)
2. an **introduction** and some background explaining the reason for the research
3. a brief literature review (a minimum of **four** previous research studies from a **peer-reviewed scholarly journal** (not articles from magazines) on the topic you choose;
4. **a description of the methodology,** including an explanation of the sampling method. You may use any **two** methodologies: qualitative or quantitative research, focus groups, surveys, case study, content analysis, experimental research.
5. a **data analysis**, with results/conclusion. If you used an instrument, such as a survey, you should include that instrument in the appendix.
6. a paragraph about the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology you chose
7. at least one suggestion for further research on the same or a related topic.
8. Appendix with survey instrument, citations and other appropriate items.

YOU SHOULD USE APA style for **citations**. It might be helpful to search other research papers on the internet to see the appropriate format. (Note: **No first person** references in research papers. Use third person.)

Also, see Ch.1, page 16, Figure 1.2 to see the steps you need to take in the development of your project. *Note: Before we get to the final assignment, there will be several assignments relating to research, e.g. a short literature review, a focus group, a survey. If you choose your final topic early in the course, you may apply all these assignments to your final project.*

Week 2 Elements of Research

Introduction

Before we can learn about research, we need to have a basic understanding of the basic elements that are necessary to conduct effective research. We will explore many of those in this module so that we will have a good foundation for the weeks ahead.

Objectives

- 2.1 Identify important elements of research including concepts, constructs, variables and measurement.
- 2.2 Explain validity and reliability.
- 2.3 Describe measurement scales commonly used in research.
- 2.4 Analyze a literature review.

Readings and Videos

- Chapter 2, Wimmer and Dominick

- PNAS research on validity of group projects
- NY Times article on validity of Nike research

- http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/11/07/europe-north-america-publics-more-supportive-than-experts- of-direct-democracy/

Watch:

Elements of Research (12:31) (Links to an external site.)

Discussion #2

Discuss your thoughts on the validity of the Nike research.

Assignment #2

Analyzing literature reviews

Researchers usually begin with a review of the literature - a summary of research that has already been done in the field. In the last module, you developed a research question and a hypothesis and you spent some time looking at professional journals. Using the same research question or hypothesis, read at least two literature reviews of prior research on that topic. Post at least two **ABSTRACTS** and at least two of the citations quoted in the studies you chose onto the assignment link.

Week 3 Ethics in Research

Introduction

Ethical concerns are paramount when planning, conducting and evaluating research. Since most mass media research involves humans, we must be vigilant in protecting the rights of participants. In this module, we will explain ethical issues in detail, and examine the guidelines for dealing with those issues.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 3.1 Describe the guidelines that help researchers answer ethical questions.
- 3.2 Discuss UF's IRB and understand its role in university research.
- 3.3 Summarize the four basic ethical principles of research: autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, justice.

Readings & Videos

Read:
- Chapter 3 Wimmer and Dominick

- UF Institutional Review Boards UF Institutional Review Boards (Links to an external site.) This is **required reading** for all mass communication research students, especially IRB-02.

Watch:
- Research Ethics lecture (08:27)

- TED TALK on good/bad research https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4MhbkWJzKk

Discussion #3

Discussions are an important element of this course. You are expected to read ALL posts by your classmates and to respond to at least two with substantive posts.

What ethical challenges do you see with researchers using data they gather on Facebook?
Post your thoughts and discuss with your classmates.

Assignment #3

Using the unethical examples on the first page of this chapter, **briefly** suggest alternative, more ethical, ways of conducting each study. Post your thoughts on the assignment page.

Take Quiz #2

Week 4 Sampling

Introduction

Although some scientific research examines every member of a population, usually that is not possible. Instead, researchers depend on a sample, a subset of the population that is representative of the entire population. As one researcher put it, you only need to taste a spoonful of the sauce to know what the whole pot tastes like. In this module we will explore several different kinds of samples and sampling techniques used in mass communication research.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 4.1 Differentiate among the various types of probability and non-probability sampling
- 4.2 Distinguish between population and census

Readings & Videos

Read:
1. Chapter 4 Wimmer and Dominick
2. Article about probability vs. non-probability polls
   http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/05/02/q-a-online-nonprobability-polls/

Watch: two videos on sampling

1. Five minutes about sampling:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=be9e-Q-jC-0 (Links to an external site.)

2. More about sampling:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOBYsdgGhVw

Assignment #4   Probability vs. Non-Probability Sampling

You work for a national polling organization. Your supervisor tells you to find out whether the majority of the people in Gainesville voted for Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton. Since you can't possibly ask everyone in town, you decide to use a sample of the population.

1. Briefly describe a possible sampling procedure using a nonprobability sampling technique.
2. Then describe how you might sample people using a probability sampling technique.
3. Briefly explain the difference between probability and non-probability sampling.
4. Now speculate on the ways that the outcomes might differ using the two techniques.

Post your responses on the assignment link.

Week 5 Qualitative Research – Interviews, case studies, observation, focus groups

Introduction

All scientific research requires careful observation. In this module we will discuss various ways to conduct this observation. We will explore how researchers conduct qualitative research in an attempt to gain an in-depth understanding of human behavior. Qualitative research investigates the why and how of decision making, not just the *what, where, when*. We will explore several types of qualitative research methods.

There will be a quiz on Chapter 4, 5 and 6 at end of Module 6.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 5.1 Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative research methods, including the advantages and disadvantages of each
- 5.2 Describe various qualitative methods, including focus groups, case studies, field observation, interviews and ethnography
- 5.3 Discuss the pros and cons of online research.
- 5.4 Lead a focus group and analyze the results

Readings & Videos

Read:
- Chapter 5 Wimmer and Dominick
- Effective Focus Group questions
- Deflate-gate case study (Annenberg)

Watch:
- **Lecture :** Qualitative Research (10:42)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gR1zu7i0-E (focus group video)

Discussion #4

Our textbook authors say that in-depth case studies are a common qualitative research technique that use as many data sources as possible to systematically investigate a situation or understand a phenomenon. After reading the "Deflate-Gate" case study below, discuss what data sources were explored in this situation. What elements of the case study method can you identify? Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

http://cssc.uscannenberg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/v6art3.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Assignment #5 – Focus Group

Select a **communication** research topic and conduct a one-hour focus group of at least five people -- use your family, friends, classmates or co-workers. Emailing several people separately for their opinion is not

a focus group. **Interaction** among participants is key in a focus group. A group Skype meeting is acceptable. Remember that open-ended questions work best in this method. Take good notes, then write a 3-5 page summary (double-spaced) describing the experience, including the challenges. How did you analyze the data you gathered? Post on assignment link.

Week 6 Content Analysis

Introduction

Content analysis is the systematic analysis of existing documents. This approach is popular with mass media researchers because it is an efficient and cost-effective way to investigate the content of the media. Also, it allows for qualitative research to be presented in a quantitative way. We will explore the advantages and challenges of this approach, including its place in internet research.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 6.1 Define content analysis and articulate how it can be used in mass communication research.
- 6.2 State the advantages and limitations of content analysis as a research method.
- 6.3 Describe the sampling challenges in content analysis.

Readings & Videos

Read:
- Wimmer and Dominick, Ch. 6

- Read how the Pew Research Center does content analysis for its research articles. https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/about-content-analysis/

- ⬚ Interesting NYT article examines content from a different angle:

Watch: Content Analysis lecture (12:35)

Assignment #6

After reading the Pew Research Center article about content analysis, devise a simple coding system to do a content analysis on a topic of your choice. (It can be on the topic of your final research project.) You should analyze **at least 10** issues of magazines, trade journals, newspapers, print or TV ads, news broadcasts. Decide what you want to look for/measure. For example, one student analyzed issues of *Runners World* and *Running* magazine to compare the amount of coverage of male vs. female runners. Others have measured how often a certain word or phrase appears. One student analyzed 12 beer commercials to compare their messages. Write a brief summary (min. 500 words) of your findings. **Be sure to describe/include the coding system you used.** (*Reminder: Word count means **actual content**, not my name, your name, a restatement of the assignment or citations.*)

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Quiz # 3 (on chapters 4,5,6)

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Week 7 Quantitative Research: Surveys and Polls

Introduction

In this chapter we will delve into the world of polls and survey research, learning about both descriptive and analytical surveys. We will learn how researchers design effective questionnaires that will elicit the information they need.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 7.1 Distinguish between descriptive and analytical surveys.
- 7.2 Design a survey with well-constructed questions.
- 7.3 Collect and analyze data obtained through surveys.
- 7.4 Distinguish between polls and surveys

Readings

Read:
- Wimmer and Dominick Ch. 7
- Wondering what the difference is between a poll and a survey? Read this.
  https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/public-perspective/ppscan/83/83006.pdf
- Research on relationship between narcissism and Facebook use.
  file:///C:/Users/NEW/Downloads/Narcissism%20&%20SM%20Academic%20Article%20(1).pdf

Watch:
- Sometimes even the most experienced pollsters get it wrong.
  http://www.pewresearch.org/2016/11/15/video-why-2016-election-polls-missed-their- mark/
- A survey in 10 steps: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1MYM35qUr8

Assignment #7-- Your survey

Please follow the directions on page 222 for conducting your own survey, using the UF Qualtrix platform. Complete # 1, a-d. Include the purpose of the study and demographics of the respondents. Is there a hypothesis or research question you are testing? Post a 2-3 page report summarizing your findings. **Include a copy of your survey instrument**.

Take **Quiz #4**

Week 8 Longitudinal and Experimental Research

Introduction

In this module we will consider two research methods which are not commonly used in Mass Communication research. Nonetheless, they are important methods that research students should be aware of. Longitudinal studies involve the collection of data at different points in time. Experimental methods are done in a controlled environment. Quasi-experimental designs and field experiments will also be discussed.

There will be a Quiz on Ch. 8 and 9 at the end of Module 9.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 8.1 Define longitudinal research and its application in mass communication.
- 8.2 Differentiate between trend studies, cohort studies and panel studies.
- 8.3 Describe steps researchers take in conducting experiments.
- 8.4 Explain confounding variables.
- 8.5 Discuss strengths and weaknesses of field experiments.

Readings

- **Wimmer and Dominick, Ch. 8 and 9**
- **Longitudinal study linking cell phone use and academic performance.**
  http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015573169

Watch:
Ted Talk on happiness study:
https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness?rid=7wiMSGKeZBXj&utm_source=recommendation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=explore&utm_term=watchNow (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Discussion #5

Our class is going to design an experimental research study to measure the effects of watching horror movies. What are some ways we can recruit subjects? How will we define and measure effects? What kind of ethical issues may be involved?

Week 9 Analyzing Data/ SPSS

Introduction

Statistics help us understand the data collected in research investigations so that we can make inferences and draw conclusions about a population. This module will introduce some of the common mathematical methods that researchers use to collect, organize and analyze data.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 9.1 Discuss some of the more common descriptive and inferential statistics used by mass media researchers
- 9.2 Define common terms used in analyzing and interpreting data, including data distribution, frequency distribution, sample distribution, dispersion, the normal curve.
- 9.3 Explain how SPSS software can be used to analyze and interpret data.
- 9.4 Articulate the concept of 'evidence-based" communication research.

Readings & Videos

Read:

- Wimmer and Dominick Chapter 10: Introduction to Statistics

- Paper on Florida's citrus industry by this week's lecturer, Robert Norberg, Director of Strategy and Research for The Agency at UF Financial Benefits to Florida Orange Growers of FDOC Generic OJ Marketing-2.pdf

First here is some background about the objectives of the presentation, the lecturer and the Agency at UF: Norbert background.pdf

Discussion #6:

After reading the paper about the Florida Citrus industry and hearing Mr. Norbert's lecture, what does "evidence-based decision making mean to you? Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

Watch:
- Analyzing Data (4:19) (Donohue comments)
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADDR3_Ng5CA (SPSS for beginners)
-
- Norbert Lecture: *Evidence-based Decision Making Research: Case Study of Florida Department of Citrus Market Mix Modeling for Optimum Return on Investment*

Take Quiz #5 (on Chs. 8/9)

Week 10 Newspaper and Magazine Research

Introduction

As newspaper and magazines have been struggling to keep afloat in recent years, print media research has taken on an increasingly important role. Print media companies are not only using research to improve their readership and circulation, but also to examine their management. Additionally, social media platforms are changing the way people get their news, putting pressure on print media to develop additional readership research to learn and respond to preferences of their audiences.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 10.1 Explain research methods used by newspapers and magazines.
- 10.2 Analyze various types of readership and circulation studies.
- 10.3 Discuss the use of management research in the newspaper industry
- 10.4 Analyze the impact of the internet on the print media industry.

Readings & Videos

Read:

- Read Chapter 13, Wimmer and Dominick
- Research studies on newspaper readership and how people get their news

  - http://www.journalism.org/2017/09/07/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2017/

- http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/01/circulation-and-revenue-fall-for-newspaper-industry/

- How Americans view the media in 2018   https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/americans-views-media-2018-08-0

<u>Discussion #7</u>: How do the 2017 Journalism.org and Pew newspaper readership reports reflect your personal readership and news gathering habits?

What are your thoughts on the articles? Do they reflect your perception of the current news industry? What, if anything, surprised you in these articles? What did you find particularly

interesting about the research? Looking WAY into the future, what highlights would you predict for newspaper readership in the year 2030?

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Week 11 Research in Social and Electronic Media

Introduction

Advertisers who place commercials on radio or television shows understandably want to know how many people are seeing or hearing their ads and how effective their messages are. Broadcasters have the responsibility to provide this empirical data to their advertisers and they do this through ratings companies. In this module we will look at how the ratings system works.

We will also explore several types of non- ratings methods used to measure programming and audiences.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 11.1 Describe ratings research in broadcast media.
- 11.2 Explain non-rating approaches, such as music research and program testing.
- 11.3 Articulate the role of social media in targeting audiences
- 11.4 Be able to conduct a social media audit

Readings & Videos

Read:
- Wimmer and Dominick Ch. 14

- Let's look at recent research in the audio news sector: http://www.journalism.org/fact-sheet/audio-and-podcasting/

- Quesenberry's template for conducting a social audit. http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com/tag/social-media-audit-template/

- Radio Station Ratings: Where Do the Numbers Come From?

Watch:

1. The Ratings Game

- 2. **How To Conduct a Social Media Audit** : Presentation by Abigail Kneal, former UF student who was part of The Agency, UF's full-service ad/PR agency serving a wide range of local and national clients on campus. https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/e7f81627ee6c452d853a75b53f2bff2c1d

- **How Millennials Use Social Media:**
    - research/millennials-social-media/

Discussion #8

The article from the American Press Institute shows that social media has changed the game in many ways, especially for the millennial generation. Let's talk about how millennials use social media and how advertising and public relations firms have adopted their strategies to get their messages out to this audience. Post your thoughts to the discussion link.

Module 12 Public Relations and Advertising Research

Introduction

Advertising and public relations people rely heavily on research to help them develop strategies for creating effective campaigns. Good research can increase their understanding of consumer attitudes, can provide data to determine how, when and where to tell their story, and can provide ways for them to evaluate and, if necessary, modify their medium and their messages. Research can also help them understand their competition. This module will provide an overview of how research is used in these two specialty areas of mass communication.

Objectives

By the end of this module students will have completed the following objectives:

- 12.1 Explain copy testing.
- 12.2 Discuss the cognitive and affective dimensions of advertising research.
- 12.3 Define the concepts of "frequency" and "reach" in media research.
- 12.4 Explain the four-step process in developing a Public Relations plan.
- 12.5 Articulate role of communication audit in formulating a public relations plan.

Readings & Videos

Read:
- Ch. 15 and 16, Wimmer and Dominick

- Future of PR Research: https://instituteforpr.org/future-pr-bright-behavioral-insights-research/ (Links

- How PR and Advertising Work Together
    - http://www.prnewsonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/5-Ways-PR-and-Advertising-Are-Working-Together-to-Create-Key-Messages.pdf

Watch: Research in Advertising and Public Relations lecture (8:02) (Donohue)

Assignment: Final Project (25 percent)

See the last section of Module 1 for details/requirements.

Turn in your **final** project by **FRIDAY** at 11 p.m.