

CMN 3000: Communication Research Methods

Spring 2024 | Section 001 | 3 credit hours

Room: Buzzard Hall 2441 | Tues/Thurs 2:00 - 3:15 p.m.

Instructor: Josh Grube | **Email:** jgrube@eiu.edu | **Office:** Buzzard Hall 2533

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 12 – 1:30 p.m.; Thurs 12:45 – 1:45 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to research methods in Communication Studies. This course surveys the major approaches to communication data collection using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Students will become familiar with the research process by reviewing literature, designing an original research proposal, and using APA style to write up research reports and/or textual analysis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the nature and process of communication research.
- Describe and compare qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- Recognize that different research methods yield different results in investigating communication phenomena.
- Locate, read, and understand scholarly research articles and other relevant research materials.
- Evaluate, summarize, and synthesize communication research.
- Design and conduct an original research project.
- Utilize data in a decision-making process.
- Utilize APA writing style.
- Understand the ethics of research.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Merrigan, G., & Huston, C. (2020). Communication Research Methods (4th Ed.).

GRADING

Grading Scale: A = 100-90% B = 89-80% C = 79-70% D = 69-60% F = 59-0%

There is no rounding of final scores.

Grade Distributions:

Methods Checks (4)	10%
Article Comparison	15%
Methods Paper	20%
Exams (3)	45%
Participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

ASSIGNMENTS

Methods Checks: In these assignments, you will read and evaluate an article provided on D2L. These assignments assess your understanding of research methodology. There will be 4 methods checks throughout the semester.

Article Comparison: This assignment will require you to locate two articles from communication journals on a single topic; One with a quantitative approach and one with a qualitative approach. After reading both articles, you will write a brief analysis regarding the similarities and differences between them.

Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester covering course content and comprising of multiple choice and True/False questions.

Method Proposal: In this paper, you will propose a research project on a communication topic of your choice. You will be required to choose a research method and provide a rationale for why this method is the most appropriate approach to answer the research questions.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Class Participation and Communication: You are expected to regularly participate in class discussions/activities and attentively listen. Class participation is worth 10 percent of your overall grade. Participation grades are given at my discretion and are not subject to dispute. Discussions must be conducted courteously and with respect to your fellow classmates and myself. I have zero-tolerance for hate speech. I reserve the right to ask you to leave if you disrupt the safety of our classroom and you will be considered absent. Violations to EIU's Code of Conduct will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

Attendance: Class attendance is expected and crucial for your success in this course. Poor attendance will reflect negatively on your participation grade. Any absence due to illness, emergency, and participation in official University activities must be properly verified by providing documentation. If you have a planned or expected absence, please notify me ahead of time and keep me informed. **It is your responsibility to obtain missed materials and content from a classmate, not the instructor.** It is also important to arrive at class on time. Arriving at class late may cause you to miss important information and become a distraction for your classmates. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be considered absent.

Technology: Please silence your cellphone before class begins. Cellphone use during class is strongly discouraged. Traditional notetaking is highly encouraged. Laptops and tablets are allowed for taking notes and participating in in-class activities as necessary as long as they do not become a distraction. I reserve the right to ask you to put any device away.

Assignment Policy: All assignments must be submitted by the due date. Late submissions (excluding major scheduled grading events) will be penalized 10%, with an additional 10% for each calendar day they are missing. After five calendar days, there will be no credit earned. There are **no makeups for missing major scheduled grading events** without proper verification of absence. As a result, you will earn a 0 on the assignment. Documentation for properly verified absences should be submitted within one week of your return to class. All make-up work is subject to my discretion. It is your responsibility to

contact me to initiate plans to make up work. Typed assignments should have one-inch margins and use 12-point Times New Roman font and be thoroughly proofread. Any source citations must be done using APA style.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

This course has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism. EIU's Code of Conduct defines plagiarism as “the use, without adequate attribution, of another person’s words or thoughts as if they were ones’ own, failing to cite outside sources used in completion of the work, improperly citing sources, and submitting work that was previously completed for another class without prior approval from the instructor.” At minimum a student who engages in academic dishonesty/plagiarism will receive a 0 on the assignment and be reported to the Office of Student Standards. If there are multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Office of Student Standards may sanction the student further, i.e., suspension or expulsion from the university.

Students are not allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or Dall-E 2) on assignments in this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without substantive assistance from others, including automated tools.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Accessibility & Accommodations (OAA). All accommodations must be approved through OAA. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1272, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Academic Support Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Academic Support Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 2230.

COURSE CALENDAR

*Assignment deadlines are listed in the 4th column and are DUE on the day they are listed.
Readings are expected to be completed prior to the start of class on the day they are listed.*

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS
1	T 1/9	<i>Course Introduction</i>	
	TH 1/11	<i>Introduction to Communication Research</i>	Read Chapter 1
2	T 1/16	Three Paradigms of Knowing	Read Chapter 2
	TH 1/18	Three Paradigms of Knowing	
3	T 1/23	Ethics in Research	Read Chapter 3
	TH 1/25	Ethics in Research	
4	T 1/30	Exam review	DUE: Methods Check #1
	TH 2/1	Exam 1	
5	T 2/6	Quantitative Research Making Arguments for Association and Causality	Read Chapter 4
	TH 2/8	Quantitative Research Measuring and Designing	Read Chapter 5
6	T 2/13	Experimental Research	Read Chapter 6
	TH 2/15	Survey Research	Read Chapter 7 DUE: Methods Check #2
7	T 2/20	Content Analysis	Read Chapter 8
	TH 2/22	Analyzing and Interpreting Quantitative Data	Read Chapter 9
8	T 2/27	Exam review	
	TH 2/29	Exam 2	

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS
9	T 3/5	<i>Making Arguments for Multiple Plausible Realities</i>	Read Chapter 11
	TH 3/7	<i>Making Arguments for Multiple Plausible Realities</i>	DUE: Methods Check #3
10	T 3/12	Interviews and Focus Groups	Read Chapter 12
	TH 3/14	Interviews and Focus Groups	
11	T 3/19	SPRING BREAK NO CLASS	
	TH 3/21	SPRING BREAK NO CLASS	
12	T 3/26	Ethnography	Read Chapter 13
	TH 3/28	Ethnography	
13	T 4/2	Discourse Analysis	Read Chapter 14
	TH 4/4	Discourse Analysis	DUE: Methods Check #4
14	T 4/9	Rhetorical Criticism	Read Chapter 15
	TH 4/11	Rhetorical Criticism	
15	T 4/16	Critical Studies	Read Chapter 16
	TH 4/18	Critical Studies	DUE: Article Comparison
16	T 4/23	Exam Review	
	TH 4/25	Exam 3	
Finals Week 4/29 - 5/3		Method Proposal due Monday 4/29 at 11:59 p.m.	