COM 3073 – Conduct of Communication Inquiry

Course Materials Handbook

(Fall 2009)

Prepared by

H. Paul LeBlanc III

for

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Department of Communication

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SYLLABUS

H. Paul LeBlanc III, PhD
Department of Communication
MB 2.248D, FS 4.416 (DT)

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


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 UTSA Information Bulletin. 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 UTSA 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 requiring short written reports. These assignments are designed to assist each student in the preparation of the research paper and will involve researching and reviewing the literature, developing an instrument and method, and collecting and analyzing data for a research project.

**Research Paper:** 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 paper should detail findings and propose directions for future study.

**Oral Presentation:** Students will present their individual research projects to the class. The presentation will be a four-minute informative speech using technological tools such as spreadsheet and presentation computer software. 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 may 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 BlackBoard, or through the course website Student Section at hpleblanc.com
DIVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

EXAMINATIONS (150 pts. each)  
RESEARCH EXERCISES (50-100 pts. each)  
RESEARCH PAPER (100 pts.)  
ORAL PRESENTATION (100 pts.)  
QUIZZES (25 pts. each)  

Grades are earned and will be calculated on a cumulative scale. Grades for individual assignments can be calculated by dividing the raw score of the assignment by the total points possible for the assignment. Grades for the course are calculated using a 1000 point scale. For example, if the total number of points that can be achieved on the Research Paper is 100, then the paper is worth 10% of the final grade. However, a raw score of 72 on the Research Paper 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 BlackBoard 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 26: Classes begin.
September 1: Final date for adding the course.
September 10: Assignment #1 due by 8:00am.
September 11: Final date for dropping the course without receiving a grade of “W”.
September 24: Assignment #2 due by 8:00am.
September 28: Midterm Exam.
October 8: Assignment #3 due by 8:00am.
October 22: Assignment #4 due by 8:00am.
October 29: Final date for dropping course.
November 5: Assignment #5 due by 8:00am.
November 12: Assignment #6 due by 8:00am.
November 19: Assignment #7 slides and outline due by 8:00am.
November 23: Assignment #7 presentations begin in class.
November 26-28: Thanksgiving Day Holiday.
December 4: Last Day of Class. Final Exam Review.
December 11: Final Exam for Section 001 (1604 - 7:30a).
December 15: Final Exam for Section 901 (DT - 7:30a).
December 18: Final grades due by 2:00pm.

Dates for class assignments and exams will not be altered. We will meet during the Final Examination period for your section. Due to differences in computer system clocks, assignments should be submitted well in advance of the due time as assigned.
COM 3073 - Conduct of Communication Inquiry
LeBlanc

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.

• 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.
• Read Chapter 11.

• Assignment # 4 – Collect data. Read Chapter 12.

Week Ten: Using Software for Analysis.

Week Eleven: Using Software for Analysis (continued).
• Assignment # 5 – Testing and Measurement: Conduct analysis of data. Read Chapter 15.

Week Twelve: Interviewing Techniques.
• Assignment # 6 - Write Research Paper. Read Chapter 17.

Week Thirteen: Reviewing and Presenting a Research Report.
• 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:

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<th>Score Range</th>
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<td>80.0 - 89.9:</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>70.0 - 79.9:</td>
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<tr>
<td>60.0 - 69.9:</td>
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Tests Total: _____

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<td>Assignment 5</td>
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RESEARCH PAPER:

| Assignment 6| ___   | 100     |

ORAL PRESENTATION:

| Assignment 7| ___   | 100     |

Assignments Total: _____

QUIZZES:

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<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<tr>
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Quizzes Total: _____

FINAL GRADE:  

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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 BlackBoard

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 research questions or hypotheses to be investigated or tested. The first two assignments cover these six steps. You will be given a list of possible topics which reflect the areas of interest relevant to your communication degree (see Research Topics in the Course Materials Handbook). You may choose from these topic areas. Please also see the Research Timeline in BlackBoard 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 research questions or hypotheses proposed for investigation. Assignment three covers the seventh through tenth steps in the research process. Assignment four requires collecting and scoring the data (steps eleven and twelve). Steps thirteen and fourteen involve the running of tests on the data and creating output for analysis (Assignment five). Step fifteen requires analysis of the results according to the procedure or test(s) implied by the research questions or hypotheses specified. Step sixteen involves interpretation of the findings that 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 Paper) based on your earlier assignments. The final steps of the research process involve preparing (step eighteen-en) and presenting the report to an audience of peers for review and critique (step nineteen). 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 BlackBoard 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 BlackBoard, the timestamp on the assignment submission will serve as documentation for meeting the deadline for the assignment. The assignments feature in BlackBoard 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 the 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

For this and following assignments materials from two studies have been provided through the Samples link in BlackBoard 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 Paper in the Course Materials Handbook for assistance in the development of your essay.
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 BlackBoard 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:
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 60 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 BlackBoard. (Graduate or Honor’s Contract students must collect and score data from a minimum of 120 subjects).

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 # 5:
Testing and Measurement

Objective: To demonstrate the ability to conduct hypothesis testing or measurement on data.

Directions: Create contingency tables for each of the demographic characteristics measured and sets of variables specified by the research question or hypothesis from Assignment #2. Create charts for each of the demographic variables collected from subjects. Create graphs which demonstrate the results of hypothesis testing or measurement of the variables specified in the research question or hypothesis. The Excel workbook should have three spreadsheets: 1) the data from completed questionnaires, 2) a revised code page, and 3) the tables, charts, and graphs. Please see the sample provided through BlackBoard.

Report: Submit for credit a Microsoft Excel workbook containing: 1) the tables, 2) appropriate charts for the demographic data, and 3) graphs for comparison or relationship of variables. (50 points)

Criteria for Evaluation:

I. Testing and Measurement
   A. Charts and/or Tables for the demographic variables (15 pts.)
   B. Tables for each of non-demographic variables (20 pts.)
   C. Graphs, Charts or Tables for the hypothesis testing (10 pts.)

II. Instructions followed? (5 pts.)
ASSIGNMENT # 6:
Research Paper

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 paper 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 revised methods section from Assignment #3, including descriptive statistics of the characteristics of the sample. The assignment should include a results section specifying results of analysis of the data. Finally, this assignment should include a discussion based on the implications of the results, the limitations of the study, and directions for future research.

Report: Submit for credit an argumentative essay in a coherent format. The paper 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 findings (10 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 (5 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 Paper (Assignment # 6). The presentation should include information such as: (a) a description of the phenomenon the research was designed to investigate, (b) the methods utilized for researching the phenomenon, and (c) findings of the research. Also, provide analysis of the findings, the research 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 (4:00 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. Outline and use of visual aids - see note below (5 pts.)
III. Introduction:
   A. Description 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 – with descriptive statistics (10 pts.)
   B. Identification of variables (5 pts.)
   C. Description of procedures (5 pts.)
VI. Discussion of Results:
   A. Description of the criteria for analysis (5 pts.)
   B. Description of findings – with descriptive statistics (10 pts.)
VII. Concluding Synthesis:
   A. Implications/relevance of the findings: (10 pts.)
   B. Evaluation of the study: (5 pts.)
   C. 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. Your outline should be one page, single-spaced, covering each of the five subheadings of the research paper (as III through VI above).
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:


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 Paper 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).

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


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


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 Paper located in the Course Materials Handbook to help in writing.
OUTLINE FOR A RESEARCH PAPER

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 general question
   B. Reasoning and evidence that leads to the specific research question or hypothesis
   C. Statement in concise terms of each research question or hypothesis (each one should specify a cause leading to an effect or the nature of the relationship between two or more variables). Examples:
      1. Is there a relationship between wait time and number of facial displays of anger?
      2. Significant differences exist between males and females in their nonverbal response to waiting.

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 (1-2 pages):
   A. Report any statistical tests 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 findings
      1. implications if the hypothesis is confirmed
      2. explanations if the hypothesis is not confirmed
   B. Evaluate the methods used
   C. Make suggestions for future research

References

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

1. The use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors in intimate relationships
2. The importance of attraction in the development of relationships
3. Perception regarding the effects of the use of deception on trust
4. The effect of media images associated with body image
5. Parental perceptions of the effect of violence in the media
6. Perceptions regarding the objectivity of TV news anchors by gender and ethnicity
7. Teacher use of technology in the classroom: Student perceptions of effect on learning
8. The use of negative advertising in political campaigns: Voter perception
9. The use of blame in corporate PR campaigns: Ford/Firestone, Enron, etc.
10. Consumer loyalty to brand/product following recall
11. Differences in the use of distance or eye contact among different cultural groups
12. The use of Spanish language TV among Latino/non-Latino users, or by generation
# LIST OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH JOURNALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journals</th>
<th>Library Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Education</td>
<td>PN 4071 S74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Monographs</td>
<td>PN 4077 S6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Quarterly</td>
<td>PN 4071 T6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Research</td>
<td>P87.C58 (Trinity University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Studies (formerly Central States Speech Journal)</td>
<td>PN 4001 C45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourse Processes</td>
<td>P 302 D55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Communication Research</td>
<td>P 91.3 H85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Applied Communication Research</td>
<td>HM 258 J67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Communication</td>
<td>P 87.J6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Nonverbal Behavior</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly Journal of Speech</td>
<td>PN 4071 Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on Language and Social Interaction</td>
<td>P 1.P36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern (Speech) Communication Journal</td>
<td>PN 4071.S65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Journal of (Speech) Communication</td>
<td>PN 4071.W45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 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/.


