

COM6715: Research Lifecycle
Spring 2026
College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

INSTRUCTOR	Jinping Wang, Ph.D. Assistant Professor 2080 Weimer Hall jinping.wang@ufl.edu
CLASS LOCATION & TIME	Weimer 1092 Tuesdays 9:35 am - 12:30 pm
STUDENT HOURS	Mondays & Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 pm or by appointment
COMMUNICATION:	If you can't make it to my student hours, email and message on canvas are the preferred modes of communication. Usually I'll respond within 24 hours.

Course Description

This course examines the research process from initial concept through dissemination. Students develop skills in research agenda formation, funding acquisition, and applied research implementation. The course integrates grant proposal writing with broader research management competencies to prepare graduate students for academic careers.

The course is designated an “Advanced-level course” in the College of Journalism and Communications doctoral program, meaning Ph.D. students enrolled in the course are required to complete an original scholarly paper (academic conference quality) that advances knowledge in the field.

Course Objectives:

- Develop a focused research agenda that aligns with funding opportunities in the field.
- Master grant proposal components and peer review processes while building effective project management skills.
- Create compelling arguments for research significance that resonate with academic and public audiences.
- Build strategic research collaborations and professional networks to enhance scholarly impact.
- Navigate the research lifecycle from concept to dissemination with attention to both theoretical and practical impact.
- Understand the role of thought leadership and social media with research.

Required Text

Required readings will be available through Canvas.

Assessment:

Grades will be based on a combination of categories as follows:

Assignment	% of Total
Class Participation	10%
Assignments	20%
Midterm Proposal	15%
Proposal Peer Review	15%
Research Paper (presentation 10% + paper 30%)	40%
TOTAL	100%

- **Class participation (10%):** You are expected to be an active member of the class. Meaning, you are expected to contribute thoughtful comments and questions during class discussions, demonstrating engagement with assigned readings. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for meaningful participation.
- **Assignments (20%):** Throughout the semester, you will complete a series of assignments designed to build foundational research skills. These assignments progress through key stages of the research lifecycle, including developing a research problem statement, creating a literature review strategy, establishing a team collaboration plan, and designing data collection methods. Detailed rubrics and guidelines for each assignment will be posted on Canvas one week before their respective due dates.
- **Midterm Research Proposal (15%).** You will develop a complete research proposal as a base for your final research paper following the guidelines below:
 - 4-page single-spaced narrative
 - Clear research agenda and methodology
 - Realistic budget and timeline
 - Broader impacts statement
- **Proposal Review (15%).** You will participate in an anonymous peer review process, evaluating two classmates' draft proposals using a provided review template. Reviews should assess the methodology, feasibility, and clarity of the proposals while offering specific, constructive suggestions for improvement. Each review should be at least 300 words and must be completed within one week of receiving the assigned proposals
- **Research Presentation & Paper (40%):** The presentation (10%) will be 15 minutes long with 5 minutes for Q&A, requiring professional visual aids and a clear explanation of your research design. The presentation should address feedback received during the proposal stage. The written paper (30%) can either (1) be an empirical research article between 2800-3500 words, following APA 7th style formatting. Your paper should be written with the following elements in the following order: title page; abstract; keywords; main text introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figures; figure captions (as a list). Please refer to the articles published on Communication Research Reports (<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?show=instructions&journalCode=crr20>) as examples.
- To manage this major research project effectively, you'll complete the paper or the proposal in stages throughout the semester.
- Under circumstances where you cannot submit their assignments on time due to unanticipated reasons, please contact me to plan on a workaround.

Grading Scale

Grade	Scale	
A	93-100	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes
A-	90-92.99	Generally outstanding performance on almost all learning outcomes
B+	87-89.99	High performance on all learning outcomes
B	84-86.99	Generally high performance on almost all learning outcomes
B-	80-83.99	Satisfactory performance on all learning outcomes
C+	77-79.99	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes.
C	73-76.99	Somewhat satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes.
C-	70-72.99	Somewhat satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
D+	67-69.99	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
D	60-66.99	Barely satisfactory performance on all learning outcomes
F	59.99 and below	Unsatisfactory performance on learning outcomes.

Course Policies and Responsibilities

Students are expected to behave professionally and respectfully towards their classmates and the instructor.

- Arrive on time and stay until the end of class.
- Cell phones, and other electronic devices must be turned off or silent during class. They are only permitted for note taking and relevant class activities.
- I expect you to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT and image generation tools) in this class. Some assignments will encourage you to explore their potential. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I am happy to assist with these tools during office hours or after class. However, society is still determining appropriate AI usage due to concerns about originality, bias, and the tools' limitations in critical thinking and judgment. In this class, the responsible use of AI tools in coursework or assessments must follow these guidelines:
 - **Disclosure:** Clearly indicate when you have used AI tools in your work. Specify the tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT-4, you should cite it as follows: "ChatGPT-4. (YYYY, Month DD of query). 'Text of your query.' Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>"
 - **Transparency:** Be clear about how the AI tool was used and what portions of the work are your original contribution. AI detectors like GPTZero (<https://gptzero.me/>) may be employed to identify AI-generated content.
 - **Copyright Compliance:** Ensure your use of AI tools does not infringe on any copyright or intellectual property laws.
 - **No Cheating:** Do not use AI tools to gain an unfair advantage in assessments.
 - **No Plagiarism:** Do not use AI tools to plagiarize content without proper citation.

Violations of this policy will be handled according to UF's academic integrity guidelines. Penalties may include grade reduction, failure of the assignment, or even failure of the course. It is your responsibility to understand and adhere to this policy. If you have any questions, please consult with me as we work together to navigate the ethical use of these tools.

– I encourage you to speak up and share your views, but also understand that you are doing so in a learning environment in which we all are expected to engage respectfully and with regard to the dignity of all others.

- Your suggestions are always encouraged and appreciated. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or comments on ways to improve the effectiveness of the course.

University Policies

Please visit the website (<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>) for details about UF Academic Resources & Policies.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:

Plagiarism Definition - A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authorized by the student.
- Unauthorized use of materials or resources.
- Prohibited collaboration or consultation.
- Submission of paper or academic work purchased or obtained for an outside source.

Students should be familiar with and understand UF's Plagiarism Policy as found in the UF Student Honor Code Student Conduct Code.

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.

University of Florida Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness Resources:

- ***U Matter, We Care*** serves as the umbrella program for the caring culture at the University of Florida. If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- ***Counseling and Wellness Center***: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- ***Student Health Care Center***: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.
- ***University Police Department***: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- ***UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center***: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

- ***GatorWell Health Promotion Services***: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.
- ***Students with Disabilities***: Students with disabilities can receive accommodations. The first step is to contact the Disability Resource Center (352-329-8565; www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). Once you receive your accommodation letter, provide a copy to the professor as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Resources:

- ***E-learning technical support***: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- ***Career Connections Center***: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- ***Library Support***: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- ***Teaching Center***: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- ***Writing Studio***: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- ***Student Complaints On-Campus***: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.
- ***On-Line Students Complaints***: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Course schedule is subject to change, as instructor deems appropriate and necessary.

Jan 13: Introduction and Research Lifecycle

- Course overview
- Research lifecycle stages
- Assignment: Personal context concept

Jan 20: Introduction to Strategic Research Planning

- Practical mapping of research pipeline and career stages
- Hands-on analysis of successful research portfolios

Jan 27: Building the Core Proposal

- Strategic literature review techniques for proposal development
- Anatomy of winning specific aims
- Converting research ideas into fundable projects
- In-class writing workshop with peer feedback

Feb 3: Research Design and Methods

- Practical approaches to methods writing
- Building realistic timelines and workflows
- Open Science Framework for project planning
- Pre-registration and reproducible workflows
- Assignment: Methods outline with pre-registration plan

Feb 10: Making Your Case for Impact

- Writing compelling significance statements
- Practical approaches to innovation sections
- Knowledge translation planning
- Assignment: Impact statement and innovation section

Feb 17: Building Research Teams

- Strategic collaboration planning
- Writing effective support letters
- Managing research partnerships
- Assignment: Team composition plan

Feb 24: Grant Opportunities & Application Strategies

- Guest lecture: Max Williams
- Identifying relevant grant opportunities for advertising/communication projects
- Understanding grant application processes and timelines

Mar 3: Proposal Working Session

- One-on-one consultation slots
- Peer feedback roundtables
- Assignment: Complete first draft of proposal

Mar 10: Understanding Review Processes

- Scoring criteria in practice
- Responding to reviewer feedback
- Assignment: Peer review of two classmates' drafts

Mar 17: Spring Break (No Class)

Mar 24: Proposal Refinement

- Advanced editing techniques
- Graphics and visual presentation
- Data management and sharing plans

Mar 31: Applied and Industry Research

- Converting academic research for industry applications
- Industry-academic partnerships and contracts
- Industry funding mechanisms and requirements
- Guest speaker: Industry-Academic Collaboration
- Assignment: Industry translation plan for your research

Apr 7: Strategic Publication Planning

- Publication timing and sequencing
- Strategic co-authorship
- Preprints, open access, and visibility strategies

Apr 14: Project Progress Presentations

- Research progress presentations including:
 - Brief project overview (aims and significance)
 - Progress on data collection/research activities
 - Preliminary findings and analysis (if you have)
 - Next steps and timeline
- Peer feedback

Apr 21: Individual Research Consultations

- One-on-one meetings with the instructor

Apr 28: Final Paper (Due May 5, 5pm)