

COURSE SYLLABUS
COJO 5070: Research in Communication I
Spring 2016
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:45 p.m. – 4:00 pm
CR 207

Instructor: Dr. Kristen Landreville

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. *

*You're welcome to drop by my office anytime as well. I'm frequently in my office from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If I'm available, I will meet. If I'm busy, you will be asked to schedule an appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Research in Communication I! In this course, you will learn how to define research problems, design rigorous studies to investigate these problems, and analyze quantitative data. You also will learn basic uses of the statistical analysis program SPSS. This course requires students to complete course readings and out-of-class assignments, take two exams, and conduct an original research project.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to help you:

- (1) understand the logic behind quantitative social science research
- (2) design rigorous quantitative research using surveys, experiments, and content analyses
- (3) critically evaluate research designs
- (4) improve data analysis and academic writing skills

READINGS

Required

Wrench, J. S., Thomas-Maddox, C., Richmond, V. P., & McCroskey, J. C. (2013) *Quantitative research methods for communication* (2nd Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Other readings will be posted to WyoCourses.

Recommended

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

GRADING

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

Exams (2 x 25%)	50%
Assignments	20%
Seminar Preparation	5%
Final Research Paper	25%

Final grades will be based on the following scale:

89.5-100% = A 69.5-79.4% = C 59.4 and below = F
79.5-89.4% = B 59.5-69.4% = D

Consultations about grades are welcome in order to clarify course standards and procedures and to provide guidance that might improve future performance. You have one week after a grade has been assigned to contest an assigned grade, and this must be done in writing. Assigned grades will *not* be changed unless clear and significant procedural errors have occurred.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams. Two exams will be given. They will be in-class and closed book. They will be designed to cover both the readings and class lecture. The questions will ask students to think critically and apply course information. The second exam is not cumulative but does assume that students are familiar with the material covered in the first half of the course.

Assignments. During the course of the semester, students will complete ten out-of-class assignments. You will apply the information covered in class and in the course readings. The assignments will be discussed in more detail in class.

Seminar Preparation. Students must be prepared for each class session. This includes completing the required reading, participating in class discussions and activities, asking/answering questions, and refraining from distracting activities in class (e.g., checking Facebook, texting). Students may also ask questions outside of class and over email to show that they are engaging with the material.

Final Research Paper. Each student will complete a final quantitative research paper (approximately 20 pages) on a topic that interests him or her. The paper will include: an introduction with a rationale for the project, a review of relevant literature (including research concerning the topic of interest and the theory that informs the hypotheses/research questions), hypotheses and/or research questions, a method section, results section, and a discussion section. Students will also need to include in an appendix all documents they used in fielding the research project (e.g., questionnaires, experimental stimuli, codebooks, etc.).

SOFTWARE AND LAB ACCESS

Students will need access to IBM SPSS statistical software. This is available on the computers in this classroom as well as various other computers around campus. This includes RH 423 and CR 207. For a complete list of software on the University of Wyoming campus computers, see <http://microlab.uwyo.edu/Labs/software.asp>. Additionally, SPSS is available for PCs and Macs as a 14-day trial at <http://www-03.ibm.com/software/products/en/spss-statistics>. If students would like to use the trial version, I would suggest waiting to download the software until the very end of the semester so they can use the software when they are analyzing their final project data.

COURSE POLICIES

Seeking assistance. Students should *not hesitate to seek assistance*. Assistance is best sought *before*, rather than after, exams and assignments. Much of the material covered in this class is based upon social-scientific research. Students will be required to think and write in ways that may be unfamiliar to them. Training in advanced statistics is not required, but some may feel apprehensive about their understanding of various course readings and topics. If something is unclear please do not hesitate to ask questions in class or come talk to me.

Late Work. Students are expected write and proofread their assignments in advance of scheduled deadlines. Any assignments submitted late will *begin* with the following penalties:

- 25% off if delivered after the deadline but less than 24 hours late

- 50% off if delivered more than 24 hours after the deadline but less than 48 hours late
- 75% off if delivered more than 48 hours after the deadline but less than 72 hours late
- 100% off if delivered more than 72 hours late

Students who will be absent from class due to a religious holy day, travel with a university-affiliated team or group, or because of unavoidable circumstances, should inform me *in writing* at the beginning of the semester or as soon as possible thereafter, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Incomplete Grades. Incompletes will only be assigned in rare circumstances in which a student cannot complete the course requirements by the end of the semester, for instance if there is a long-term medical emergency. For more information, please see:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/files/docs/uw-reg-6-720.pdf>

WyoCourses. This course uses WyoCourses as a space to post course readings, grades, and course announcements. Students should check WyoCourses regularly to ensure that they are up to date on course material.

Email Etiquette. I encourage students to email me with any questions they have about the course. Please keep in mind three points:

- (1) I will respond within 48 hours during the week and by Monday evening if I receive an email over the weekend. If you have not heard from me in that time, feel free to email again.
- (2) Please check the syllabus and all course handouts before emailing. If an answer is in the course documents, I reserve the right to not answer an email and/or to direct students back to the documents.
- (3) Students should use their official University of Wyoming email account for security reasons. If I receive an email from another email address (e.g., gmail, yahoo), I will request that the student send the message to me again using a University of Wyoming email address.

Cell Phones and Technology. Turn off cell phones in class, and only use computers in ways that relate to the course content. If a student is distracting others with texting or computer use, that student will be asked to leave class.

Accommodations. If you have a physical, sensory, cognitive, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester. You will need to register with and provide information about your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 109, Knight Hall. Please see the UDSS website for more information: <http://www.uwyo.edu/udss/>

Academic Dishonesty University Regulation 802 defines academic dishonesty as “an act attempted or performed which misrepresents one’s involvement in an academic task in any way, or permits another student to misrepresent the latter’s involvement in an academic task by assisting in the misrepresentation.” According to the regulation, this includes, but is not limited to, copying or borrowing material from a source without accurate citations, allowing someone else to write or complete an assignment for you, turning in essentially the same assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, doing work for someone else, and copying or stealing an exam.

In this class, students will be required to summarize other researchers’ work, and these summaries *must* be original and *must* acknowledge all sources. Using *any* material that was written by someone else and submitting as though it was your own is unacceptable. Work submitted should represent the student’s original work created specifically for this class. Scholastic dishonesty

damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for a future work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in this course and/or dismissal from the University. For more information, please see: <http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/files/docs/unireg802.pdf>

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading / Assignments Due
Section 1 Research Basics		
(1) Tues., Jan. 26	Introduction	
(2) Thurs., Jan. 28	Logic of Science	Wrench et al. p. 1-4, Chs. 2, 4 Popper
(3) Tues., Feb. 2	Hypotheses/Research Questions I	Wrench et al. p. 103-108 Stinchcombe
(4) Thurs., Feb. 4	Variables	Wrench et al. Ch. 6 Assignment #1 Due
(5) Tues., Feb. 9	Intro. to SPSS Descriptive Statistics	Wrench et al. Ch. 7
(6) Thurs., Feb. 11	Descriptive Statistics	Wrench et al. p. 108- 112, Ch. 7
(7) Tues., Feb. 16	Hs/RQs II	Assignment #2 Due
Section 2 Research Design		
(8) Thurs., Feb. 18	Research Ethics	Belmont Report Wrench et al. Ch. 3
(9) Tues., Feb. 23	Measurement	Wrench et al. Ch. 8
(10) Thurs., Feb. 25	Reliability & Validity	Wrench et al. Ch. 9 Assignment #3 Due
(11) Tues., March 1	Survey Research I	Wrench et al. Ch. 10
(12) Thurs., March 3	Survey Research II	Assignment #4 Due
(13) Tues., March 8	Sampling I	Wrench et al. Ch. 13
(14) Thurs, March 10	Exam #1	
Tues., March 15	Spring Break	No Class
Thurs., March 17	Spring Break	No Class
(15) Tues., March 22	Sampling II Experiments I	Wrench et al. Ch. 12
(16) Thurs., March 24	Experiments II	Assignment #5 Due
(17) Tues., March 29	Experiments III Intro. to Qualtrics and MTurk	
(18) Thurs., March 31	Content Analysis	Wrench et al. Ch. 11 Assignment #6 Due
(19) Tues., April 5	Other Types of Relationships I	
(20) Thurs., April 7	In-Class Work Day	Assignment #7 Due at end of class Finish edits in Qualtrics by Thursday, April 14

Section 3 Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing		
(21) Tues., April 12	Hypothesis Testing I	Wrench et al. Ch. 14 Assignment #8 Due
(22) Thurs., April 14	Hypothesis Testing II	
(23) Tues., April 19	<i>t</i> -Tests I	Wrench et al. Ch. 16
(24) Thurs., April 21	<i>t</i> -Tests II	Assignment #9 Due
(25) Tues., April 26	Applying to research project	TBD – based on research projects
(26) Thurs., April 28	Applying to research project	TBD – based on research projects Assignment #10 Due
(27) Tues., May 3	Results & Discussion Sections	Wrench et al. p. 112-117
(28) Thurs., May 5	Exam #2	

Final Research Paper Due: by 5:30 pm on Thursday, May 13

Syllabus changes. The syllabus and course schedule are subject to change with sufficient notice to students.