

**COMM 366-201 (3085): Observing and Measuring Communication Behavior
Loyola University Chicago, Fall 2018 (Tuesday & Thursday 1:00-2:15, LT 410)**

(Office hours: Tuesday 2:30-4:00, Thursday 11:30-12:45, Lewis Tower #906, pmorris1@luc.edu)

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This class is designed to get you to think critically about communication research. We will be focusing on learning to observe and measure communication behavior from an empirical (objective) perspective using quantitative (counting) methods. By the end of this semester, you will be able to:

1. Describe the “world view” and approaches that social scientists use when conducting research.
 2. Explain the way communication researchers present arguments in their research.
 3. Find, analyze, and critique communication scholarship that employs different methodological approaches.
 4. Create and present your own research study applying concepts we have discussed in class.
- No prior knowledge of research design or statistics is assumed.

IDEA Learning Objectives

1. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.
2. Learning to *apply* course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).
3. Learning to *analyze* and *critically evaluate* ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Required Text

Treadwell, D. F. (2017). *Introducing communication research: Paths of inquiry* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Prerequisites

COMM 100 and COMM 272 Intercultural, COMM 273 Interpersonal, COMM 277 Organizational Communication, or COMM 281 Communication, language, and Gender

Assignments

Written work for this class should be written in business/professional format referencing any sources used **OR** in an academic style with proper citations and using APA 6th edition guidelines. Be sure to double check the required style for each assignment. For APA style examples and help, see www.apastyle.org or other online/offline sources.

Individual Assignments (35%)

Assignments include, but are not limited to: Assumptions in Research Blog Posts/Discussion, Popular Press Article Memo/Presentation/Discussion, Article Section Review (IC), Mintel Trend Presentation, Article Critique, and Content Analysis Article Review.

Class Participation and Other Exercises (10%)

An overall grade for class participation will be given and will consider how actively involved students are in all class discussions and work. In order to do well students should come to class prepared by reading assigned texts, doing homework, and making their own investigations of topics outside of class. Each class will be worth **1 to 2** participation points: **1 point for attending class on time and staying the duration, 1 point for contributing meaningfully to the discussion and completing all in-class activities or group work.** Participation is always valued and is expected. In-class activities cannot be made up except for instructor approval.

Tests – Individual (15%) Tests cannot be made up except for instructor approval.

Final Project

Survey, Paper, and Presentation (40%)

Working alone or in a pair, you will design a quantitative survey around a communication topic related to a social justice issue, such as #Me too, and compare these concepts across two groups of people, like gender or culture. You will field your survey, analyze the data, and express your findings/analyses in an academic style paper and class presentation.

Procedures – All work is due at the beginning of class on assigned dates. No work will be accepted after the due date. Some items are required, but not graded. *Assignments cannot be accepted by email. Hard copies must be submitted (unless noted).*

Attendance – Regular and on time attendance is essential for the educational process to work. Loyola University Chicago expects all students to attend every scheduled class on time. Exceptions may be made for University sponsored or work related activities, illness, or valid emergency situations. Any unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade.

Meeting Deadlines – Deadlines for all projects are firm. Any work turned in after the deadline will receive a one letter grade reduction for each week it is late, even if by one day.

Spelling and Grammar – Assignments must be typed (unless otherwise directed) and free of spelling/grammar errors. Allow time for proofreading, editing, and revision. As communication students, you have a responsibility to pay attention to spelling/grammar and if your work contains blatant errors, expect a reduced grade.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity – Any use in whole or in part of another person’s work or ideas constitutes plagiarism and will result in an automatic failure in this course. Details of the SOC policy on this issue will be covered in class and students are expected to understand and follow the policy. Students should always ask questions if they are not sure about the policy rather than risking a failing grade. Remember, integrity is one of the most important traits for success. You control your own honor and integrity. The policy: <http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/soc/pdfs/resourceforms/School%20of%20Communication%20Statement%20on%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf>

Special Needs – Please give me written notice in the first week of class about any medical or other conditions that may interfere with your individual performance. Documentation may be required. Information about Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) can be found at <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>.

Wellness Center – Students are urged to contact the Wellness Center for any physical or mental health issues. Visit <http://www.luc.edu/wellness> if you have issues or concerns about you or someone you know.

Performance Evaluation and Grading

In addition to project specifics, evaluation of assignments will use this rubric to ensure clear/consistent grading.

Grade	Description
A range	Excellent analysis that critically examines topic; digs deep beneath the surface. Creative approach to the problem/question being considered. Outstanding content, clarity of writing, and organization of research material. Sophisticated, appropriate use of language. Thorough research and documentation of ideas, arguments, and comments. Free of mistakes: no typos; no misspellings; no punctuation or grammatical glitches; no errors of fact. All the necessary details, documentation, quotes, citations, and specifics are there.
B range	Very good attempt to link analysis to class themes, but more connections could be made. Very good to excellent; above average work and research. Some improvement needed in content, clarity, organization, or documentation. Occasional typos or other glitches say more about the lack of close proofreading than failure to master the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage. More details, quotes, citations, or examples needed. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, source, or date, etc.) show inattention to detail/accuracy although content is above average.
C range	Average analysis that lacks clear connections to class themes. Average, acceptable writing and research that meets basic expectations. Needs much work on content, clarity, organization, and documentation. Although basic facts most likely are there, lacks elaborating and supporting documentation or quotes. Errors indicate need for improvement in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage; material was not proofread carefully. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, wrong source, date, or page number, etc.) show inattention to detail and accuracy.
D range	Weak, unfocused work. Organization is below average, with numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Documentation and details are scanty or superfluous, with errors of fact. Paper may reflect a lack of understanding of the assignment or a lack of research effort.

The grading policy is subject to some change during the semester, but it will be based upon these guidelines:

35% Individual Assignments	100-93% = A	82-80% = B-	69-67% = D+
15% Tests	92-90% = A-	79-77% = C+	66-63% = D
10% Participation, in-class activities, other exercises	89-87% = B+	76-73% = C	62-60% = D-
40% Survey, Paper, and Presentation Project	86-83% = B	72-70% = C-	59% ≥ = F
100%			

COMM 366 Observing and Measuring Communication Behavior – Fall 2018 Tentative Schedule

Wk	Date	Readings/Assignments DUE	Topics/In-Class Activities
1	Aug 28	What is research in communications?	Introduction survey, schedule, expectations, grading; let’s get started! Q&Q <u>Introduce Assignment: Assumptions in Research Blog Posts/Discussion</u>
	Aug 30	<u>Ch 1</u> Getting started: Possibilities and decisions	IC – Ideas and reading communication research, review source hierarchies, academic article

			sections, articles, business writing, memo formats <u>Introduce Assignment: Article Example/Discussion</u>
2	Sept 4	Due: Assumptions in Research Blog Posts <u>Ch 2</u> First decisions: What, why, how?	IC – Discuss blog posts; Ch 2 review, RQ/Hs, concepts/operationalization, Worldviews I and II; <u>Introduce Assignment: Article Critique</u>
	Sept 6	<u>Ch 3</u> Ethics: What are my responsibilities as a researcher?	IC – Ch 3 Ethics activity in pairs; search demo; search and review articles in class
3	Sept 11	<u>Ch 4</u> You could look it up: Reading, recording, and reviewing research <u>Ch 5</u> Measurement: Research using numbers	IC – Libraries search, including Mintel demo; Reliability, validity, IV, DV, levels of measurement; survey data SPSS example <u>Introduce Assignment: Mintel Trend</u>
	Sept 13	<u>Ch 8</u> Sampling: Who, what, and how many? comScore guest speaker?	IC – Sampling
4	Sept 18	Due: Mintel Trend Assignment	
	Sept 20	Mintel Tour Due: Article Critique Assignment	Meet at Mintel , 333 W. Wacker Dr., Ste 1100, 60606
5	Sept 25	Test Ch 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 + lectures/discussions	
	Sept 27	<u>Ch 12</u> Content Analysis: Understanding text and images in numbers Popular Press Article Presentations	IC – Content analysis <u>Introduce Assignment: Content Analysis Article</u>
6	Oct 2	<u>Ch 10</u> Experiments: Researching cause/effect Popular Press Article Presentations	IC – Experiments
	Oct 4	Due: Content Analysis Article Assignment <u>Ch 9</u> Surveys: Putting numbers on opinions Popular Press Article Presentations	IC – Survey research, sampling, questionnaire construction <u>Introduce Assignment: Survey Project</u>
7	Oct 9	Fall Break – No Class	
	Oct 11	Test Ch 9, 10, 12 + lectures/discussions	
8	Oct 16	<u>Ch 14</u> Writing and presenting the research	IC – Work on ideas for survey assignment
	Oct 18	Survey Project	IC – Discuss research project; review final paper outline requirements
9	Oct 23	Due: Survey Topic/Rationale Idea, RQ(s) and Annotated Source List (3 total, 1 academic) comScore guest speaker?	IC – Work on Literature Review
	Oct 25	Work on variables	IC – Work on variables/questionnaire construction
10	Oct 30	Due: Survey Assignment Literature Review/Background, RQ(s), Source List	IC – Work on questionnaire construction
	Nov 1	Due: Draft of Survey Instrument (3 copies) <u>Ch 6</u> Summarizing research results: Data reduction and descriptive statistics	IC – Review drafts, get feedback
11	Nov 6	Due: 2nd Draft of Survey Instrument (3 copies)	IC – Start to finalize questionnaire/coding details; collect data
	Nov 8	Final survey, collect data Due: Code Book, set up SPSS, input data	IC – Collect data Set up SPSS files
12	Nov 13	Finish data collection, input data	Collect data
	Nov 15	Input into SPSS, process data <u>Ch 7</u> Generalizing from research results: Inferential statistics	Work with SPSS, input completed surveys
13	Nov 20	Due: Initial results	Work in class
	Nov 22	Happy Thanksgiving – No Class	
14	Nov 27		Work in class to finish paper
	Nov 29	Due: Methods Section	Work in class to finish paper
15	Dec 4		Work in class to finish paper
	Dec 6		Work in class to finish paper
16	Dec 14	1:00 – 3:00 Due: Survey Paper and Presentation (10-15 min), hand in paper	