

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: CN 4532 Communication Research Methods		
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Instruction Hours/lab hours/US Credits: 3/0/3</b>  <b>UK LEVEL: 6</b>  <b>UK CREDITS:15</b></p> <p>(Updated Fall 2025)</p>		
<b>PREREQUISITES:</b>	WP1010 Introduction to Academic Writing WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing and Ethics WP 1212 Academic Writing and Research CN 2301 Foundations of Contemporary Media CN 3421 Communication Theories	
<b>CATALOG DESCRIPTION:</b>	An overview of the principles, methods, and tools essential for designing, conducting, and critically evaluating communication research. The course emphasizes both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, guiding students to become proficient and critical consumers and producers of research. Students will undertake a step-by-step research project, broken down into manageable components to enhance learning and practical application.	
<b>RATIONALE:</b>	Understanding research methods is crucial for students who aspire to careers in communication-related fields. This course equips students with the skills to apply theoretical concepts and practical techniques, preparing them for advanced studies and professional roles in the communication industry.	
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</b>	As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Critically evaluate theoretical frameworks to understand how they inform the selection and application of research methods in communication studies</li> <li>2. Analyze and synthesize existing research to develop a coherent literature review that informs the development of research questions.</li> <li>3. Compare major qualitative and quantitative research methods and justify the selection of appropriate methods for addressing specific research questions.</li> <li>4. Design ethical communication research projects, adhering to professional and ethical guidelines throughout the research process.</li> </ol>	
<b>METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:</b>	In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures and class discussions.</li> <li>• Homework assignments.</li> <li>• Office hours held by the instructor to provide further assistance to students.</li> <li>• Use of library facilities for further study and preparation for the exams</li> <li>• Use of the Blackboard course management platform to further support communication, by posting lecture notes, assignment instruction, timely announcements, formative quizzes, and online submission of assignments.</li> </ul>	
<b>ASSESSMENT:</b>	<b>Summative:</b>	
	<b>First Assessment: Literature Review, Research Question Formulation and Method Selection</b>  [Students will conduct a comprehensive literature review on a chosen communication topic, formulate research questions, and indicate methods that could address these questions. This is a requirement for students to be able to proceed to the second assessment]	25%

	<p><b>Final Assessment: Small-Scale Research Implementation and Analysis</b>          [Students will design and conduct a small-scale research project based on their first assessment. This includes the implementation of one selected research method, data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings in a formal research paper] 6,000-7,000 words (including the section required from the first assessment).</p>	75%	
	<p><b>First Assessment</b> tests Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3  <b>Final Assessment</b> tests Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4.</p> <p><b>Formative</b>          Optional and formative in-class exercises (e.g., short quizzes, presentation of research designs, questionnaire design, interview simulation).</p> <p>Students are required to resit failed assessments in this module.</p>		
<p><b>INDICATIVE READING:</b></p>	<p><b>REQUIRED READING:</b></p> <p>Croucher, Stephen M. and Daniel Cronn-Mills, (2014), <i>Understanding Communication Research Methods: A Theoretical and Practical Approach</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>American Psychological Association. (2020). <i>Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: the official guide to APA style</i> (Seventh edition). American Psychological Association.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED READING:</b></p> <p>Bryman, A. (2016). <i>Social research methods</i> (Fifth edition). Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Grønmo, S. (2023). <i>Social research methods: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches</i> (2nd Edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.  <a href="https://app.talis.com/textbooks/9781529618150">https://app.talis.com/textbooks/9781529618150</a></p> <p>Rubin, R. B., Rubin, A. M., Haridakis, P. M. &amp; Piele, L. J. (2010). <i>Communication research: Strategies and sources</i>. (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth</p> <p>Treadwell D. F. (2016) <i>Introducing Communication Research Paths of Inquiry</i>. Sage Publications.</p> <p>Wimmer, R. (2013). <i>Mass Media Research</i>. Cengage Learning EMEA.  <a href="https://www.perlego.com/book/801857/mass-media-research-pdf">https://www.perlego.com/book/801857/mass-media-research-pdf</a></p> <p>Other sources, including journal and newspapers' articles, research papers etc. recommended by the instructor throughout the semester.</p>		
<p><b>INDICATIVE MATERIAL:</b>          (e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</p>	<p><i>International Journal of Communication</i>  <i>Critical Studies in Media Communication</i>  <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i>  <i>Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly</i>  <i>Quarterly Review of Film and Video</i>  <i>Television and New Media</i></p>		
<p><b>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>Blackboard and an active ACG email account. High standards of oral and written English for all assignments</p>		
<p><b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>MS Office and Blackboard CMS</p>		

INDICATIVE WWW RESOURCES:	<p><i>International Journal of Communication</i>  <a href="https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc">https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc</a>  Communication Studies  <a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rcst20/current">https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rcst20/current</a>  Journal of Communication  <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/loi/14602466">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/loi/14602466</a>  Journal of Communication  <a href="https://academic.oup.com/joc">https://academic.oup.com/joc</a>  Pew Research Center:  <a href="https://www.pewresearch.org/">https://www.pewresearch.org/</a>  Oxford Internet Institute:  <a href="https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/">https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/</a></p>
INDICATIVE CONTENT:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Introduction to Communication Research</b>  Why take Research Methods?  Key terms to start the course  Key steps and questions to consider</li> <li>2. <b>Research Paradigms in Communication</b>  The Social Scientific Paradigm  The Interpretive Paradigm  The Critical Paradigm</li> <li>3. <b>Research Ethics</b>  Ethics Defined and Cultural Differences  Development of Ethics in the Scientific Community  Ethics and Human Subjects  How to follow Ethical Practices  Sample IRB application</li> <li>4. <b>Literature Review</b>  Reasons for a Literature Review  Selecting Sources for a Literature Review  Steps in Writing a Literature Review  Writing tips and APA basics  Key steps and questions to consider  Evaluating Research</li> <li>5. <b>Hypothesis and Research Questions</b>  Reasoning behind Hypotheses and Research Questions  When to use hypothesis and/or research question  How to Test Hypotheses and Research Questions  Key Steps and Questions to Consider</li> <li>6. <b>Overview of Research Approaches</b>  Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research Methods  Mixed Methods  Comparing Approaches  Key steps and questions to consider</li> <li>8. <b>Data and Sampling</b>  Data sources  Data sampling  Data collection  Population, Sampling, Measurement and Sampling Error  Probability and Non-Probability Sampling</li> <li>9. <b>Survey Research</b>  Survey Creation: Constructing questions  Questionnaire design: instructions, order, layout, length  Survey Delivery  Analysis of Survey Data  General guidelines  Key Steps and Questions to Consider  Advantages and disadvantages of survey research</li> <li>10. <b>Interviews</b>  Approaches to Interviewing  Interviewing Data and Data Collection</li> </ol>

	<p>Interviewing Warrants</p> <p>Key Steps and Questions to Consider</p> <p>Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews</p> <p><b>11. Focus Groups</b></p> <p>What are Focus Groups and Why are they used?</p> <p>How to prepare for a focus group</p> <p>Conducting a focus group</p> <p>Key Steps and Questions to Consider</p> <p>Advantages and limitations of focus groups</p> <p><b>12. Content Analysis</b></p> <p>Definition and history of content analysis</p> <p>How to develop content categories</p> <p>Defining the universe, sampling, selecting a unit of analysis, constructing a coding schedule, doing a pilot study</p> <p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Key Steps and Questions to Consider</p> <p>Uses and Limitations of Content Analysis</p> <p><b>13. The Experimental Method</b></p> <p>What is an Experiment? Design in Scientific Research</p> <p>Independent and dependent variables</p> <p>Steps to be taken when conducting an Experiment</p> <p>Advantages and Disadvantages of Experimental Method</p> <p>Key Steps and Questions to Consider</p> <p><b>14. Field Observation</b></p> <p>What is Field Observation?</p> <p>Steps to be taken when conducting a Field Observation</p> <p>Advantages and Limitations of Field Observation</p>
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