

COM 3073 – Conduct of Communication Inquiry

Course Materials Handbook

(Fall 2006)

Prepared by

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for

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Department of Communication

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Syllabus	1
List of Important Dates	4
Schedule of Assignments and Activities	5
Grade Monitoring Form	6
Midterm Examination Review	7
Final Examination Review	8
Overview of Assignments 1 through 7	9
Assignment # 1: Annotated Bibliography	10
Assignment # 2: Literature Review	11
Assignment # 3: Methods	12
Assignment # 4: Study Approval	13
Assignment # 5: Data Collection	14
Assignment # 6: Research Proposal	15
Assignment # 7: Oral Presentation	16
Tips for Writing Essays and Research Reports	17
Outline for a Research Proposal	23
Research Topics	24
List of Communication Research Journals	25
References	26

SYLLABUS

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course facilitates understanding of the fundamentals of research methodology as it is utilized in the field of communication. Emphasis is placed on the development of quantitative and qualitative research designs, as well as the interpretation and critical evaluation of findings. An equally important function of this class is to foster students' insight into the techniques of scientific inquiry so that students are able to apply course-related concepts to their own research of communication phenomena.

Lectures, discussion, classroom exercises, written assignments, oral presentations, and in-class and out-of-class observations will be used to aid the development of knowledge and skills related to the study of communication.

The aim is to merge theory and practice throughout the classroom experience. To this end, we will maintain a stimulating, interactive, open, and friendly classroom environment that fosters self and other insight, critical thinking, intellectual growth and communicative competence. The following objectives are core to the course:

- To ensure students have a good understanding of the fundamental principles of research design,
- To develop empirical research skills and competencies in the field of communication, and
- To develop critical thinking and analytical skills.

TEXTS

Keyton, J. (2006). *Communication research: Asking questions, getting answers* (2nd ed). Boston: McGraw-Hill. **(required)**

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. **(recommended)**

American Psychological Association. (2005). *Concise rules of APA style*. Washington, DC: Author. **(recommended)**

Rubin, R. B., Rubin, A. M., & Piele, L. J. (2006). *Communication research - Strategies and sources* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. **(recommended)**

POLICIES

Cheating, plagiarism and collusion will not be tolerated. All work submitted must be the original work of the student, for this course only (no submitting the same assignment in more than one class). The penalty for plagiarism, cheating or collusion may include failing the assignment, failing the course, or expulsion from the University depending on the severity of the infraction. Please see the University's Student Code of Conduct for information regarding these policies.

Course requirements must be fulfilled in order to successfully pass the course. Late assignments will not be accepted. Incompletes will be given only in very limited cases and only when they meet the Policy for Incompletes on file in the Department of Communication office, as well as the University requirements for Incompletes as specified in the Handbook of Operating Procedures. Please see your Course Materials Handbook for further information on assignments, grading criteria and course schedule. All other University policies will be followed.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

In order for this course to be a successful learning experience for you, active and committed participation on your part is crucial; therefore, as specified in the Information Bulletin, **students are expected to attend class**. All assignments are due according to the Schedule of Assignments in the Course Materials Handbook. Students are expected to take examinations and turn in assignments at the scheduled time. Students who may miss an examination or assignment deadline due to an authorized University activity should make arrangements to complete the assignment in advance, which includes approval from the student's Dean. **Late assignments or examinations will not be accepted**. Please also see the Handbook of Operating Procedures for policies regarding attendance.

The Americans With Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require special accommodations, please see a coordinator at Disability Services (MS 2.03.18 or BV 1.302) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

ASSIGNMENTS

Examinations: Students will be assessed on knowledge of course material through examination. Two exams will cover approximately one half of the course each and will consist of a variety of types of questions: multiple choice, true-false, and identification.

Research Exercises: Students will complete five assignments which will require short written reports. These assignments are designed to assist each student in the preparation of the research proposal and will involve researching and reviewing the literature, developing an instrument and method, and collecting data for a research project.

Research Proposal: Students will write a formal essay analyzing a communication phenomenon, utilizing standard research procedures including reviewing the literature, specifying a hypothesis, and developing a testing protocol. As well, each proposal should detail expected findings and propose directions for future study.

Oral Presentation: Students will present their individual research proposals to the class. The presentation will be a four minute informative speech using technological tools such as computer software, video or photographic slides. All presentations will be scheduled in advance. Students are expected to follow the schedule.

Quizzes: Students will be quizzed four times during the semester. Quizzes will not be announced in advance and will comprise material from the reading and/or from class lectures.

Research Participation: Students will be required to participate as subjects in data collection for the course.

A full description of each of these assignments can be found in the Course Materials Handbook, which is located in WebCT, or through the course website Student Section at hpleblanc.com

DIVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

EXAMINATIONS (150 pts. each)	<u>GRADING SCALE:</u>	
RESEARCH EXERCISES (100 pts. each)	90.0 - 100:	A
RESEARCH PROPOSAL (100 pts.)	80.0 - 89.9:	B
ORAL PRESENTATION (100 pts.)	70.0 - 79.9:	C
QUIZZES (25 pts. each)	60.0 - 69.9:	D
	BELOW 60.0:	F

Grades are earned and will be calculated on a cumulative scale. Grades can be calculated by dividing the raw score of the assignment by the total points possible for the assignment. Grades are calculated using a 1000 point scale. For example, if the total number of points that can be achieved on the Research Proposal is 100, then the proposal is worth 10% of the final grade. However, a raw score of 72 on the Research Proposal will yield only 7.2% rather than the 10% possible for that assignment. Likewise, a raw score of 78 on the Midterm is 7.8% of the final grade. Extra credit will not be assigned for any student due to poor performance or missed assignment. **Grades are not rounded.** You may use the Grade Monitoring Form located in the Course Materials Handbook to calculate your grade average in the course at any time. Furthermore, you may obtain your current grade for assignments in WebCT for this course. Additional requirements on individual assignments will be assessed for graduate students or students registered for the class under an Honor's contract. These additional requirements are specified in the Course Materials Handbook for each assignment description.

GRADING RATIONALE

- A** Exceptionally well-prepared completion of assignment indicating effort, individualized style, and impact expected of effective communication.
- B** Unusually well-prepared completion of assignment indicating original application of course materials and individual imagination distinctly superior to average effort.
- C** Satisfactory completion of assignment indicating effort normally expected of the majority of students (basic preparation, correct procedure, and disciplined technique.)
- D** Unsatisfactory completion of assignment indicating technical irregularity, misperceived objectives or methods, unorganized effort, or failure to follow directions.
- F** Failure to complete assignments during the scheduled time through lack of evident effort.

All students will be expected to follow the instructions as they are presented, meet the grading criteria, and turn in each assignment by the due date in order to earn a "C." All course requirements and deadlines are explicitly written in the Course Materials Handbook.

LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES

August 23:	Classes begin.
August 29:	Final date for adding the course.
September 7:	Assignment #1 due by 10:00pm.
September 8:	Final date for dropping the course without receiving a grade of “W”.
September 21:	Assignment #2 due by 10:00pm.
September 27:	Midterm Exam.
October 5:	Assignment #3 due by 10:00pm.
October 12:	Assignment #4 due by 10:00pm.
October 24:	Final date for dropping course.
October 26:	Assignment #5 due by 10:00pm.
November 9:	Assignment #6 due by 10:00pm.
November 15-17:	NCA Convention. No class. Prepare for presentations.
November 17:	Assignment #7 slides and outline due by 10:00pm.
November 20:	Assignment #7 presentations begin in class.
November 23-24:	Thanksgiving Day Holiday.
December 1:	Last Day of Class.
December 11:	Final Exam. (1604 - 7:30a, DT - 1:30p).
December 15:	Final grades due.

Dates for class assignments and exams will not be altered. We will meet during the Final Examination period for this section. Due to differences in computer system clocks, assignments should be submitted well in advance of the due time as assigned.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Week One: Introduction and Outline of the Course. Research Overview.

- Read Chapters 1 and 2.

Week Two: Beginning the Research Process.

- Read Chapters 3 and 4. Read supplemental ethics articles. Pick a topic.

Week Three: Research Ethics and APA Research Writing Guidelines.

- Assignment # 1 - Create an annotated bibliography covering ten articles, and write ten questions. Read Chapter 5.

Week Four: Measurement, Sampling, and Significance.

- Read Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Week Five: Hypothesis Testing. Experimentation.

- Assignment # 2 - Write a review of literature based on the annotated bibliography.

Week Six: Midterm Exam. Survey Design.

- Study for Midterm Exam. Read Chapter 9.

Week Seven: Descriptive Statistics.

- Assignment # 3 - Create a survey instrument and code page, and write a methods section. Read Chapter 10.

Week Eight: Testing for Differences.

- Assignment # 4 - Complete IRB forms. Read Chapter 11.

Week Nine: Testing for Relationships.

- Read Chapter 12.

Week Ten: Using Software for Analysis.

- Assignment # 5 - Collect data.

Week Eleven: Interviewing Techniques.

- Read Chapter 15.

Week Twelve: Writing and Reviewing a Research Report.

- Assignment # 6 - Write Research Proposal. Read Chapter 17.

Week Thirteen: Presenting Research.

- Assignment # 7 - Prepare presentation outline and visual aids.

Week Fourteen: Student Presentations.

- Assignment # 7 - Give presentation.

Week Fifteen: Student Presentations (cont.).

- Assignment # 7 - Give presentation.

Final Exam Week:

- Final Exams. (See List of Important Dates for information regarding your section).

GRADE MONITORING FORM

Name: _____

Banner ID: _____

GRADING SCALE:

90.0 - 100: A
80.0 - 89.9: B
70.0 - 79.9: C
60.0 - 69.9: D
BELOW 60: F

EXAMINATIONS:

Midterm: Total:____ Possible: 150

Final: Total:____ Possible: 150

Tests Total: _____

RESEARCH EXERCISES:

Assignment 1: Total:____ Possible: 100

Assignment 2: Total:____ Possible: 100

Assignment 3: Total:____ Possible: 100

Assignment 4: Total:____ Possible: 50

Assignment 5: Total:____ Possible: 50

RESEARCH PROPOSAL:

Assignment 6: Total:____ Possible: 100

ORAL PRESENTATION:

Assignment 7: Total:____ Possible: 100

Assignments Total: _____

QUIZZES:

Quiz 1: Total:____ Possible: 25

Quiz 2: Total:____ Possible: 25

Quiz 1: Total:____ Possible: 25

Quiz 1: Total:____ Possible: 25

Quizzes Total: _____

FINAL GRADE:

Total:____ Possible: 1000

Percent:____

Grade:_____

MIDTERM REVIEW

The chapters listed below comprise the material to be covered on the midterm exam. The terms provided below are in addition to the key terms provided at the end of each chapter in the course text.

Syllabus and Course Materials Handbook
Ethics Articles on WebCT

Chapter 1: Introduction to Research

Applied research
Basic research
Method
Methodology
Theory
Triangulation

Chapter 2: Beginning the Research Process

Meta-analysis
Refereed journal
Primary source
Review of literature
Secondary source

Chapter 3: Quantitative Methodology

Alternative hypothesis
Causal relationships
Constant
Co-occurrence
Extraneous variables
Groups
Sequence
Subjects
Value

Chapter 4: Qualitative Methodology

Conversation Analysis
Discovery
Empirical Phenomenology
Ethnography
Ethnomethodology
Explanation
Interpretation
Invention
Participant observation
Systematic observation

Chapter 5: Research Ethics

Human subjects
Plagiarism

Chapter 6: Measurement

Blind / double-blind study
Levels of measurement
Paired comparisons
Rating scales

Chapter 7: Sampling, Significance, Testing

Error
Return rates
Sample bias

Chapter 8: Quantitative Design

Parameter
Statistic

FINAL REVIEW

The chapters listed below comprise the material to be covered on the final exam. The terms provided below are in addition to the key terms provided at the end of each chapter in the course text. Be sure to study the procedures for reading the critical values tables.

Cover letter
UTSA IRB Forms

Chapter 9: Survey Design

Coding
Ranking
Salience
Scoring

Chapter 10: Descriptive Statistics

Figures
Graphs
Charts
Plots
Tables

Chapter 11: Testing for Differences

Contingency tables
Critical value
General linear model (GLM)
Effect size
Randomized block design
SPSS

Chapter 12: Testing for Relationships

Analysis of covariance ANCOVA
Covariance
Multivariate analysis of covariance
MANCOVA

Chapter 15: Interviewing

Manifest vs. Latent Content
Unstructured, Structured and Semistructured
Probe

Chapter 17: Writing the Report

Appendix
Article
Draft
Manuscript
Peer review
Presentation
Replication
Style manual

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS 1 THROUGH 7

The purpose of the following assignments one through seven is to take you through each step of the process of conducting and preparing a report of original research. Each assignment represents a series of steps in the research process. The first step involves selecting a topic based on familiarity with current research. The next two steps involve closer investigation of previous research on the topic. The fourth and fifth steps require further organizing and narrowing of the topic sufficiently to conduct systematic original research. The sixth step involves developing hypotheses or research questions to be tested or investigated. The first two assignments cover these six steps. You will be given a list of five possible topic areas which reflect the concentration areas available for the communication degree (see Research Topics in the Course Materials Handbook). You may choose from these topic areas. Please also see the Research Timeline in WebCT for an overview of steps.

The seventh step specifies a particular method of measurement or criterion for categorization of phenomena to be investigated, and step eight involves developing the means for collecting data. Once the choices of general and specific topic are made, the methods are determined by the framing of the hypotheses or research questions proposed for investigation. Assignment three covers the seventh through tenth steps in the research process. Assignment four involves gaining approval for the research project (steps eleven and twelve). Steps thirteen and fourteen involve collecting and scoring the data. These two steps are covered in assignment five. Step fifteen involves the actual analysis of the data according to the procedure or test(s) implied by the research questions or hypotheses specified. Step sixteen involves interpretation of the findings which may require returning to the literature for more information to assist in the discussion. For step seventeen, researchers must make conclusions about their research. For this class, you will propose a study (assignment six, the Research Proposal) based on your earlier assignments. The final steps of the research process involve preparing and presenting the report to an audience of peers for review and critique. This is assignment seven (the Oral Presentation).

For each of these assignments, a written document will be created. **These assignments must be submitted electronically** as an attachment through the WebCT Assignments link for this class (but not as text embedded in an e-mail). Furthermore, submit all written assignments with your name, the assignment number and the date in the document itself, in a standard format such as Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint. **Assignments created and submitted in Microsoft Works format will not be accepted.** When you submit the assignment in electronic form, use the following file naming protocol: **LastnameF1.doc** (as in LeBlancP1.doc), where “F” represents the first letter of your first name and “1” represents the assignment number. It is critical that you use this naming convention to avoid confusion and assure credit as each student will be sending multiple assignments in this fashion. When you submit your assignment through WebCT, the timestamp on the assignment submission will serve as documentation for meeting the deadline for the assignment. The assignments feature in WebCT is designed not to accept submissions after the deadline. You will be notified automatically via the e-mail address you provide when your assignment has been submitted. Failure to attach the document will not serve as grounds for accepting late assignments.

For all assignments, **failure to properly follow these general instructions or the instructions for any assignment will result in a ten percent deduction on the grade for that assignment.** These instructions include the guidelines specified in Tips for Writing Essays and Research Reports in the Course Materials Handbook.

ASSIGNMENT # 1:
Annotated Bibliography

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to find and abstract the important elements of research articles within a narrow domain of interest.

Directions: Choose from among the list of possible topics provided (or select and seek approval for a unique topic). Find and read 10 (20 for graduate or Honors students) empirical, peer-reviewed articles from a scholarly journal that are no more than eight years old and relevant to the chosen topic (see the List of Communication Research Journals in the Course Materials Handbook). Create an annotated bibliography covering the ten articles by writing an abstract for each article in your own words.

Report: Submit for credit a document which specifies a domain of study in a title and introductory paragraph, list each article read in proper bibliographic form (as specified in the Tips for Writing Essays and Research Reports in the Course Materials Handbook), followed by an abstract of at least 75 words in length for each article found. The introduction and annotated bibliography will be used to develop the review of literature (see Assignment # 2 below). Following the annotated bibliography, submit 10 (20 for graduate or Honors students) questions about communication phenomena derived from the findings of the articles. (100 points).

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Introduction
 - A. Title (5 pts.)
 - B. Definitions (5 pts.)
 - C. Rationale (5 pts.)
- II. Number of article references: (2 pts. each for 10, or 1 pt each for 20 for graduate/Honors)
- III. Number of article abstracts: (2 pts. each for 10, or 1 pt each for 20 for graduate/Honors)
- IV. Relevant research questions: (2 pts. each for 10, or 1 pt each for 20 for graduate/Honors)
- V. Mechanics:
 - A. Grammar, neatness and spelling (5 pts.)
 - B. APA style (citations and references, 10 pts.)
- VI. Instructions followed? (10 pts.)

Note: Please see the List of Communication Research Journals located in the Course Materials Handbook for help in selecting scholarly journals. Do not define terms by citing a dictionary or an online encyclopedia. Focus on the findings of empirical research. If you have difficulty finding your topic in the library, feel free to ask for tips in locating information. Two resources for communication students developed by Celita DeArmond, of the UTSA library, and members of the Department of Communication at UTSA include:

<http://www.lib.utsa.edu/Instruction/Classes/com2213/> and
[Http://www.lib.utsa.edu/Research/Subject/communicationguide.html](http://www.lib.utsa.edu/Research/Subject/communicationguide.html)

For this and following assignments materials from two studies have been provided through the Samples link in WebCT for this course.

ASSIGNMENT # 2:
Review of Literature

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to report and synthesize previous research in the domain of interest, and to demonstrate the ability to formulate concise agenda for research in the form of a research question or hypothesis.

Directions: Write a review of literature based on the articles listed in the annotated bibliography (Assignment # 1), which compares and combines previous findings. The review of literature should cover peer-reviewed, empirical articles from scholarly journals (see the List of Communication Research Journals in the Course Materials Handbook) that are no more than eight years old.

Report: Submit for credit a review of the literature referenced in Assignment # 1 in a coherent essay format. Formulate a hypothesis or research question based on the review of literature. The essay should synthesize the literature and provide a rationale and direction for study. The essay should follow proper format as specified in the Tips for Writing Essays and Research Reports in the Course Materials Handbook, and be approximately 1500 to 2000 words in length. (100 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Introduction (5 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #1)
- II. Literature review:
 - A. Citation of sources, References (number and matching, 25 pts.)
 - B. Synthesis of concepts (25 pts.)
- III. Proposed direction for study:
 - A. Statement of hypothesis (15 pts.)
 - B. Concluding paragraph (5 pts.)
- IV. Mechanics:
 - A. Grammar, neatness and spelling (5 pts.)
 - B. APA style (citations and references, 10 pts.)
- V. Instructions followed? (10 pts.)

Note: This paper, and all following written reports (Assignments 3 and 6), should be written in formal essay style according to the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual (5th ed.). An abbreviated version of the APA manual is available in the Tips for Writing Essays and Research Reports located in the Course Materials Handbook. Please see the Outline for a Research Proposal in the Course Materials Handbook for assistance in the development of your essay.

ASSIGNMENT # 3:
Methods

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to prepare for data collection, and to demonstrate the ability to collect and record data.

Directions: Determine the characteristics of the population to be sampled for the study. Determine the data collection and sampling procedures for the project. Operationalize variables and develop a survey questionnaire, according to the list of appropriate elements as discussed in class, which contains no less than three demographic variables and twenty scale items measuring at least one but no more than five variables appropriately related to the research questions or hypotheses from Assignment # 2. Develop a code page for the survey instrument (see article on developing a code page in WebCT for more information).

Report: Submit for credit a document describing the methods to be used for the proposed study (minimum 350 words). Submit for credit a survey instrument developed for measuring the phenomenon you propose to observe. Also, submit for credit a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet code page which specifies the methods for coding the data. (100 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Methods
 - A. Description of the demographics of subjects to be recruited for the study: why are they relevant? (10 pts.)
 - B. Description of the sampling and data collection procedures (10 pts.)
 - C. Description of the instrument development process (10 pts.)
 - D. Description of variables relevant to the hypothesis (10 pts.)
- II. Survey instrument:
 - A. Appropriate format (10 pts.)
 - B. Appropriate operationalization of variables (10 pts.)
 - C. Number of demographic and independent/dependent variable elements (10 pts.)
 - D. Appropriateness of scales and/or survey items (10 pts.)
- III. Code page (10 pts.)
- IV. Instructions followed? (10 pts)

ASSIGNMENT # 4:
Study Approval

Objective: To develop a protocol for the systematic collection of data.

Directions: Develop an appropriate protocol for selecting and contacting study participants following the rules and guidelines specified by the University's Institutional Review Board.

Report: Complete the UTSA Request to Use Human Subjects in Research form and the UTSA Consent to Participate in Research as a Human Subject form, according to the instructions given in class, which describe the subject's participation procedures. Additionally, create for credit a one page cover letter using the sample cover letter provided through WebCT for this course. Submit all three files electronically as specified in the Overview of Assignments 1 through 7 in the Course Materials Handbook. (50 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. UTSA Request to Use Human Subjects in Research form (30 pts.)
- II. UTSA Consent to Participate in Research as a Human Subject form (10 pts.)
- III. Cover Letter (5 pts.)
- VI. Instructions followed? (5 pts.)

Note: A sample cover letter and the appropriate IRB Human Subjects forms are available online through WebCT for this course.

ASSIGNMENT # 5:
Data Collection

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to prepare for and conduct data collection, and to demonstrate the ability to collect and record data.

Directions: Collect and score data from a minimum of 80 subjects following the guidelines of the code page created for Assignment # 3. You may have to edit the code page submitted through Assignment # 3 to match any changes to the order of items or other elements on the survey. The Excel workbook should have two spreadsheets: the data from completed questionnaires and a revised code page. Please see the sample provided through WebCT.

Report: Submit for credit a Microsoft Excel workbook containing: 1) the data collected for the study, and 2) the revised code page. (50 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Data Collection
 - A. Complete Excel file (15 pts.)
 - B. Proper format for the Excel file as per instructions (15 pts.)
 - C. Number of subjects surveyed (15 pts.)
- II. Instructions followed? (5 pts.)

Note: The data must be recorded in such a way as to allow for testing using statistical software such as SPSS, or statistical procedures in the Analysis Toolpack available in Microsoft Excel. This requirement is the purpose for creating a code page in advance.

ASSIGNMENT # 6:
Research Proposal

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to write and propose original research.

Directions: This report assignment requires analysis based on current research and should be an in-depth look at a particular topic area. You are required to write the proposal based on previous Assignments for this course (see the Course Materials Handbook for assignment descriptions). This assignment should include an edited and revised introduction from Assignment #1, and edited and revised review of literature and statement of hypothesis from Assignment #2, and a revised proposed method from Assignment #3. The assignment should include a results section specifying expected results. Finally, this assignment should include a discussion based on the implications of expected results, the limitations of the study, and directions for future research.

Report: Submit for credit an argumentative essay in a coherent format. The proposal should be typed, 3000 - 3500 words not including the title and reference pages or appendices. (100 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Introduction: (5 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #1)
- II. Literature Review: (5 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #2)
- III. Method of Study: (5 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #3)
- IV. Results/Analysis:
 - A. Description of statistical procedures needed to test hypotheses (5 pts.)
 - B. Description of speculated findings (5 pts.)
 - C. Statement of support or lack of support for hypotheses (5 pts.)
- V. Discussion/Conclusion:
 - A. Relevance of findings (10 pts.)
 - B. Evaluation of methods (10 pts.)
 - C. Direction for future study (5 pts.)
- VI. Mechanics
 - A. Grammar, neatness and spelling (5 pts.)
 - B. APA style (citations and references, 10 pts.)
- VII. Organization:
 - A. Proper placement of manuscript elements (10 pts.)
 - B. Length requirements (10 pts.)
- VIII. Instructions followed? (10 pts.)

Suggestions for conducting communication inquiry:

1. **Be Precise** - Accurately code, analyze and explain communication phenomena by paying close attention to systematic research method.
2. **Be Objective** - Be critical of your methodological choices and how those choices might influence the outcome of analysis.
3. **Be Disciplined** - Follow the order of steps and procedures ethically and with purpose. Do not take shortcuts!

ASSIGNMENT # 7:
Oral Presentation

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to present research orally to an audience.

Directions: For this assignment, you will be responsible for orally presenting your Research Proposal (Assignment # 5). Since you may not have results to report, you will be required to speculate expected results. The presentation should include information such as: (a) the definition of the phenomenon the research was designed to investigate, (b) the proposed methods to be utilized for researching the phenomenon, and (c) directions for future research. Also, describe the your reaction to the research project. Did the assignment teach you anything new about the phenomenon you observed? Provide analysis of the expected findings, the experimental design, or other relevant factors. The presentation should be creative and interesting.

Report: Submit for credit a one page outline of your presentation and PowerPoint slides for visual aids prior to your presentation according to the course schedule. (100 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

Time: Allotted time (4:30 minutes, -2 pts. per :30, -5 pts. total, **Stopped at 6:00**)

- I. Delivery: including eye contact, internal organization, body and vocal style (5 pts.)
- II. Use of visual aids - see note below (5 pts.)
- III. Introduction:
 - A. Definition of the communication phenomenon (5pts.)
 - B. Rationale for the study (5 pts.)
- IV. Review of Literature:
 - A. Citation and description of sources (5 pts.)
 - B. Statement of hypothesis (5 pts.)
- V. Method of the Study:
 - A. Identification of subjects (5 pts.)
 - B. Identification of variables (5 pts.)
 - C. Description of procedures (10 pts.)
- VI. Discussion of (expected) Results:
 - A. Description of the criteria for analysis (5 pts.)
 - B. Description of expected findings (10 pts.)
 - C. Implications of the findings: (5 pts.)
- VII. Concluding Synthesis:
 - A. Evaluation of the study: (10 pts.)
 - B. Direction for further study: (5 pts.)
- VIII. Instructions followed? (10 pts.)

Note: Visual aids should be used to contribute to audience understanding and enhance but not detract from the presentation. Visual aids should be self-explanatory and not too detailed, and they should follow general guidelines for legibility. PowerPoint slides may include: 1) a title slide with your name and project title, 2) a slide with two or three citations in APA format, 3) abbreviated hypotheses, or 4) tables or figures of results. Use no more than 5 slides.

TIPS FOR WRITING ESSAYS AND RESEARCH REPORTS

This quick reference may be useful for helping writers catch common problems. This quick reference should not supplant a style manual to which writers (including students) should have access. The most common style manual currently in use by researchers and writers in the fields of Communication, Psychology, Sociology, Education, and other social sciences is:

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

The APA manual is also used by journals in the social sciences. The reference above is typed in the form appropriate for the manual to which they refer. For example, the reference for the APA manual is typed in APA style. For purposes of social scientific research (conducted in this class), APA style should be used. All of the following examples will be given in APA style, which is required for this course.

Common Errors:

1. Typographical errors: please proofread your paper. It would serve you well to organize your time in such a way as to give yourself ample time to proofread before the paper due date. If you are using a computer or word processor, this process will go much quicker. However, do not rely on the word processing program's spell checker to do your proofreading. Spell checkers only check spelling, they do not check context or usage (See number two below). Sometimes it may be helpful to read the paper out loud to catch phrases that do not sound correct.
2. Proper usage: be sure to use the proper word within the context. The most common usage problems involve the words: (a) of / have, (b) affect / effect, (c) accept / except, (d) then / than, (e) no / know, and (f) to / too / two, etc. These errors may be considered misspellings.
3. Agreement: be sure that subjects and verbs within sentences agree in number. Plural verbs should be used with plural subjects. Also, be sure that personal pronouns agree in number with their antecedents.
4. Bigoted language: try to avoid the use of terms which might offend your audience. Audience analysis is important to achieve the goal of communicating ideas. The use of sexist, racist, or otherwise bigoted language may offend the audience and sabotage your goal as a communicator.
5. Use of the apostrophe ('): do not use contractions in a formal paper, unless they are used in a direct quote. Apostrophes should only be used in formal papers to signify a possessive, such as Jeff's car, the Jones' yard, etc. (*It's* is a contraction of *it is*. *Its* is the possessive of *it*.)
6. Quoting: be sure to quote accurately, and place quotation marks in their proper location in relation to other punctuation. For example, quotation marks should be placed after the period.
7. Tense: use the proper tense, and do not switch tense within a sentence or paragraph unless context demands the switch of tense.

8. Sentence structure: avoid run-on or fused sentences, comma splices, incomplete sentences or sentence fragments, and otherwise awkward constructions:

a) A run-on is a construction which contains more than one complete thought, such as several clauses strung together without the proper conjunctive or punctuation.

b) A comma-splice occurs when two complete sentences are connected by a comma.

with a conjunction (and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet):

[independent clause], and [independent clause].

without a conjunction:

[independent clause]; [independent clause].

c) Incomplete sentences or sentence fragments occur when any one or more of the following components are missing: (A sentence should convey a complete thought.)

- subject

- predicate (verb)

- the idea which the sentence is attempting to convey.

d) Awkward constructions occur when the order of components gets in the way of conveying a thought. This occurs most frequently with misplaced modifiers, prepositional phrases, and unclear (vague or ambiguous) references.

Writing Tips:

1. Avoid passive voice: minimize the use of "to be" verbs. Use action verbs.
2. Keep one main idea per paragraph. The paragraph should begin with the thesis statement. Sentences following the thesis statement should modify the thesis. The last sentence should serve as a transition to the next paragraph. This tip implies that paragraphs should contain more than one sentence.
3. Do not use slang, colloquialisms, or clichés in a formal paper (unless in a direct quote).
4. Do not address your reader directly in a formal paper through the use of the second person pronouns *you*, *your*, or *yours*, or indirectly through the use of the first person plural pronouns *we*, *our*, *ours*, or *us*. The author of a paper can never have enough evidence to make claims about all others, including the audience of the paper. (Formal papers are not for giving advice or prescribing behavior.)
5. Use parallel construction within sentences, paragraphs, and the paper as a whole. Do not be afraid to refer back to a statement made earlier in the paper, either directly or indirectly.
6. Do not split infinitives. Modifiers should be placed before or after the "to be" verb form.

Structure of Essays:

Essays such as the Research Report should follow the basic structure of an argument. This structure requires an introduction in which the thesis of the paper is set forth, a body in which the evidence is presented, and a conclusion in which the argument is summarized. For the Research Report, the majority of evidence should be from the results of the data analysis. This evidence

should describe, interpret or explain only the phenomenon or phenomena under study. See the Outline for a Research Proposal in the Course Materials Handbook for more information.

1. The introduction should include:
 - a. a setting of context: briefly describe the background information necessary for understanding the thesis statement.
 - b. a statement of the thesis which is to be proved.
 - c. the definition of terms used in the thesis statement.
2. The body should include:
 - a. evidence from prior research (a review of literature).
 - b. evidence from current research (see below).
 - c. a synthesis of the two forms of evidence.
3. The conclusion should include:
 - a. a restatement of the thesis.
 - b. a brief description of the evidence presented in the body.
 - c. a concluding statement affirming the thesis statement given the evidence.

The Use of Evidence in Research:

When writing an essay or research paper, evidence will be required to provide proof for declarative statements, or statements of fact. However, not all evidence may be appropriate or valid. The use of evidence in research papers must follow basic the guidelines of source credibility. Evidence, sources of factual information, must be objective, reproducible, and accepted by experts in the field of inquiry. In general, evidence is considered credible when the source of the evidence is considered trustworthy by a consensus of scholars. For example, scientific evidence must be presented to the community of scholars within the discipline, or field of study, for discussion and possible refutation. For these reasons, research requires careful consideration of the sources of factual information. There are three basic types of evidence: examples, authority, and statistics. (See the table below for a description of these basic types).

Type	Definition	Characteristics	Test of Validity
Examples	case studies or hypothetical instances	1. difficult to generalize 2. provides strong identification 3. adds good will	Is it a typical case?
Statistics	numerical measure of scope or frequency of occurrence	1. easy to generalize 2. limits identification 3. adds expertise	Is the methodology sound? Is the sampling adequate?
Authority	Expert testimony which interprets and draws conclusions, or witness testimony which provides facts	1. depends on authority's expertise 2. depends on witness's trustworthiness 3. depends upon audience perception of source	Is the expert qualified in this area? Is the witness biased in any way?

For sources of evidence, several questions should be asked when assessing the credibility of the source (Ormondroyd, Engle, & Cosgrave, 1999):

1. Author: Who is the author? What are the author's credentials? Is this author cited in other research within the discipline of study? Is the topic of the research within the author's field of expertise?
2. Date of Publication: When was the article published? Is it timely? Is this the first edition or a later revision?
3. Publisher or Title of Journal: Who is the publisher? Is the article refereed or edited by scholars in the field? Is the research found in a scholarly journal? (See the List of Communication Research Journals in the Course Materials Handbook).
4. Audience: Who is the intended audience of the research?
5. Objectivity: Is the evidence presented valid and reliable? Can the evidence be verified? Is the evidence free of bias?
6. Coverage: Does the research corroborate other sources? Does it add to the body of knowledge in the field of study? Is the source primary or secondary in nature?
7. Structure: Does the article follow a logical structure? (See the Outline for a Research Proposal in the Course Materials Handbook).
8. Evaluation: Is the article reviewed or evaluated by other researchers? What is the consensus of scholarly opinion on the evidence presented in the article?

Research begins with a review of literature on the topic. The search for information on a topic may start with class notes or references in the course textbook. Once a topic has been located in the subject index of a book (such as your textbook), a citation of an outside source may accompany the information on the topic.

Use of the Internet for Conducting Research:

Generally, Internet sources are not allowed in this class without special permission. The Internet, and more specifically the World Wide Web, often provides students and scholars many conveniences previously unavailable for conducting research. The convenience is allowed courtesy of the vast amounts of information and the software, or search engines, available for accessing that information. However, the information available on the Internet is not always credible. The lack of credibility of Internet sources is attributable to the fact that anyone can post or publish information on the Internet. (See discussion above on the credibility of evidence). Therefore, special precautions should be taken when accessing and using Internet information.

Credible sources on the Internet will provide, minimally, information regarding the author, the date of publication, the publisher, and the complete URL (Internet address). Sources which do not provide this basic information should be avoided.

Once a credible source has been located on the Internet, the author and date of the source should be cited in the text following the same guidelines specified for traditional paper sources as demonstrated on the next page. The source must also be listed on the reference page. According to the APA, the form of the reference should be:

Author. (Date of Publication). *Title*. Location: Publisher. (or *Journal, Volume, Page(s)* for online journals). Date and URL where article was retrieved.

For example, the article by Ormondroyd, Engle, and Cosgrave which was cited in the section titled *The Use of Evidence in Research* would be:

Ormondroyd, J., Engle, M., & Cosgrave, T. (1998). *How to critically analyze information sources*. Cornell, NY: Cornell University, Olin Kroch Uris Libraries, Reference Services Division. Retrieved December 12, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill26.htm>

The information regarding how to cite internet sources was taken from:

American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *Electronic references*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved August 21, 2001 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.apastyle.org/eleceref.html>

Specific Tips for Papers in H. Paul LeBlanc's Classes:

1. Do not use any form of folder or other device for holding the paper. Use a staple in the upper, left-hand corner only.
2. Use only 10 or 12 point fonts listed below. The font may measured by point size or characters per inch. Monospaced type such as *Courier*, or type on a typewriter (Pica or Elite) is measured by characters per inch: 10 cpi is normal. Proportionally spaced type such as Times New Roman (the font on this handout) or Arial (*Helvetica*) is measured by point size: 12 pt is normal.
3. Use a title page following the guidelines specified on the next page. Graphics (including special fonts for the title) on the title page are not necessary and do not enhance the quality of the paper.
4. Use page numbers. Placement of page numbers should follow the style manual guidelines.
5. Use left justification only. Fully-justified text creates large spaces between words which may make the paper hard to read. Also, avoid large spaces between words: neatness counts.
6. Do not place the first or last line of a paragraph on the bottom or top of the page. The command for controlling this is referred to as widow/orphan control in most word processors.
7. Make use of other materials such as the [Outline for a Research Proposal](#) located in the [Course Materials Handbook](#) to help in writing.

AUTHOR-DATE CITATION

Insert the last name of the author and year of publication in parentheses in the text.

A study of nonverbal behavior (Burgoon, 1984) . . .

If the author's name appears in the text, insert only the year of publication in parentheses.

Burgoon's (1984) study of nonverbal behavior indicated . . .

Second or later mention of the same work: the year within parentheses may be omitted if there will be no confusion.

In the study of nonverbal behavior, Burgoon . . .

Mention of a work by two authors should always include both names separated by an "&" in parentheses or the word *and* in the text.

In a study on interpersonal conflict, (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979) .
Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979) studied interpersonal conflict . . .

First mention of a work by three or more authors should include all the authors' last names.

Research on loneliness and social interaction (Wheeler, Reis & Nezlek, 1983) . . .

Later mention of a work by three or more authors may be shortened to the last name of first author, et al., and the year of publication in parentheses only if there is no confusion, or as:

In a study on loneliness, Wheeler and colleagues (1983) . . .

Include initials of authors with the same last names.

All sources cited in the text must be in the reference list. Conversely, all sources in the reference list must be cited in the text.

TITLE PAGE

Center the full title on page in upper and lower case, double spacing if more than one line. Double space and center the author's name in upper and lower case. At the bottom of the page center course name in upper and lower case. Single space and center the instructor's name in upper and lower case. Single space and center the due date.

PAGINATION

Beginning with the second page, place the author's last name followed by the page number in the upper right corner, one half inch from the top of the page and flush with the right margin.

REFERENCE PAGE

Begin references on a new page. Type the word References centered on the top line. Double space. Type references, as demonstrated by the samples, unnumbered and alphabetized. The first line is flush with the left margin. The following lines are indented five spaces. Double space within and between references.

MARGINS

Top, bottom, and side margins are 1 inch. Do not increase or decrease spaces between words to make lines even. Do not hyphenate. Allow lines to be shorter; left justify all text. Indent paragraphs five spaces.

QUOTATIONS

Quotations of 40 words or fewer are not set off from the text but are placed within double quotation marks. Use single quotation marks for a quotation within a short quotation.

For longer quotations, use a colon after the last word of text, double space, indent five spaces and type in block form without paragraph indentation. Do not use quotation marks. Double space quotation. Use double quotation marks for quotations within long quotations. Avoid excessively long quotations. Attempt to paraphrase. Page numbers are necessary for direct quotes. Give the page number for quotations in the form (Author, Date, p. #).

GENERAL RULES

Periods and commas are placed within quotation marks. Question marks and exclamation marks not originally in the quotation go outside the quotation marks. Place author-date citation prior to direct quote.

Words omitted (ellipses) are shown by three periods with a space between each and a space before the first period and after the last.

SPECIAL NOTES:

These instructions are based on the APA manual (5th ed.), with some variation for purposes of student papers not intended for publication. Writers may wish to follow the APA manual more closely than suggested on this style sheet.

APA REFERENCE SAMPLES

JOURNAL ARTICLE - ONE AUTHOR

Martin, R. (1992). Relational cognition complexity and relational communication in personal relationships. *Communication Monographs*, 59, 150-163.

JOURNAL ARTICLE - TWO AUTHORS

Fitzpatrick, M. A., & Winke, J. (1979). You always hurt the one you love: Strategies and tactics in interpersonal conflict. *Communication Quarterly*, 27, 3-11.

JOURNAL ARTICLE - PAGINATED BY ISSUE

Beier, E. G., & Sternberg, D. P. (1977). Subtle cues between newlyweds. *Journal of Communication*, 27(3), 92-97.

ARTICLE IN AN EDITED BOOK

LeBlanc, H. P., III. (1998). Plurality and Affirmative Action: The social requirement of diversity. In P. Minarik (Ed.), *Illinois Consultation: Focus on Affirmative Action* (pp. 49-54). Bellwood, IL: Richards Graphic Communications.

BOOK - ONE AUTHOR

Pearson, J. C. (1989). *Communication in the family: Seeking satisfaction in changing times*. New York: Harper and Row.

BOOK - EDITOR INSTEAD OF AUTHOR

Socha, T. J., & Diggs, R. C. (Eds.). (1999). *Communication, race and family: Exploring communication in Black, White, and Biracial families*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

BOOK - CORPORATE AUTHOR

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

BOOK - NO AUTHOR

Psychology and you. (1979). New York: Macmillan.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION

National Institute of Mental Health. (1982). *Television and behavior: Ten years of scientific progress and implications for the eighties*. (DHHS Publication No. ADM 82-1195). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

LeBlanc, H. P., III. (2000). Family boundary negotiation in parent-adolescent interaction. (Doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 61, 2995-A.

MASTER'S THESIS

LeBlanc, H. P., III. (1992). *Student perceptions of rules for classroom interaction*. Unpublished master's thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

PAPER PRESENTED AT A MEETING

LeBlanc, H. P., III. (1994, November). *Building little communities: Relational communication and early parenthood in two young couples*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT

LeBlanc, H. P., III. (1990). *Minimal responses*. Unpublished manuscript, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.

OUTLINE FOR A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Title

I. Introduction (1-2 pages):

- A. Identification of general area of study
- B. Importance and rationale of the investigation

II. Review of the Literature (3-4 pages):

- A. Review of previous research and thinking that is relevant to the question
- B. Reasoning and evidence that leads to the hypothesis
- C. Statement in concise terms of each hypothesis (each one should specify a cause leading to an effect or the nature of the relationship between two or more variables).

Examples:

- 1. An intrusion of personal space influences negative attitudes toward the intruder.
- 2. There is a significant, negative correlation between eye contact and distance.

III. Method (2-3 pages):

- A. Identification of subjects (how many, how selected, how assigned to experimental conditions)
- B. Identification of independent and dependent variables in operational terms (for example, what constitutes invasion of personal space, how is eye contact defined and measured, how is liking measured)
- C. Identification of experimental procedures of observational methods (carefully explain what, if anything, was manipulated, how it was manipulated, and how it was observed; the setting should also be described)

IV. Expected Results (1-2 pages):

- A. Report any statistical tests to be used
- B. Report any results in tabular form or in a summary
- C. State whether the results confirm the hypothesis

V. Conclusion (2-3 pages):

- A. Discuss the importance of the expected findings
 - 1. implications if the hypothesis is confirmed
 - 2. explanations if the hypothesis is not confirmed
- B. Evaluate the methods proposed
- C. Make suggestions for future research

References

Appendices (i.e. instrument, tables, figures)

RESEARCH TOPICS

Speech Communication:

1. The use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors in intimate relationships: Males versus females
2. The importance of attraction in the development of friendships
3. Perception regarding the effects of the use of deception on trust

Electronic Media:

1. The effect of media images associated with body image
2. Parental perceptions of the effect of violence in the media
3. Perceptions regarding the objectivity of TV news anchors by gender and ethnicity

Technical Communication:

1. Teacher use of technology in the classroom: Student perceptions of effect on learning
2. Consumer perceptions on the usefulness of printed software manuals
3. HR managers perceptions on the importance of computer skills

Public Relations:

1. The use of negative advertising in political campaigns: Voter perception
2. The use of blame in corporate PR campaigns: Ford/Firestone, Enron, etc.
3. Consumer loyalty to brand/product following recall

Intercultural Communication:

1. Differences in the use of distance or eye contact among different cultural groups
2. The use of Spanish language TV among latino/non-latino users, or by generation
3. Perceptions regarding U. S. foreign policy by cultural or religious group

LIST OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH JOURNALS

Journals	Library Location
Communication Education	PN 4071 S74
Communication Monographs	PN 4077 S6
Communication Quarterly	PN 4071 T6
Communication Reports	P87.C58 (Trinity University)
Communication Research	
Communication Research Reports	
Communication Studies (formerly Central States Speech Journal)	PN 4001 C45
Communication Theory	
Discourse Processes	P 302 D55
Human Communication Research	P 91.3 H85
Journal of Applied Communication Research	HM 258 J67
Journal of Communication	P 87.J6
Journal of Nonverbal Behavior	
Quarterly Journal of Speech	PN 4071 Q3
Research on Language and Social Interaction	P 1.P36
Southern (Speech) Communication Journal	PN 4071.S65
Western Journal of (Speech) Communication	PN 4071.W45
Related Journals	
American Sociological Review	
Child Development	
Developmental Psychology	
Family Relations	
Family Process	
Journal of Adolescence	
Journal of Applied Social Psychology	
Journal of Early Adolescence	
Journal of Family Issues	
Journal of Marriage and the Family	
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology	
Journal of Social Issues	
Journal of Social and Personal Relationships	
Journal of Youth and Adolescence	
Research in Sociology of Education and Socialization	
Small Group Research	
Social Psychology Quarterly	
Abstracts (Reference)	
Communication Abstracts	P 87.C59733
Psychological Abstracts	BF 1.P65
Sociological Abstracts	HM 1.S67

References

- The following books are used for additional materials in the course. Please also see the bibliography of sources available through the Student Section at <http://www.hpleblanc.com/>.
- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Andrews, F. M., Klem, L., Davidson, T. N., O'Malley, P. M., & Rodgers, W. L. (1981). *A guide for selecting statistical techniques for analyzing social science data* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan: Institute for Social Research.
- Babbie, E. (2002). *The basics of social research* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Bostrom, R. N. (1998). *Communication research*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.
- Brewer, J., & Hunter, A. (1989). *Multimethod research: A synthesis of styles*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Christensen, L. B., & Stoup, C. M. (1991). *Introduction to statistics for the social and behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Frey, L. R., Botan, C. H., & Kreps, G. L. (2000). *Investigating communication: An introduction to research methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gubrium, J. (1988). *Analyzing field reality*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1983). *Methodology for the human sciences: Systems of inquiry*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Rose, D. (1990). *Living the ethnographic life*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Salkind, N. J. (2000). *Statistics for people who (think they) hate statistics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Smith, M. J. (1988). *Contemporary communication research methods*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Sommer, B., & Sommer, R. (2002). *A practical guide to behavioral research: Tools and techniques* (5th ed.). New York: Oxford University.
- Spector, P. E. (1992). *Summated rating scale construction: An introduction*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Tucker, R. K., Weaver, R. L., II., & Berryman-Fink, C. (1981). *Research in speech communication*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1990). *Writing up qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.