

## Marshall University

Course Title/Number	<b>Problems and Methods in Communication Research/CMM 601</b>
Semester/Year	Spring 2016
Days/Time	Tuesdays 4:00 – 6:20 p.m.
Location	Smith Hall 232
Instructor	Dr. Jill C. Underhill
Office	Smith Hall 250
Phone	(304) 696-3013
E-Mail	underhillj@marshall.edu
Office Hours	Tuesdays- 11:00- 12:30; 2:00-4:00; 6:30-8:00 Wednesdays- 9:15-11:15 or 2:30-4:30 (depends on week; schedule with me) Thursdays- 11:00-12:30; 2:00-4:30 & by appointment!  *Please e-mail me in advance for an appointment.
University Policies	By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to <a href="http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs">www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs</a> and clicking on “Marshall University Policies.” Or, you can access the policies directly by going to <a href="http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802">http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802</a>  Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

### Course Description

Communication researchers and practitioners are frequently called upon to create and evaluate knowledge. Therefore, this class focuses on developing critical thinking in regards to the way social scientific investigation can inform communication research and practice. To accomplish this goal, we will first define some of the essential features of communication as a science, review the major contexts within which communication is studied, and discuss methods used to investigate communication within these contexts.

### Course Student Learning Outcomes

	<b>How students will practice each outcome in this course:</b>	<b>How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this course:</b>
Students will find, read, and understand peer-reviewed, primary research studies conducted to answer communication questions.	Chapter readings, class discussion, meeting with instructor	Research Report: -identifying hypotheses -bibliography construction
Students will critically analyze	Chapter readings, class discussion, in-class	Quiz questions

research questions, methods, and findings that you encounter and understand the strengths and weaknesses of different methods of primary data collection used in communication.	exercises.	Exam questions Research Report: -rationale draft -final draft
Students will create strategies for applying research methods and findings to answer questions that arise in communication practice.	Chapter readings, class discussion, in-class exercises, drafting proposal in sections	Quiz questions Exam questions Research Report: -synthesizing primary research
Student will modify core beliefs and ethical principles based on analysis of the perspective and experience of others.	Class Activities; Developing Survey; Class discussion	Reflection Papers; Research Paper
Students will create new, more accurate explanations for social problems on the basis of ongoing, discipline-specific civic involvement.	Analysis for Research Project; Class discussion	Research Paper

### Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials

#### **Required:**

Wrench, J. S., Thomas-Maddox, C., Richmond, V. P., & McCroskey, J. C. (2013). *Quantitative research methods for communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

#### **Optional (Highly Recommended):**

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2008). *The craft of research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### Course Requirements / Due Dates

#### **1. 12 ONLINE “TAKE-HOME” QUIZZES (10 POINTS EACH = 120 POINTS)**

These quizzes will help you understand your own knowledge level in the course, and prepare you for my testing style. The quizzes are 5 questions, 2 points each. Please complete the quizzes individually. Quizzes will be posted on-line and completed on Blackboard. Once you open the quiz, you will have 30 minutes to complete the true/false and multiple-choice questions. You must complete the entire quiz in one session.

#### **2. SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT (TOTAL = 215 POINTS)**

The major course assignment will involve a service learning research project for the College Program for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Specifically, we will investigate perceptions and attitudes public speaking course students have about autism.

Guidelines and rubrics for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard. All assignments should be submitted via the drop box function. Below is a brief description of the major assignments for the course.

**Pre-Reflection (10 points):** After taking the knowledge test and the client visit (1/26), you will author a reflection on your orientation toward these topics.

**Annotated Bibliography (25 points):** Each group will pick a variable/concept cluster to focus on for the project. The group will review 5 articles from peer-reviewed journals that are focused on examining that variable in the context of public understandings of autism. Give priority to articles that use quantitative research methods. To the extent possible, look for articles that use surveys. For each article review (approximately 1 page each), give a complete citation, and describe 1) the research questions or hypotheses, 2) the theoretical perspective (include whether this is explicitly stated or how you figured it out), 3) the data collection methods used, **ESPECIALLY THE INSTRUMENT**, 4) the authors' methodological reflections, and 4) how this article assists in the current project.

**Survey Instrument (25 points):** Your group will create a portion of the survey instrument focused on your variable/concept cluster. Each survey instrument should include protocol for data collection. First, your protocol needs to include guidelines and steps for implementing the survey. Next, you should include all the measures in the correct format.

**Process Reflection (10 points):** You will reflect on our progress in the research project and ways we are enacting the goals of service learning. We can also reflect on our expectations for data collection.

**Report (100 points):** Use the annotated bibliography to write a brief literature review that establishes what is currently known about your topic. You will then present the results of your section of the survey in an executive summary. All the steps of this process will be explained in class and through assignment guidelines.

**Presentation of Report (30 points):** Your group will give a 10-minute presentation of your research report during the last session of class. Guidelines for the presentation will be posted on Blackboard.

**Summative Reflection (15 points):** After completing the requirements for this course, you will author a reflection on your experience with service learning and quantitative research. Through guided prompts you will reflect upon the how the experiences within the class influenced your understanding of qualitative research and community engagement.

### **3. TWO EXAMS (MIDTERM & CUMULATIVE FINAL; MIDTERM = 100 POINTS; FINAL= 100 POINTS)**

You will take 2 exams. Each exam is worth 100 points. The midterm exam will consist of a 50-point multiple-choice exam and 50 points answering the two method comp questions (you will consider this your dress rehearsal). The final exam is 100 multiple-choice questions. Both exams will be completed online.

## Grading Scale

A = 100-90%	535 – 482 POINTS
B = 89-80%	481 – 428 POINTS
C = 79-70%	427 – 375 POINTS

## Class Policies

**CONTACTING INSTRUCTOR:** If we cannot chat face-to-face, I prefer e-mail to telephone calls. E-mail should be used to set up appointments and ask short questions. I will generally respond to your inquiry in one business day. If I do not respond within 24 hours, please re-send your e-mail.

**DUE DATES:** Assignments are due by 11:59 pm of the due date via the dropbox function on Blackboard. Please do not submit any hard copies of assignments unless explicitly asked by the instructor.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Assignments not received by the due date will be subject to a reduced grading scale. For every day that the assignment is late without the instructor's approval, the assignment grade will drop 20%. The assignment will not be accepted later than 5 days after it is due.

**GRADE INQUIRES:** All grades will be recorded on Blackboard and can be viewed by the students throughout the semester. All questions about graded assignments, quizzes, or exams must be brought to the instructor within two weeks of the day the grade is posted. We will schedule an appointment to discuss the grade outside of class time.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** Copying another's work without proper citation of the source constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. A student that is found plagiarizing another's work will automatically receive an "F" in the course and may be subject to further university discipline. **Cheating will also not be tolerated.** According to university policy, cheating is defined as the use of any unauthorized materials during an academic exercise to include notes, study aids etc. Cheating also includes the viewing of another person's work or securing any part of an assignment or examination in advance of distribution by the instructor. Cheating will not be tolerated in this class and will result in an automatic "F" for the class and the possible recommendation of suspension or expulsion from the university.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Regular attendance is expected for this course. You are allowed to miss one class period; thereafter, any absences that are not university-excused will result in -20 point from your total points for the class. You are strongly encouraged to complete your readings and think about them before attending class. Please read ahead of time and take notes. Think of interesting examples to share. Think of important questions to ask. Come to class prepared.

## Course Schedule

SESSION	TOPIC FOR THE WEEK	READINGS FROM TEXT	WHAT IS DUE?
January 12	WAYS OF KNOWING SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND THEORY	<b>CHAPTER 1</b> <b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
January 19	HYPOTHESES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND VARIABLES	<b>CHAPTER 6</b> <b>CHAPTER 14</b>	QUIZ 1 DUE BY 12:00 P.M. JAN 19
January 26	VISIT FROM CPSASD MEASUREMENT	<b>CHAPTER 8</b>	QUIZ 2 DUE BY 12:00 PM JAN 26 PRE-REFLECTION DUE BY 11:59 JAN 31
February 2	1 HOUR LIBRARY SESSION WORKSHOP		QUIZ 3 DUE BY 12:00 PM FEB 2  ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE BY 11:59 PM FEB 7
February 9	SAMPLING METHODS	<b>CHAPTER 13</b>	QUIZ 4 DUE BY 12:00 PM FEB 9
February 16	VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	<b>CHAPTER 9</b>	QUIZ 5 DUE BY 12:00 PM FEB 16
February 23	SURVEY RESEARCH	<b>CHAPTER 10</b>	QUIZ 6 DUE BY 12:00 PM FEB 23
March 1	EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH	<b>CHAPTER 12</b>	QUIZ 7 DUE BY 12:00 PM MARCH 1  SURVEY INSTRUMENT DUE BY 11:59 PM MARCH 6
March 8	EXAMINATION PERIOD		<b>ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM DUE BY 11:59 PM MARCH 8</b>
March 15	<b>SPRING BREAK!</b>		
March 22	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	<b>CHAPTER 7</b>	QUIZ 8 DUE BY 12:00 PM MARCH 22
March 29	CORRELATION	<b>CHAPTER 18</b>	QUIZ 9 DUE BY 12:00 PM MARCH 29  PROCESS REFLECTION DUE BY 11:59 APRIL 4
April 5	REGRESSION	<b>CHAPTER 19</b>	QUIZ 10 DUE BY 12:00 PM APRIL 5
April 12	t-TESTS	<b>CHAPTER 16</b>	QUIZ 11 DUE BY 12:00 PM APRIL 12
April 19	ANOVA	<b>CHAPTER 17</b>	QUIZ 12 DUE BY 12:00 PM APRIL 19
April 26	PRESENTATIONS		PRESENTATIONS REPORT DUE 5/2 BY 11:59 p.m.
May 6	EXAMINATION		SUMMATIVE REFLECTION DUE BY 11:59 PM MAY 5  <b>ONLINE FINAL EXAM DUE BY 11:59 PM MAY 6</b>

