

COMM 363-201 Research Methods in Ad/PR

Loyola University Chicago | School of Communication

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 12:10 pm – 1:00 pm (Central Time)
Online (ZOOM Live Meetings)

INSTRUCTOR

Taeyoung Kim

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Virtual Office Hours using ZOOM: M & W 10:20 am – 11:00 am (Or by appointment)

Course Description

Does research sound tedious or difficult? Unfortunately, it's not an option anymore. In many cases, successful and effective marketing/communication campaigns are derived from a thoroughly designed research work that provides meaningful insights on the perception, belief, attitude, and behaviors of a targeted public. That said, communication professionals should be able to 1) select the right research method relevant to research questions an organization might have, with a realistic eye of what really needs to be done within a limited time and budget, 2) plan a non-biased and less flawless research design, and 3) accurately interpret the result, avoiding it distorted, incorrect, and skewed.

As soon-to-be professionals, you need to keep it in mind that many organizations (in general, I would say) might be somewhat reluctant to spend their money on extensive research work. Ironically, however, even though you have a brilliant idea for a new campaign, it is hard to get it approved without a piece of solid evidence ensuring its effectiveness. Then prior research will help you to develop a strong rationale for it. Research is also necessary for you to evaluate the outcomes of a project. There are different ways of measuring performance. Assessing the right information will help you demonstrate how your idea is "tied to the bottom line" and make you a more valued employee to top management.

With this in mind, the course will cover the basic steps and methods that are commonly used in communication fields. Students will learn the essential concepts of various research methods, a critical framework for evaluating communication research, and how to design and manage research process for real-world problems.

Course Objectives

Students are expected to know how to read and evaluate a research study, select appropriate research questions, develop measurements, draw a sample, collect and analyze data and interpret the results.

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Determine how to validate the quality of a research project or article
- Learn how to appropriately structure research questions
- Identify the appropriate tools when beginning an inquiry
- Select the appropriate methodology for primary research
- Build skills related to accessing and using information
- Appropriately communicate your findings in an honest and ethical manner

Course Materials

Stacks, D. W. (2016). *Primer of Public Relations Research*, Third edition, Guilford Publications.
ISBN-10: 146252270X / ISBN-13: 978-1462522705

* Ebook of the second edition is available at Lewis Library.

Creswell, J., & Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (Fifth edition.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Other required or additional readings will be uploaded or linked to Sakai for you. Students should expect that the content from any materials provided could be included in exam. Lecture notes also will be provided on Sakai after the class session.

Course Requirements

Further instructions for each component will be given in class.

Research Project	400	50%
Assignments 7*30	210	
Final Research paper	150	
Presentation	40	
Test & Quizzes	360	45%
Quizzes 5*40	200	
Final (take home)	160	
Professionalism	40	5%
Total	800	100%

Grading

Grade Scale	Minimum %
A	93.0
A-	90.0
B+	87.0
B	83.0
B-	80.0
C+	77.0
C	73.0
C-	70.0

D+	67.0
D	63.0
D-	60.0
F	0.0

Professionalism

It is our expectation that each of you will be respectful to your fellow classmates and instructor at all times. Display professional courtesy and respect in all interactions related to this class. A positive learning environment relies upon creating an atmosphere where diverse perspectives can be expressed. Each student is encouraged to take an active part in class discussions and activities. Honest and respectful dialogue is expected. Disagreement and challenging of ideas in a supportive and sensitive manner is encouraged. Hostility and disrespectful behaviors are not acceptable.

Attendance will be automatically taken based on the Usage Reports generated by Zoom. Attending class and not speaking has neither a positive nor a negative impact on your participation grade. To obtain maximum score on this component, always model the intern who is eager to earn an offer for a permanent job. Failing to attend individual meetings, poor preparation, and detrimental participation may decrease your participation score.

Attendance at a designated individual meeting with an instructor is essential. If you expect to miss any meetings for any reason, advance notification is required for the instructor's approval, NOT after the fact. Absences for serious medical reasons will be excused if you provide appropriate documentation from the Student Health Center or your personal physician. Absences due to documented family emergencies will also be excused. Absences without any proper and advance notifications may affect your professionalism score.

Policies

I treat this class as a professional setting. I encourage professional behavior as part of the class activities. Here are some tips: Always attend class, on time (be reliable – regardless of class mode); always do your best (work hard; be good at what you do); always reach out and contribute as best as you can (show hustle; work as part of a team). These attributes will help you succeed in your career as well as in life.

a. Makeup Test Policy

No tests may be made up without advance permission. If you get sick or face a personal emergency on the day of a test or quiz, you **MUST** send me an email in advance of the class or deadline (sending the email does not automatically extend your deadline). If you fail to do this, you should assume the test will not be made up or it will be downgraded.

b. Guidance on Late Submission

All assignments should be submitted in before the due dates. There should be no discretionary periods or periods of grace. Late work will be penalized one letter grade (3 percentage) per day. If the work is more than two days late, it will be graded at my discretion.

c. Re-grade

Re-grade requests must be submitted within 7 days from when the assignment/grade is returned. Along with the request, you must attach a letter explaining why you are requesting a re-grade. While I will consider the specific concerns cited in your letter, I will re-grade the entire assignment.

d. Incomplete

Incomplete class grades are only given for exceptional reasons.

Academic Integrity

Each student is expected to do his or her own work in the course. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication for possible disciplinary action. Loyola regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with consequences ranging from failure of the course to probation to expulsion.

Academic misconduct includes:

- Cheating on exams or aiding other students to cheat. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.
- Stealing the intellectual property of others and passing it off as your own work (this includes material found on the Internet). Software will be used to identify plagiarism.
- Failing to quote directly if you use someone else's words, and cite that particular work and author. If you paraphrase the ideas of another, credit the source with your citation. Please ask me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to cite sources.
- For closed-book exams, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test, and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor.
- Turning in the same work for two classes.

Accommodations

Any student with a learning disability who needs accommodation during class sessions or exams should provide documentation from Student Accessibility Center to the instructor during the first week of class; this information will be treated in complete confidence. The instructor will accommodate students' needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the responsibility of each student to plan in advance to meet their own needs and assignment due dates. Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please inform the instructor in advance if you have a conflict. Details are available at <https://www.luc.edu/sac/>.

Keeping in Touch

Get the most out of your professor! I am available to help you:

- During office hours
- During in-class meeting sessions
- By email
- By appointment

Email is the best means of communication to request an individual meeting or to consult any accommodation you might need. The reasons for meetings might be topic-driven so please provide a summary of the material you wish to discuss when we meet as part of your email request. When you send your emails to the professor, please use proper salutation for it, such as “Dear Professor Kim (instead of “Hi there” or “Hello”). Students’ emails will be responded within three business days. Please be patient and allow at least one day in receiving response from the professor.

Recording Online Sessions

In this class software will be used to record live class discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions will be recorded. These recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. All recordings will become unavailable to students in the class when the Sakai course is unpublished (i.e. shortly after the course ends, per the [Sakai administrative schedule](#)). Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with your instructor.

The use of all video recordings will be in keeping with the University Privacy Statement shown below:

Privacy Statement

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Students will be informed of such recordings by a statement in the syllabus for the course in which they will be recorded. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording. Recordings including student activity that have been initiated by the instructor may be retained by the instructor only for individual use.

Course Schedule

PLEASE NOTE:

The following schedule is subject to change. The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the course schedule and class assignments for the good of the class. Students should attend class, check their email and Sakai to make certain they are up-to-date with class activities and aware of any changes.

Week Subjects, Readings & Assignments

Week 1 Introduction to Research in Strategic Communication

M 8/24 Course Overview

*Skill questionnaire

W 8/26 What is Research

Stacks's Ch. 1

F 8/28 Research Topics

* Introduction to research project

** Two useful research tools: Qualtrics, SPSS

Assignment # 1. Topic of Interest (due on Saturday, August 29)

Week 2 Preliminary Considerations

M 8/31 Selection of Research Approach

C&C's Ch. 1

W 9/2 Literature Review & The Use of Theory

C&C's Ch. 2-3

F 9/4 Ethical Considerations & IRB

C&C's Ch. 4; Articles in Sakai

Assignment # 2. Explore Sources (due on Saturday, September 4)

Week 3 Planning a Research

M 9/7 Labor day – No Classes

Quiz 1

W 9/9 Structure of Research

C&C's Ch. 5-7

F 9/11 RQs & Hypothesis

C&C's Ch. 5-7 (Cont'd)

*Assignment # 3. Elaborate Your Research Idea (due on Saturday, September 11)
- Introduction, Research Purpose, & Research questions or Hypotheses*

Week 4 Research Week — *Finalize Research Topic*

M 9/14 Individual Meetings

W 9/16 Individual Meetings

F 9/18 Research Day: work on your project

Week 5 Research Basics

M 9/21 Sampling

Quiz 2

Stacks's Ch.12 (Ch.10 in 2nd ed.)

W 9/22	Concept & Measure	Stacks's Ch.4 (Ch.3 in 2 nd ed.)
F 9/24	Reliability & Validity	C&C's XXX

Assignment # 4. Revise Research Idea (w/ Literature Review, due on September 25)

Week 6	Quantitative Research Methods	
M 9/28	Poll vs Survey	C&C's Ch.8; Stacks's Ch.13
W 9/30	Experiment	Stacks's Ch. 14
F 10/2	Developing a Survey Questionnaire *Introduction to Qualtrics	

Week 7	Qualitative Research Methods	Quiz 3
M 10/5	Interview & Observation	C&C's Ch.9; Stacks's Ch.11
W 10/7	Content Analysis	Stacks's Ch.8
F 10/9	Secondary Research & Case Study	Stacks's Ch.9-10

Assignment # 5. Research Design (due on October 10)
- target of research, sampling, research method, measure, survey questionnaire

Week 8	Research Week — Finalize Questionnaire	
M 10/12	Individual Meetings	
W 10/14	Individual Meetings	
F 10/16	Research Day: work on your project	

Assignment # 6. Qualtrics Survey Questionnaire (due on October 17)
- get confirmed & start collecting data

Week 9	Data Analysis of Quantitative Data	Quiz 4
M 10/19	Data Collecting & Cleaning *Introduction to SPSS	
W 10/21	Descriptive vs Inferential Statistics	Stacks's Ch.6, 15
F 10/23	Reporting Quantitative Data	Stacks's Ch.13

Week 10	Data Analysis of Qualitative Data	Quiz 5
M 10/26	Analyze Qualitative Data	C&C's Ch.9
W 10/28	Reporting Qualitative Data	
F 10/30	Research Day — Work on your data	

Assignment # 7. Top-line Report (due on October 31)

Week 11 Research Week — Data Analysis

M 11/2 Individual meetings
W 11/4 Individual meetings
F 11/6 Individual meetings

Week 12 Writing and Presenting the Final Research Report

M 11/9 Writing a conclusion Stacks's Ch.16
W 11/11 Things to be included in your research paper
F 11/13 Research Day (Individual meetings upon request)

Week 13 Research Week

11/16 – 20 Work on your final research report

Final Research Paper (due on November 21)

* Take home exam question will be posted on November 22

Week 14 Thanksgiving Break

11/23 - 11/27 No Classes

Week 15 Presentations

M 11/30 Q&A on Take Home Exam, Presentations I
W 12/2 Presentations II
F 12/4 Presentations III

Week 16 Final week

M 12/7 Deadline: Take Home Exam

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