

Syllabus

COM-227: Research Methods in Communication

Written By: Henry Smith, Ph. D.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the research process. It examines how research is planned and designed, explores both quantitative and qualitative methods, introduces the techniques of these methods, and provides experience in conducting original research.

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisite Courses: COM-105

Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge: Basic background in communication principles and theories

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate how communication-related academic disciplines and professions utilize research.
2. Analyze the appropriateness of different research methods for particular projects and objectives.
3. Identify key methodological tools and techniques used in communication research.
4. Apply knowledge gained in an original research project from design through completion of study.

Course Textbook

Baxter, L. & Babbie, E. (2003). *The Basics of Communication Research*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

IWU Diversity Statement

IWU, in covenant with God's reconciling work and in accordance with the Biblical principles of our historic Wesleyan tradition, commits to build a community that reflects Kingdom diversity. We will foster an intentional environment for living, teaching and learning, which exhibits honor, respect, and dignity. Acknowledging visible or invisible differences, our community authentically values each member's earthly and eternal worth. We refute ignorance and isolation and embrace deliberate and courageous engagement that exhibits Christ's commandment to love all humankind.

Grading Scale

Grade	Quality Points Per Credit	Percentage	Score
A	4.0	95%–100%	950–1000
A-	3.7	92%–94.9%	920–949
B+	3.3	89%–91.9%	890–919
B	3.0	85%–88.9%	850–889
B-	2.7	82%–84.9%	820–849
C+	2.3	79%–81.9%	790–819
C	2.0	75%–78.9%	750–789
C-	1.7	72%–74.9%	720–749
D+	1.3	69%–71.9%	690–719
D	1.0	65%–68.9%	650–689

F	0.0	0%-64.9%	0-649
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Grading Policies

Your grading policy for your course is dependent on your school and program. Your grading policies can be found in the IWU Catalog.

Letter Grade Equivalencies

Grade	Description of Work
A	Clearly stands out as excellent performance. Has unusually sharp insights into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines. Anticipates next steps in progression of ideas. Example "A" work should be of such nature that it could be put on reserve for all cohort members to review and emulate. The "A" cohort member is, in fact, an example for others to follow.
B	Demonstrates a solid comprehension of the subject matter and always accomplishes all course requirements. Serves as an active participant and listener. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for the degree program. Work shows intuition and creativity. Example "B" work indicates good quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a good grade and awarded to those who submit assignments of quality less than the exemplary work described above.
C	Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is average. Has marginal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at least minimally.
D	Quality and quantity of work is below average. Has minimal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at below acceptable levels.
F	Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable and does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of work.

Course Workshop Summary

Week	Module	Discussion	Devotional	Reading Chapters	Chapter Exams	Assignment Projects	Total Points
Week One	Module One	1/45	1/5	Chapter 1 Scientific Inquiry	-	-	50
	Module Two	-	-	Chapter 2 Basics of Research	1/45	-	45
Week Two	Module Three	1/45	1/5	Chapter 3 Research Paradigms	-	1/85	135
	Module Four	-	-	Chapter 5 Ethics in Research	1/45	-	45
Week Three	Module Five	1/45	1/5	Chapter 6 Quantitative/Operationalize			50
	Module Six	-	-	Chapters 7 & 8 Sampling/Surveying	1/45	1/130	175
Week Four	Module Seven	1/45	1/5	Chapters 9 & 10 Experiments/Texts			50
	Module Eight	-	-	Chapter 13 Qualitative/Observation	1/45	-	45

Week Five	Module Nine	1/45	1/5	Chapter 14 Interviewing		1/85	135
	Module Ten	-	-	Chapter 15 Social Texts	1/45	-	45
Week Six	Module Eleven	1/45	1/5	Chapter 11 Data Analysis			50
	Module Twelve	-	-	Chapter 16 Data Analysis	1/45	1/130	175
Course Totals		6/270	6/30		6/270	4/430	1000

* Number of Activities/Sum Point Totals

Module One Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
1.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	5
1.2 Discussion: Research Interest	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week.	3 hours	45
1.3 Exercise: Chapter 1 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
1.4 Exercise: Major Course Projects Overview	Notification of course work		0
Totals		6 hours*	50

Module Two Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
2.1 Exercise: Chapter 2 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
2.2 Quiz: Chapters 1 and 2	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
Totals		5 hours*	45

Module Three Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
3.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	5
3.2 Discussion: Paradigms	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
3.3 Assignment: Communication Research	Due by the end of the week	8 hours	85
3.4 Exercise: Chapter 3 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
Totals		14 hours*	135

Module Four Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
4.1 Exercise: Chapter 5 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
4.2 Quiz: Chapters 3 and 5	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
Totals		5 hours*	45

Module Five Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
5.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	5
5.2 Discussion: Research Findings	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
5.3 Exercise: Chapters 6 and 7 Reading	Due by the end of the week	4 hours	0
Totals		8 hours*	50

Module Six Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
6.1 Assignment: Research Paper: Surveys and Polls	Due by the end of the week (project worked on during the 1st half of the course)	14 hours	130
6.2 Exercise: Chapter 8 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
6.3 Quiz: Chapters 7 and 8	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
Totals		19 hours*	175

Module Seven Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
7.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	5
7.2 Discussion: Content Analysis Methods	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week.	3 hours	45
7.3 Exercise: Chapters 9 and 10 Reading	Due by the end of the week	4 hours	0
Totals		8 hours*	50

Module Eight Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
Totals		5 hours*	45

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
8.1 Exercise: Chapter 13 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
8.2 Quiz: Chapters 10 and 13	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
Totals		5 hours*	45

Module Nine Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
9.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	5
9.2 Discussion: Interviewing Techniques	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
9.3 Assignment: Focus Group Interviewing	Due by the end of the week	8 hours	85
9.4 Exercise: Chapter 14 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
Totals		14 hours*	135

Module Ten Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
10.1 Exercise: Chapter 15 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
10.2 Quiz: Chapters 14 and 15	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
Totals		5 hours*	45

Module Eleven Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
11.1 Discussion: Biblical Wisdom	Due by the end of the week	1 hour	0
11.2 Discussion: Sharing Annotated Bibliography Findings	Initial post due by the end of the fourth day of the week; two responses due by the end of the week.	3 hours	50
11.3 Exercise: Chapter 11 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
Totals		6 hours*	50

Module Twelve Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
Totals		19.5 hours*	175

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
12.1 Assignment: Research Paper: Annotated Bibliography	Due by the end of the course	14 hours	130
12.2 Exercise: Chapter 16 Reading	Due by the end of the week	2 hours	0
12.3 Quiz: Chapters 11 and 16	Due by the end of the week	3 hours	45
End of Course Survey	Due by the end of the week	30 minutes	10 Extra Credit
Totals		19.5 hours*	175

Course Assignments

TOTALS	114:30 hours*	1000 points
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* These timings are based on estimations of average times to complete each assignment. Actual assignment completion times will vary.

Course Development Resources

Baxter, L. & Babbie, E. (2003). *The Basics of Communication Research*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

To better assist students, the OCLS library resources page provides a helpful guide to facilitate a more detailed understanding of how to use APA in academic writing (http://www2.indwes.edu/style_guide.html). Your instructors and the librarians of OCLS are available to answer questions that may arise. Proper use of APA writing style, as specified in the assignment and/or rubric, will be considered in scoring your assignment.

Expectations, Policies, and Important Student Information

Expectations

Instructor Expectations of Students

- Submit assignments on time. If there are circumstances beyond your control, discuss possible options for completion with your instructor.
- Accomplish work on your own unless otherwise instructed (i.e., do not cheat or plagiarize).
- Contribute substantively to discussions according to assignment guidelines provided.
- Contribute to discussions throughout each workshop rather than waiting until the end of the workshop.
- Contribute substantively to group assignments (if required in course).
- After spending a reasonable amount of time on it, ask your instructor if you do not understand content or instructions. Ask for help early while there is time to fix problems.
- Treat other students courteously and respectfully.
- Every time you enter your course, read and abide by postings made in the Announcements and Faculty Forum. These postings are critical.

Students' Expectations of Instructor

- Set a friendly, open, and encouraging learning environment.
- Guide discussions as needed.
- Set clear rules, standards, and expectations.
- Provide workshop grades and feedback within seven days of assignment due date.
- Provide final grades and feedback within seven days after the last day of class.
- Ensure students treat each other respectfully.
- Respond to student inquiries within 48 hours.

Policies

Late Policy

- No credit is available for postings of any kind made in the discussion forums after a given workshop ends.
- If your instructor approves your submission of late assignments, each assignment score will be penalized 10% per day up to five days late. After the end of the fifth day, late assignments will not be accepted. An assignment is a paper, a project, a team presentation, etc., but not a discussion or quiz/test.
- No late assignments will be accepted after the close of the final workshop.
- **Unless otherwise stated by the course instructor, all assignments are due by 11:59pm EST.**

Attendance Policy

Onsite:

Students are expected to be present when class begins, and remain the entire workshop. To be counted present, a student must attend a total of three hours or more of a class that is four hours in length, or four and one-half hours or more of classes that are six hours in length.

Online:

Attendance is determined by activity during a workshop, either through discussions or submission of assignments. A student is reported absent

for a workshop if there is not at least one submission (or posting) of an assignment or in a discussion forum assigned during that workshop.

Withdrawal Policy

Students needing to withdraw while in a course may do so by arrangement with the Office of Student Services prior to the end of the course, but the regular refund and academic withdrawal policies apply.

University Policies

- CAPS Catalog - <https://www.indwes.edu/catalog>
- College of Adult and Professional Studies Policies - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2016-2017/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS>

DeVoe School of Business

- [College of Adult and Professional Studies Policies and General Information](#) (Attendance Policy; Computer Requirements; Honesty, Cheating, Plagiarism, and Forgery Policy; and Student Address/Email Information are found here.)
- [Undergraduate Business Programs](#)
- [Graduate Business Programs](#)
- [DeVoe School of Business Website](#)
- [The DeVoe Report Digest](#) (The DeVoe Report Digest provides applicable insight into best business practice with credible commentary on current marketplace events.)

School of Service and Leadership

- School of Service and Leadership Policies - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Copy-of-School-of-Service-and-Leadership>
- Graduate Studies in Leadership Division Policies - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Copy-of-School-of-Service-and-Leadership/Graduate-Studies-in-Leadership-Division>
- Attendance Policy - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/Academic-Information-CAPS/Attendance-Policy-CAPS>
- Computer Requirements - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/Academic-Information-CAPS/Computer-Requirements-CAPS>
- Honesty, Cheating, Plagiarism, and Forgery Policy - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/Indiana-Wesleyan-University-at-a-Glance/Honesty-Cheating-Plagiarism-and-Forgery>
- Student Address/Email Information - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/General-Information-CAPS/Student-AddressEmail-Information>

Division of Liberal Arts

- School of Service and Leadership Policies - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Division-of-Liberal-Arts>
- Attendance Policy - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/Academic-Information-CAPS/Attendance-Policy-CAPS>
- Computer Requirements - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/Academic-Information-CAPS/Computer-Requirements-CAPS>
- Honesty, Cheating, Plagiarism, and Forgery Policy - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/Indiana-Wesleyan-University-at-a-Glance/Honesty-Cheating-Plagiarism-and-Forgery>
- Student Address/Email Information - <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/College-of-Adult-and-Professional-Studies-CAPS/Policies-and-General-Information-CAPS/General-Information-CAPS/Student-AddressEmail-Information>

Important Student Information

Off Campus Library Services

As an IWU student, you have library privileges through Off Campus Library Services. Go to <http://www.indwes.edu/ocls/> to learn more about the library. These are your privileges. Services provided include:

- Access to books (print and e-books), article databases, services and web resources.
- Access to many full text articles.
- Document delivery, which includes mailing print books, scanning PDF articles (that are only available in paper in the IWU library), providing a service of interlibrary loan whereby items not owned by IWU are obtained on your behalf from other libraries that own the item.
- Consultation with APA writing style. The librarians are not editors, but they are extremely knowledgeable about APA and are glad to answer your specific questions regarding correct ways to use APA.
- Provision of customized research guides for your particular topic that will walk you through the steps to locate appropriate articles/books on your topic.
- A general go-to source for helping you find information for your research projects.

In order to use many of the library databases, you either need your MyIWU credentials OR the Library Access Number sent to you via email from OCLS. It will be needed to get into the proprietary subscription-based databases; to check out print books and for some classes you will be asked to access specific articles as additional reading. Links directly to these articles will be provided.

If you need help, contact OCLS; 800-521-1848 or <http://www2.indwes.edu/forms/request.aspx>.

APA Writing Style

APA (American Psychological Association) writing style, based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed., is the foundation for all academic writing in for non-residential students. All students will be required to adhere to the formatting, citing and documentation of all sources used in a research paper per the guidelines of APA. Resources for learning APA and resources for using APA are provided as follows:

- Some programs purchase the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed.
- APA 6e Guide, available at <http://www2.indwes.edu/APA/APA6eGuide.pdf>. This resource also includes some specific references entries for IWU specific resources, e.g. catalog, IWU library databases, etc.
- OCLS APA Resource page, that includes a Word template; APA checklist; APA focused videos, etc., at: http://www2.indwes.edu/style_guide.html
- APA Style CENTRAL, includes a personalized learning system for APA and an interactive APA template for writing and saving papers.
- Off Campus Library Services librarians, <http://www2.indwes.edu/forms/request.aspx> or 800.521.1848.

Special Needs

If you need accommodations for your course, you can email ADARrequest@indwes.edu with your request, and you will be forwarded forms to fill out and return. Once all forms are received and reviewed, a determination is made on reasonable accommodations and you will receive an Academics Adjustment Notification. You will be required to give this notification to your instructor before the beginning of each of your courses.

Smarthinking

Access to both live and online tutoring can be found through your course under *Content>>Course Dashboard>>IWU Resources*.

Netiquette

In the online classroom, people cannot see your face, they cannot hear the tone or inflection of your voice, and they cannot observe your body language to determine your intention. Therefore, when responding to another student's post, or even in creating your own, it is very important to write your thoughts out and take a few minutes away from them. Then reread what you wrote and make sure it answers the question(s) and is worded in a way that is not likely to offend others.

- It is okay to disagree, but do so in a manner that is constructive rather than destructive, encouraging rather than denigrating.
- It is very easy to say the right words but for them to be "heard" incorrectly. Take the time to review what you type. This is one of the benefits of online education; you have the ability to wait and rethink what you will say before you say it.
- USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS IS THE SAME AS SHOUTING!!!!!! Use capitals only to emphasize a point; do not type full posts in capital letters.
- Respect others' opinions as you would have yours respected.
- This is a Christian school; please respect the religious beliefs of those around you.