

Quantitative Research Methods

JRSM 7080-001, M50

Spring 2020

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Familiarization with content analysis, survey research, data analysis, and field studies as practiced by reporters, editors, and public relations decision makers; modern research techniques and class project using computer analysis.

Course overview

At its core, graduate study is research. To that end, this course develops the understanding and skills needed to conduct mass communication research. This course explores the three primary methods of quantitative research: content analysis, survey, and experiment. Students will learn the common scientific methods of inquiry. This graduate course lays a foundation to conduct a research project in either professional or academic settings.

Prerequisites

JRSM7050

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Keyton, J. (2019). *Communication research: Asking questions, finding answers*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

APA Style Manual, 6th Edition.

Note: Several additional required readings are posted to Courseware for each week.

Grading

A: 90% or above

B: 80% - 89%

C: 70% - 79%

D: 60% - 69%

F: < 60%

Grading Philosophy

A = Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification

B = Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement, but would require revision to be used professionally

C = Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement, but would need significant revision

D = Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality

F = Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement

NOTE: Students in Journalism and Strategic Media must earn a B or better to earn credit in the course.

Grade Distribution

Assignment	Percent of grade
Discussion leadership	10%
Article/Method Reviews	20%
Exams	20%
Homework Assignments & Colloquium	20%
Research Paper	30%

Intellectual Property

1. Ideas cannot be copyrighted, but the way they are described can.
2. Anything set down in a tangible form, i.e., written, is by law copyrighted.
3. If, in a paraphrase, your work is “substantially similar” to a copyrighted work, you are guilty of copyright infringement.
4. A citation indicates where you got material. However, that portion you do not show as a direct quote must be “substantially original” to you. In other words, you can’t just paste in something from another’s work, put a citation at the bottom and call it your own. You need a full rewrite in your own words and syntax so the unquoted material is “substantially original” to you.

Plagiarism: From um student handbook

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Attendance & Class conduct

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of each class session. Students are allowed three unexcused absences; after three, additional unexcused absences will drop the student’s final grade by one letter grade for each absence. Missing a total of seven classes will result in the student failing the course. University policy for excused absences apply to this course. Tardiness will not be tolerated. After two tardiness, one percentage point will be deducted from the student’s final grade for each additional tardy. Attendance will be determined by signing the daily sign-in sheet for the course.

Mobile and electronic devices

The use of electronic devices is permitted, as this class focuses on design and technology. Mobile telephones must be turned to vibrate during class and should be used only for emergencies. Excessive text messaging will not be tolerated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and mass communications. Assignments turned in late will be deducted a letter grade for each day late. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to or on the due date.

Assignments

This section is meant as a general guideline to the major assignments within the class. More detail will be provided in class and on eCourseware. Deadlines are also listed in the Class Schedule. All work should be turned in via Dropbox in eCourseware unless otherwise noted. All work is due at the start of class, 11:59 p.m. CT on the Friday of the week assigned, unless otherwise noted.

Discussion leadership (10%)

Each student is will take the lead on a discussion for class one week. Students will sign up for their weeks in advance. The discussant will write a two-page essay discussing the week's readings and turn it in to the professor on Saturday before class. During the class session, the discussant will take the lead in the classroom seminar.

Article/method reviews (20%)

Students will find a published, peer-reviewed journal article using each of the three methods we discuss in class. The instructor must approve the article before the student begins work. Student will read the article and write a 250-word critique of the article, with particular attention to the method addressed in the article. Articles should be drawn from journalism and mass communication journals, such as *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Mass Communication & Society*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *New Media & Society* and others published by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication or the International Communication Association.

Exams (20%)

Midterm and final exams.

Homework assignments and colloquium (20%)

Assigned throughout the semester based on the topic under discussion. Some will be statistics related and others will be sampling technique related. Graduate students must attend and write a one-page reflection paper about at least one Research Colloquium sponsored by the Department. Attendance and papers will count for at least 2% of your course final grade. Those who cannot attend will receive instructions about remote viewing from your instructor.

Research paper (25%)

Approximately 20-page research paper addressing a phenomenon in journalism and mass communications. Student must conduct original research for the paper.

Additional information about research paper

Prospectus (10%)

1. Begin with a brief introduction that explains the journalism and mass communication problem or phenomenon you are researching.
2. Write a very brief academic literature review about previous scholarship related to your

subject. This brief literature review should support your argument and identify the scholarly gap that your study will answer (in-text citations and references are needed).

3. Propose your research questions or hypotheses at the very end of this prospectus. Make sure your research questions or hypotheses are clear. List them as RQ1, RQ2, RQ3 etc., or H1, H2, H3, H4 etc.

Proposal (25%)

In total, your proposal should be about 8-10 pages long. It should include the following sections:

1. Begin with a brief introduction that explains the journalism and mass communication problem or phenomenon you are researching.
2. Write an academic literature review about previous scholarship related to your subject. Focus on journalism and mass communication journals, such as *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Mass Communication & Society*, *the Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *New Media & Society* and others published by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication or the International Communication Association. This brief literature review should support your argument and identify the scholarly gap that your study will answer (in-text citations and references are needed).
3. Propose your research questions or hypotheses at the very end of this prospectus. Make sure your research questions or hypotheses are clear with one question only. List them as RQ1, RQ2, RQ3 etc., or H1, H2, H3, H4 etc.
4. Write a methodology that explains the procedure for data collection, sampling, and analysis.
5. Any tools needed for data collection (questionnaire, code book, interview guide, etc.).

Research paper (60%)

Build on your proposal and complete an original research project.

1. Your papers will be graded on content, including writing quality, comprehensiveness of research, adherence to complete and proper citation style, grammar, punctuation and spelling. All of these will be analyzed to determine a final paper grade.
2. Use third-person, active voice.
3. Within your paper, you will have sections on short introduction, short literature review, full method, full results, full discussion, full conclusion, and complete references.
4. Your written work will be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. By taking this course, you agree that your paper may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Research presentation (5%)

Professional presentation of research paper in class. Students will prepare a 10-minute presentation and be prepared for question and answer.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Case Studies

Tuten, T. L. (2011). Field Observations and case studies. In S. Zhou & S. Sloan (Eds.), *Research methods in communication* (pp. 265-271). Northport, AL: Vision Press.

Content Analysis

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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

Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. G. (1998). *Analyzing media messages: Using content analysis in research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Content Analysis Web Sites (with sample code books)

Inter-coder reliability. <http://astro.temple.edu/~lombard/reliability/>

Palo Alto Research Center: <http://www2.parc.com/istl/groups/qca/demos.html>

ReCal: <http://dfreelon.org/utis/recalfront/>

Effect Size

www.researchconsultation.com/how-to-calculate-effect-size-help.asp

www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00002182.htm

www.wilderdom.com/research/effectsizes.html

Other "tools"

www.ets.org/testcoll Database of scales, inventories, surveys and such used in research articles
Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Models. Index of more than 1,700 unpublished instruments. Available in McWherter Library. [2009]

Other special Web sites / Print resources

Communication Studies Resources: www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources

First Amendment Handbook: www.rcfp.org/handbook/index.html

Freedom Forum: www.freedomforum.org

History of the Mass Media in the United States. 2000 is latest. P92.U5 H55 1998 journalism.org

Media and Communication Studies: www.aber.ac.uk/media

Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopedia of Television. 2000 is latest. PN1992.18 .M874 1997.

Social Science Network: www.socialpsychology.org

Public Affairs Video Archives. Purdue University: pava.purdue.edu

Power

www.researchconsultation.com/power-analysis-sample-size-calculation-help.asp

Q Method

www.qmethod.org

Watts, S., & Stenner, P. (2012). *Doing Q methodological research: Theory, method and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Repositories for social science questions

Social science archives www.icpsr.umich.edu/gss www.irss.unc.edu/data_archive

American Assn. for Public Opinion Research www.aapor.org

[see: “response rate calculator” under Survey Methods. Lots of links in Resources on the Web, also under Survey Methods.]

Roper Center www.ropercenter.uconn.edu

Public Opinion Lab felix.iupui.edu [see: Completed Studies – results available from some studies. see: Links – useful references in many areas.]

National Survey www.wisc.edu/uwsc [see: Projects – actual Qs in national survey since 1988]

Social Science Methods (all)

The Sage encyclopedia of social science research methods. (2004). H62.L456 2004 in reference collection, McWherter Library. Explanations of 1,000 methods.

Statistics

SPSS Website www.spss.com/tech/stat/Articles.htm [see especially their articles on survey methods]

www.spss.com/academic

<http://insideout.spss.com/> [SPSS Blog]

Statistics website at www.statistics.com www.davidmlane.com/hyperstat

www.seeingstatistics.com

Warner, R. M. (2008). *Applied statistics*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Survey Sites and References

Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS). Apply to have them gather data for you via Internet or phone (national sample).

www.experimentcentral.org

“Think aloud” protocol. See: S. Presser et al. (2004). Methods for testing and evaluating survey questions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 68(1), pp. 109-131.

Writing Proposals

Bui, Y. N. (2009). *How to write a master’s thesis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Leedy, P. D. (2004). *Practical research planning and design*, 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Locke, L. F., Spirduso, W. W., & Silverman, S. J. (2000). *Proposals that work*, 4th ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. [www.sagepub.com]

Ogden, E. H. (1993). *Completing your doctorate dissertation or master’s thesis in two semesters or less*, 2nd ed. Lancaster, PA: Technomic.

HYBRID CLASSROOM FORMAT

- Blue Jeans is a web-based video conferencing platform. Students in the M50 section will receive an invitation to join Blue Jeans from your instructor.
- This hybrid class, with students on campus and also online synchronously, operates in a seminar format.
- Online students must have a stable Internet connection, speakers and a microphone (or a headset with a built-in mic). Headsets can be purchased for approximately \$20. Students will need to be able to have video turned on for the entire class. Online students will not be permitted to attend class using a cellphone.

- Class time will primarily be spent in discussion of theories, issues, and applications. To that end, on campus and online students must complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the night's topic. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively take part — even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably — will significantly affect your final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: This schedule is subject to change based on the class situations. The professor reserves the right to change the schedule. Please get the updated details about assignments, reading materials, and related class materials from eCourseware.

WEEK 1, Jan. 21-24, NO CLASS (MLK day)

WEEK 2, Jan 27-31, Research fundamentals

Ways of knowing. Scientific method of inquiry. What do we research? Keywords, Search Terms, and Folders. Research ideas. Overview of Methods.

Homework: Annotated Bibliography

WEEK 3, Feb. 3-7, Conceptualization and Operationalization.

Defining concepts. Research questions vs. hypotheses.

Homework: Operational definitions, Prospectus

WEEK 4, Feb. 10-14, Measurement

Scales. Variables.

Homework: Measurements.

WEEK 5, Feb. 17-21, Sampling

Simple random sample. Stratified sample. Snowball. Convenience. Purposive. Central limit theorem. Sampling error. Confidence levels.

Homework: Sample procedure.

WEEK 6, Feb. 24-28, Research practices

Institutional Review Board. Research ethics. Laws in research.

Homework: IRB Certification.

WEEK 7, March 2-6, Content Analysis

Selection. Coding. Reliability testing. Code books.

Homework: Article Review 1.

WEEK 8, March 9-13, Midterm exam

Homework: Proposal

WEEK 9, March 16- 20, Survey

Populations. Scales. Factor Analysis.

Homework: Article Review 2.

WEEK 10, March 23-27, Experiment

Setup. Organization. Analysis.

Homework: Article Review 3.

WEEK 11, March 30 – April 3, Descriptive Statistics

Central tendency. Frequencies.

Homework: Statistic Activity 1.

WEEK 12, April 6-10, Inferential Statistics

Chi Square, ANOVA, T-tests, Correlation.

Homework: Statistic Activity 2.

WEEK 13, April 13-17, Analysis and Conclusions

Results. Discussions.

Homework: Statistic Activity 3.

WEEK 14, April 20-24, Data Interpretation

Data interpretation.

Homework: TBD

WEEK 15, April 27-29, Presentations

10-minute presentations of research.

Homework: Full research paper

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, May 6, 5:30pm - 7:30m

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or Squarespace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

Weather policy

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

Student support

Students who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.