

COM 4913 – Independent Study

Course Materials Handbook

(2nd rev. ed.)

Prepared by

H. Paul LeBlanc III

for

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Department of Communication

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## Policy for Request of an Independent Study

A student's request for an Independent Study will be granted, upon consultation with the student regarding purpose of the Independent Study, when the following conditions have been met:

The student must have successfully completed, with the letter grade of "B" or higher, Conduct of Communication Inquiry (COM 3073), and

The student must have completed at least one entire course, with the letter grade of "B" or higher with the instructor, and

The student must be not be enrolled in courses in excess of twelve hours, not including the Independent Study, for the semester for which the request is made, or not in excess of three hours for a five-week summer session, and

The student must have had an outstanding record of class attendance for previous courses with the instructor, and

The student must be able to schedule and attend regular weekly meetings with the instructor, at both the student's and the instructor's convenience, for the course of the entire semester.

Furthermore, the request for Independent Study will be granted when, after consultation with the student, the purpose of the recommendation is compatible with the expertise of the instructor. The student will be required, when making the request for an Independent study, to provide a synopsis of the proposed study area including preliminary research questions.

The structure of the course will follow the guidelines for assignments set forth in the Independent Study - Course Materials Handbook.

H. Paul LeBlanc III

Rev. 06/03

## SYLLABUS

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H. Paul LeBlanc III, PhD  
Department of Communication  
MB 2.248J

Office: 458-7724, Fax: 458-5991  
E-mail: pleblanc@utsa.edu  
Office hours to be negotiated

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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 independent research and critical analysis of communication phenomena. The aim is to merge theory and research methodology by providing one-on-one instruction through assigned reading, research, discussion and writing.

### **POLICIES**

All course requirements must be fulfilled in order to successfully pass the course.

**Students must meet the attendance criteria.** The student and instructor will discuss and develop a plan of action and schedule of assignments. Attendance will be based on the schedule developed in consultation with the instructor, and the student will be responsible for meeting the time requirements as per the agreed upon schedule. The student may miss one (1) scheduled meeting before before deduction from the final grade occurs, provided the student meets the criteria outlined below. Students will receive a letter grade drop from the final grade for each absence in excess of the first absence. If the student is absent, for whatever reasons, the student is responsible for obtaining and completing assignments by the due date in order to receive full credit. In general, no make-up assignments will be allowed. Make-up assignments will be allowed only in extreme circumstances and according to the following requirements for an excused absence: (a) **documentation** - the student must present written proof of reason within one week of missed meeting, (b) **legitimacy** - the reason for absence must be acceptable, such as an authorized University activity as specified in the Handbook of Operating Procedures, (c) **advance notice** - unless absolutely impossible, the student should contact me or leave a message in the main office in advance, and (d) **prior conscientiousness of student** - you must allow me the benefit of the doubt. All assignments are due according to the Schedule of Assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted. No incompletes will be given for independent study courses. Please see the Information Bulletin and the Handbook of Operating Procedures for policies regarding attendance.

**Neither cheating nor plagiarism will be tolerated.** Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, ideas, quotes, etc. without due credit. Turning in an assignment for this class that was previously submitted in another class will be considered cheating. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating 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 this policy.

All other University policies will be followed.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Short Reports:** There will be several exercises which will require short written reports. These assignments are designed to assist the student in the preparation of the research report.

**Research Report:** A formal essay is required and will be due on the last scheduled meeting date prior to the final exam period. The essay should analyze a communication phenomenon, utilizing standard research procedures including reviewing the literature, specifying a hypothesis, developing a test instrument, collecting data, analyzing the data and drawing conclusions.

A full description of each of these assignments can be found in the Course Materials Handbook through the Student Section at <http://www.hpleblanc.com/>.

## DIVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Annotated Bibliography (100 pts)	GRADING SCALE:
Review of Literature (200 pts)	90.0 - 100: A
Test Instrument and Forms (100 pts)	80.0 - 89.9: B
Methods and Data (200 pts)	70.0 - 79.9: C
Analysis (200 pts)	60.0 - 69.9: D
Research Report (200 pts)	BELOW 60: 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 Report is 200, then the report is worth 20% of the final grade. The Annotated Bibliography is worth 100 points. Therefore, a raw score of 78 on the first assignment is 7.8% of the final grade. A score of 160 on the Methods and Data exercise is 16.0% of the final grade. Please see the Grade Monitoring Form located in the Course Materials Handbook for more information.

## 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, and methods, and unorganized effort.
- F** Failure to complete assignment during the scheduled time through lack of evident effort.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

(15 Week Schedule)

Week One: Development of Assignment Schedule.

Week Two: Reviewing the Research Literature.

Week Three: Reviewing the Research Literature.

- Assignment #1 - Create an annotated bibliography covering twenty articles.

Week Four: Reviewing the Research Literature.

Week Five: Defining the Research Problem.

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

Week Six: Defining the Research Problem.

Week Seven: Defining the Research Problem.

- Assignment # 3 - Create survey instrument, cover letter, and complete HSC forms.

Week Eight: Developing Appropriate Methods.

Week Nine: Developing Appropriate Methods.

Week Ten: Developing Appropriate Methods.

- Assignment # 4 - Develop methods and collect and code survey data.

Week Eleven: Doing the Analysis.

Week Twelve: Doing the Analysis.

- Assignment # 5 - Analyze the data.

Week Thirteen: Writing and Reviewing a Research Report.

Week Fourteen: Writing and Reviewing a Research Report.

Week Fifteen: Writing and Reviewing a Research Report.

- Assignment # 6 - Write and edit the final research report.

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

(5 Week Schedule)

Week One: Reviewing the Research Literature.

- Assignment #1 - Create an annotated bibliography covering twenty articles.

Week Two: Defining the Research Problem.

- Assignment #2 - Write a review of literature based on the annotated bibliography.
- Assignment # 3 - Create survey instrument, cover letter, and complete HSC forms.

Week Three: Developing Appropriate Methods.

- Assignment # 4 - Develop methods and collect and code survey data.

Week Four: Doing the Analysis.

- Assignment # 5 - Analyze the data.

Week Five: Writing and Reviewing a Research Report.

- Assignment # 6 - Write and edit the final research report.

GRADE MONITORING FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Banner ID: \_\_\_\_\_

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment 1:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 100

Assignment 2:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 200

Assignment 3:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 100

Assignment 4:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 200

Assignment 5:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 200

Assignment 6:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 200

Subtotal:\_\_\_\_\_      Possible: 1000

ATTENDANCE:

Days Missed: \_\_\_\_\_

Deduction:    - \_\_\_\_\_

FINAL GRADE:            Total:\_\_\_            Possible: 1000            Percent:\_\_\_            Grade:\_\_\_

## OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS 1 THROUGH 6

The purpose of the following assignments one through five is to take you through each step of the process of conducting and preparing a report of original research. Each assignment represents a step in the research process, whether conducting qualitative or quantitative research. The first step involves collecting resources necessary to narrow and focus the topic of inquiry. The second step involves closely investigating previous research on the topic. The third step requires further narrowing of the topic sufficiently to conduct systematic original research by specifying the variables to be measured. The fourth step specifies a particular method of measurement or criterion for categorization of phenomena to be investigated, and following those procedures to collect and code the data. Step five involves the actual analysis of the data according to the procedure or test(s) implied by the research questions or hypotheses specified. The final step involves making conclusions about the phenomenon(a) studied and writing the report.

For each of these assignments, a written document will be created. You may submit these documents in electronic form on a floppy or as an e-mail attachment (but not as text embedded in an e-mail in a standard format such as Microsoft Word or Excel. **Assignments created and submitted in Microsoft Works format will not be accepted.** If 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 other students may be sending several assignments in this fashion. **Please note: the option to turn in assignments 1 through 5 as an e-mail attachment does not apply to Assignment # 6. Your Research Report (Assignment # 6) must be turned in as hardcopy.**

Furthermore, submit all assignments with your name, the assignment number and the date in the document itself. 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: Select and seek approval for a topic of research. Find and read 20 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 articles by writing an abstract for each article in your own words. See the example of an annotated bibliography provided through the course website at:

<http://www.hpleblanc.com/courses/anno-bib.pdf>.

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 20 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: (1 pt. each for 20)
- III. Number of article abstracts: (1 pt. each for 20)
- IV. Relevant research questions: (1 pt. each for 20)
- 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. Focus on the findings of empirical research.

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. (200 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Introduction (10 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #1)
- II. Literature review:
  - A. Citation of sources, References (number and matching, 50 pts.)
  - B. Synthesis of concepts (50 pts.)
- III. Proposed direction for study:
  - A. Statement of hypothesis (30 pts.)
  - B. Concluding paragraph (10 pts.)
- IV. Mechanics:
  - A. Grammar, neatness and spelling (10 pts.)
  - B. APA style (citations and references, 20 pts.)
- V. Instructions followed? (20 pts.)

**Note:** This paper, and all following written reports (Assignments 4 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 the Sample Research Report and the Outline for a Research Proposal in the Course Materials Handbook for assistance in the development of your essay.

### ASSIGNMENT # 3 - QUESTIONNAIRE AND FORMS

Objective: To develop an instrument and protocol for the systematic collection of data.

Directions: Determine the data collection and sampling procedures for the project. For surveys, operationalize variables and develop a survey questionnaire, according to the list of appropriate elements as discussed in conference, which contains no less than three independent variables and twenty scale items measuring at least one but no more than five dependent variables appropriately related to the research questions or hypotheses from Assignment # 2. For interview protocols, determine general and specific questions about the co-participants lived experience related to the topic under investigation. Interview questions should not be overly intrusive, while in-depth enough to elicit useful responses. Complete appropriate University Institutional Review Board Human Subjects Committee forms for study approval.

Report: Submit for credit a survey instrument or interview protocol developed for measuring or describing the phenomenon you propose to observe. Along with the interview protocol or survey questionnaire, write a one page cover letter, and separate informed consent form, according to the instructions available from your instructor, which describes the subject's participation procedures. Complete and return a University Human Subjects Research Exemption form. (100 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Survey instrument or interview protocol:
  - A. Appropriate format (10 pts.)
  - B. For Survey:
    1. Appropriateness of independent variables (10 pts.)
    2. Number of dependent variable elements (10 pts.)
    3. Appropriateness of scale items (10 pts.)
  - C. For Interview Protocol:
    1. Appropriateness of questions (10 pts.)
    2. Number of questions (10 pts.)
    3. Interrelatedness of questions to phenomenon(a) under investigation (10 pts.)
- II. IRB Forms:
  - A. University Human Subjects Exemption or Request form (15 pts.)
  - B. Cover Letter (20 pts.)
  - C. University Subject Participation Informed Consent form (15 pts.)
- III. Instructions followed? (10 pts)

ASSIGNMENT # 4  
Methods and Data

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to prepare for and conduct 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. Develop a code page for the survey instrument (see article online on developing a code page for more information). Determine sampling procedures for data collection. Collect and code data from a minimum of 120 subjects.

Report: Submit for credit a document describing the methods to be used for the proposed study (minimum 350 words). Also, submit for credit a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet code page which specifies the methods for coding the data. For survey research, submit the SPSS data file. For interview research, submit a transcription of the interviews for all participants. (200 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Methods
  - A. Description of the demographics of subjects to be recruited for the study: why are they relevant? (20 pts.)
  - B. Description of the data collection procedures (20 pts.)
  - C. For survey research, description of variables relevant to the hypothesis (20 pts.)
  - D. For interview research, description of the interrelatedness of interview concepts relevant to the research questions (20 pts.)
  - E. Description of the instrument development process (20 pts.)
- II. Code page (20 pts.)
- III. Data Collection
  - A. For survey research:
    - 1. Completed SPSS data file (30 pts.)
    - 2. Proper format for the data file as per in-conference instructions (20 pts.)
    - 3. Number of subjects surveyed (minimum 120) (30 pts.)
  - B. For interview research:
    - 1. Completed transcription (30 pts.)
    - 2. Proper format for the data file as per in-conference instructions (20 pts.)
    - 3. Number of co-participants interviewed (minimum 5) (30 pts.)
- IV. Instructions followed? (20 pts.)

ASSIGNMENT # 5  
Analysis

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to apply systematic and reproducible analysis techniques.

Directions: For survey research, select and run the appropriate tests and analyze the results. For interview research, search for and categorize themes inherent in the data utilizing a method appropriate to the study.

Report: Submit for credit a written analysis section (see Outline for a Research Report in the Course Materials Handbook for a description of relevant elements). (200 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

I. Analysis of Data

A. For Survey Research:

1. Description and rationale for selection of tests (50 pts.)
2. Description or tabulation of results (80 pts.)
3. Comparison of results to related hypotheses (50 pts.)

B. For Interview Research:

1. Description and rationale for selection of analysis frame (50 pts.)
2. Description, categorization and critical analysis of lived experience (80 pts.)
3. Comparison of findings to research questions (50 pts.)

II. Instructions followed? (20 pts.)

## ASSIGNMENT # 6 - RESEARCH REPORT

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to conduct and report original research.

Directions: This report assignment requires analysis of communication phenomena based on current research and should be an in-depth look at a particular topic area. The type of phenomenon of interest for analysis is not important provided it is significant and related to the general domain of communication. The phenomenon for study may be previously described or explained in prior research. However, it is important that the data be current. Therefore, you are required to write the report based on the preceding assignments for this course (see the Course Materials Handbook for these descriptions).

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. (200 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

- I. Introduction: (20 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #1)
- II. Literature Review: (20 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #2)
- III. Method of Study: (20 pts., **edited** as from Assignment #3)
- IV. Results/Analysis: (20 pts, **edited** as from Assignment #4)
- V. Discussion/Conclusion:
  - A. Relevance of findings (20 pts.)
  - B. Evaluation of methods (20 pts.)
  - C. Direction for future study (10 pts.)
- VI. Mechanics
  - A. Grammar, neatness and spelling (10 pts.)
  - B. APA style (citations and references, 20 pts.)
- VII. Organization:
  - A. Proper placement of manuscript elements (10 pts.)
  - B. Length requirements (10 pts.)
- VIII. Instructions followed? (20 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!

## OUTLINE FOR A RESEARCH REPORT

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. Results (3-4 pages):

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

V. Conclusion (2-3 pages):

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

References

Appendices

LIST OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH JOURNALS

<b>Journals</b>	<b>Library Location</b>
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
<b>Related Journals</b>	
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	
<b>Abstracts (Reference)</b>	
Communication Abstracts	P 87.C59733
Psychological Abstracts	BF 1.P65
Sociological Abstracts	HM 1.S67

## 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. 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.
8. Tense: use the proper tense, and do not switch tense within a sentence or paragraph unless context demands the switch of tense.

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 Report 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 Sample Research Report and Outline for a Research Report 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 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 be 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 List of Communication Research Journals and the Sample Research Report 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 only if there is no confusion

In a study on loneliness, Wheeler et al. (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 indented five spaces. The following lines are flush with the left margin. 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.

SAMPLE RESEARCH REPORT

LeBlanc 1

Chronemics:  
Person's Nonverbal Reactions  
as They Relate to the Use of Time  
H. Paul LeBlanc III

Course Name (ex: COM 3073 Section 2)  
Course Instructor (ex: Dr. LeBlanc)  
Due Date (ex: November 21, 2001)

Chronemics:  
Persons' Nonverbal Reactions  
as They Relate to the Use of Time

Introduction

Many functions of everyday life are overlooked or taken for granted. These aspects have enormous effects on how persons deal with each other. However, they are taken for granted because they are habituated, routine behaviors. An example of this is the use of time.

When observing chronemics, which is the use of time as a form of nonverbal communication,<sup>1</sup> the observer must decide if the behaviors manifested are linked to an attitude, value or belief. This study will attempt to demonstrate whether differences exist between males and females in responses associated with time.<sup>2</sup>

Review of Literature

According to Stewart (1985), North Americans subscribe to the idea of a linear progression of time.<sup>3</sup> This affects one's

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view on events. With a linear progression of time, relationships are viewed in terms of cause and effect which gives one the appearance of control over the environment, oneself or others.

This view of time has practical consequences. One's allocation of time, judgment of time duration, and attitudes about the use of time are based on the values grounded in one's view of abstract time. In a study conducted in 1984, Ahmadi found that persons tend to judge time as longer in duration when waiting in unexpected conditions as compared to waiting in expected conditions.<sup>4</sup>

Cultural or gender-based differences in the use of time seem to be a function of social roles. Further research on these differences can flesh them out. However, in doing such research, the researcher must begin with the perspective that any measurable differences can be attributed to socialization. Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed:

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H<sub>1</sub> Significant differences exist between males and females in their nonverbal response to waiting.<sup>5</sup>

Method

To test the hypothesis, 36 subjects will be randomly selected for observation of nonverbal cues of discomfort in a waiting situation. Of the 36 subjects, half will be female and half will be male. Subjects' ethnic background will also be noted to control for non-gender based socialization.<sup>6</sup>

The particular waiting situation will involve standing in line to make an order for food in a busy fast food restaurant.<sup>7</sup> Observed subjects must be standing in line alone (without acquaintances) in order to control for the effects of conversational enjoyment. The length of time spent waiting will be controlled by limiting observations of dependent variables to 30 second intervals. The dependent variables will include: (a) facial expression, (b) body posture, and (c) body movement.<sup>8</sup> Body movement entails adaptors but does

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not include movement up in line. (See Appendix A for coding scheme of dependent variables).

Data will be collected and analyzed using comparison of means for length of wait by gender, and chi-square for facial expression, body posture and body movement.<sup>9</sup>

Results

Overall, the results supported the hypothesis that significant differences occur between males and females in their reactions to temporal stimuli. On average females tend to be less agitated than males during waits. For example, males displayed more facial displays of anger ( $\chi^2 (3, N = 36) = 10.21, p < .05$ ), more tense body posture ( $\chi^2 (1, N = 36) = 7.20, p < .05$ ), and more body movement ( $\chi^2 (1, N = 36) = 7.12, p < .05$ ). Furthermore, females tended to smile more while waiting (See Table 1 below). These differences existed regardless of the fact that females on average ( $M = 1.45 \text{ min.}, SD = 0.19$ ) waited longer than males ( $M = 1.04 \text{ min.}, SD = 0.17$ ) ( $F (1, 35) = 46.52, p < .001$ ).<sup>10</sup>

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Table 1

Frequency of significant nonverbal cues of waiting by gender

Gender	Happiness	Anger	Relaxed posture	Tense posture	Frequent movement	Infrequent movement
Male (18)	0	7	5	13	12	6
Female (18)	6	2	13	5	4	14

Discussion

These results suggest that females in our culture are socialized to be more patient than males. While nonverbal displays such as facial expressions, body posture and body movement are not direct indications of attitude regarding the use of time, such nonverbal displays do point to aroused states which may be indicative of cognitive dissonance associated with the violation of expectations regarding time.<sup>11</sup>

This study had a small sample size and was strictly observational. Further studies might survey attitudes to determine whether socialization plays an important role in gender differences in the use of time.<sup>12</sup>

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References

Ahmadi, K. S. (1984). Effects of social influences and waiting on time judgment. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 59, 771-776.

Stewart, E. C. (1985). Culture and decision-making. International and Intercultural Communication Annual, 9, 177-211.

Notes for Students  
(see Outline for a Research Report):

- 1. Definition of phenomena
- 2. Rationale for study
- 3. Citation of source # 1
- 4. Citation of source # 2
- 5. Hypothesis
- 6. Identification of subjects
- 7. Description of procedures
- 8. Identification of variables
- 9. Description of procedures (cont.)
- 10. Presentation of results
- 11. Discussion of findings
- 12. Evaluation of the study

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Appendix A

Coding scheme for dependent variables

A. Facial Expressions (based on Ekman & Friesen, 1976):

- 0. No Expression
- 1. Surprise
- 2. Disgust
- 3. Happiness
- 4. Sadness
- 5. Anger
- 6. Fear

B. Body Posture

- 1. Relaxed
- 2. Tense

C. Body Movement

- 1. Frequent (3 or more movements per 30 second interval)
- 2. Seldom (less than 3 movements per 30 second interval)