

Communication 2800



“Communication Research”

Spring 2018

Monday & Wednesday @ 16:00—17:15

Padre Rubio Hall, Aula N°10

Instructor: Brian M. Goss, Ph.D.

E-mail: brian.goss@slu.edu

San Ignacio Hall, N°313

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 14-15; and

Tuesday and Thursday 17:30-19

Course Credit: 3.0 Hours

Prerequisite: Communication 1000

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to rigorously introduce students to the fundamentals of research as it bears on communication. On one hand, this introduction to the topic implicates being able to read and craft evaluations of other people's research. On the other hand, students will also directly engage with being researchers on smaller-scale, "hands on" projects that implicate pertinent techniques. The course will cover methods that are both qualitative (psychoanalysis, ideological critique, ethnography) and quantitative (experiments, statistics). However, the accent will be more strongly placed on qualitative methods in line with the tendencies of the field at large.

One important assumption that is inscribed within the course is that research is not a removed, "Ivory Tower" activity. As the semester unfolds, we will be alive to the wider implications of research in social/political life and alert to the possibilities for applying a critical investigatory edge to such encounters.

Notice that this course is a required part of the Communication major's core program. If you do not experience abiding interest in the subject matter or a measure of success in mastering the course material, it presents a very clear sign that a change in program is in your best interest.

Method of Evaluation

Semester grades will be calculated out of 1000 possible points as follows:

Three Research Exercises (110 + 140 + 140) = 390 points

Mid-Term Examination = 150 points

Final Examination = 170 points

Twelve Quizzes = 150 points

In-Class Performance (Attendance, Participation) = 140 points

The writing assignments and exam preparation will be explained in detail in subsequent handouts. Attendance will be taken at all class meetings.

Quizzes are weighted heavily to underscore the importance of being prepared for class. All quizzes will be unannounced but are, nonetheless, a "predictable" part of the course since they will be frequently administered. Quizzes will be distributed at the start of class and collected no later than 16:10. If you are late, it will be graded as zero. There is no make-up for a quiz but it will be graded "Excused" in the event of an excusable absence (*i.e.*, documented medical problem or university-sponsored excursion).

Course Objectives

Enhance students' ability to decode original research reports through reading that is at once fair-minded (in "good faith") and critical; enable direct, hands-on experience in creative aspects of planning and executing investigations; practice in the use of theoretical instruments for the purpose of excavating knowledge; advance students' cognizance of research's impact on everyday life and its ethical dimensions.

Miscellaneous Policies

Campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their “@slu.edu” e-mail regularly.

Written work that is submitted late without an acceptable excuse will be penalized, the magnitude of which will be at my discretion. If written work is not submitted within two weeks of the due date, it will be assigned a grade of zero. Aside from excused absences (documented illness, university-sponsored excursion), attendance is mandatory and will be recorded at all class meetings. A student may be granted no more than three excused absences.

The student is obligated to plan doctor’s appointments and personal excursions outside of class time. Early exits from class session always present poor etiquette; do not show up for class unless you plan to stay the whole period.

Students are expected to be prepared, attentive, participatory, and courteous with the people with whom they share the academic milieu.

Laptops are tolerated during lecture/discussion, provided that they are used for class-salient activity. I can, will, and have marked students absent for demonstrable lack of attention and am empowered to investigate what happens in my classroom as needed.

A student should have something to say at all class meetings and make regular, substantial contributions while displaying the sensitivity toward others that one would expect to be apportioned toward one’s self.

Notice that before each class session, I need to prepare audiovisual materials. Please do not approach me with questions until I have the materials ready for the whole class’ benefit and edification.

By virtue of being enrolled in this course, the student *by definition* firmly grasps all policies described in this syllabus.

The appendices to this syllabus detail the grading scale that will be employed for final grades; the university calendar for the semester; accommodation policies; university-wide policies on academic integrity; and assessment procedures.

Materials

Texts to be mastered prior to class meetings will be found in the following channels:

- (1) Leslie Baxter & Earl Babbie, *The Basics of Communication Research* (2004, London: Thomson Wadsworth), available at the university bookstore;
- (2) Scanned readings distributed directly to students via email;
- (3) Internet selections listed below in the “Sequence of Topics” with author(s), article name, and URL.

Notice that, during the semester, additional readings may be added.

Sequence of Topics

SECTION ONE: ORIENTATION

Wednesday 10 January: Introduction to the Course

Monday 15 January: The Stakes in Research

—Internet: Marc Parry, “Nancy MacLean Responds to Her Critics”, at:
www.chronicle.com/article/Nancy-MacLean-Responds-to-Her/240699

—Internet: Decca Aitkenhead, “David Nutt: ‘The Government Cannot Think Logically about Drugs’”, at: www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/dec/06/david-nutt-drugs-alcohol

SECTION TWO: A TOOLBOX FOR STUDYING MASS MEDIA

Wednesday 17 January: Audiences & Messages, Part 1

—Internet: Stuart Hall, “Encoding/Decoding” at:
faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Hall-Encoding-Decoding-CSReader.pdf

Monday 22 January: Audiences & Messages, Part 2

—Scanned Reading: John Fiske, “Redundancy & Entropy”

—Scanned Reading: Bridgid Cherry, “Refusing to Look”

—Scanned Reading: Ruben Andersson, “The Rescue Image”

Wednesday 24 January: Interpretation & Ideology, Part 1

—Scanned Reading: Brian Michael Goss, “Hail to the Subject”

Monday 29 January: Interpretation & Ideology, Part 2

—Scanned Reading: Brian Michael Goss, “Jeffersonian Poetry”

SECTION THREE: CASE STUDIES

Wednesday 31 January: Case Study I: Psychoanalysis

—Scanned Reading: Sigmund Freud, “The Dream Work” & “The Manifest Content of Dreams...”

Monday 5 February: Case Study, II: Gender Analysis

—Internet: Deborah Cameron, “What Language Barrier?”, available at:
www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/oct/01/gender.books

—Scanned Reading: Carol J. Clover, “Her Body, Himself”

First Research Exercise Assigned

Wednesday 7 February: Case Study, III: Reading the News, Part 1
—B&B, pp.240-246

—Internet: Andrew M. Lindner, “Controlling the Media”, at:
contexts.org/articles/spring-2008/controlling-the-media-in-iraq/

—Scanned Reading: John Fiske, “Empirical Methods”

Monday 12 February: Case Study, III: Reading the News, Part 2

—Internet: Jeffrey P. Jones, “*Fox & Friends*: Political Talk”, at:
http://www.academia.edu/27835107/_Fox_and_Friends_Political_Talk._In_How_to_Watch_Television_Media_Criticism_in_Practice_ed._Ethan_Thompson_and_Jason_Mittell_New_York_NYU_Press_2013_186-194

—Internet: Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, “The Spiral of Silence a Theory of Public Opinion”, at:

academic.oup.com/joc/article/24/2/43/4553587 (scroll down to PDF and click)

Wednesday 14 February: Case Study V: Tourism

—Scanned Reading: Judy Giles & Tim Middleton, from *Studying Culture*

First Research Exercise Due

Monday 19 February: Ethics

—B&B, pp.85-93, pp.96-99 & pp.225-227

Wednesday 21 February: MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Monday 26 February: Guest Lecture, Alejandro Barranquero Carretero,
Universidad de Carlos III

Wednesday 28 February: Case Study V: Screen Studies, Part 1

—Scanned Reading: David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, “Style in Citizen Kane”

Monday 5 March: Screen Studies, Part 2

—Scanned Reading: Shohini Chaudhuri, “Beginnings” and “Masculinity in Crisis”,
from *Feminist Film Theorists*

Wednesday 7 March: Screen Studies, Part 3

—Scanned Reading: Rick Altman, “What Is Generally Understood by the Notion of
Film Genre?”, from *Film/Genre*

Second Research Exercise Assigned

Monday 12 March: Screen Studies, Part 4

In-Class Screening TBA

Wednesday 14 March: Screen Studies, Part 4
—Discussion of Screening

SECTION FOUR: INVESTIGATING SOCIAL DOMAINS

Monday 19 March: New Media, Part 1
—Scanned Reading: Noah Arceneux, “CB Radio”

Wednesday 21 March: New Media, Part 2
—Scanned Reading: Delia Dumitrica, “Politics as Customer Service”

Second Research Exercise Due

Monday 26 March & Wednesday 28 March: SEMANA SANTA RECESS

Monday 2 April: Interviews
—B&B, pp.325-332 & pp.336-344
— Scanned Reading: Ingrid Volkmer & Amira Firdaus, “Between Networks and ‘Hierarchies of Credibility’”

Wednesday 4 April: Participant Observation, Part 1
—B&B, Chapter 13
—Internet: Giles Tremlett, “Carlos the Jackal Was My Friend”, available at:
www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/oct/10/carlos-jackal-was-my-friend

Third Research Exercise Assigned

Monday 9 April: Participant Observation, Part 2
—Scanned Reading: Ruben Andersson, “Stranded in Time” & “Appendix”

SECTION FIVE: QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Wednesday 11 April: Surveys and Samples
—B&B, pp.166-176 & 194-200

Monday 16 April: Experiments, Part 1
—B&B, pp.115-119 & pp.120-28

Wednesday 18 April: Experiments, Part 2
—B&B, pp.204-225

Monday 23 April: Statistics, Part 1
—B&B, pp.260-66, 282-287, 290

Wednesday 25 April: Statistic, Part 2
— Scanned Reading: David Deacon, “Why Counting Counts”

Third Research Exercise Due

Monday 30 April: Presentations

Wednesday 2 May: CAMPUS HOLIDAY

TUESDAY 8 MAY @ 15:30 : FINAL EXAMINATION

APPENDICES

FINAL GRADE SCALE: 910 points /1000 or above: “A”; 890-909 points: “A-”; 860 – 889 points: “B+”; 830 – 859 points: “B”; 800-829: “B-”; 770 – 799: “C+”; 730 – 769 points: “C”; 700 – 729: “C-”; 615 – 699 points: “D”; Less than 615: “F”

Calendar

Spring 2018

JANUARY		
Sunday	7	Spring 2018 new student arrival and University Housing move-in date
Monday-Tuesday	8-9	Spring 2018 new student Welcome Sessions
Wednesday	10	Spring 2018 first day of classes
Sunday	21	Last day to drop a class without a grade W and /or add a class Last day to choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) options
Friday	26	Application deadline for spring semester degree candidates No classes
FEBRUARY		
Wednesday	14	Ash Wednesday Registration for Summer 2018 sessions begins
Thursday-Friday	22-23	No classes (Winter Break)
Tuesday	27	Professors' deadline to submit midterm grades
MARCH		
Friday	9	Last day to drop a class and receive a grade of W
Thursday	15	Last day to submit Transfer Application for fall semester
Saturday	24	Pre-Semana Santa University Housing move-out date
Monday-Wednesday	26-28	<i>Semana Santa</i> holiday (University closed)
Thursday	29	<i>Jueves Santo</i> holiday (University closed)
Friday	30	<i>Viernes Santo</i> holiday (University closed)
APRIL		
Sunday	1	Easter Post-Semana Santa University Housing move-in date
Monday	2	Easter Monday - classes resume
Wednesday	4	Registration for Fall 2018 semester begins
MAY		
Tuesday	1	<i>Día del Trabajador</i> holiday (University closed)
Wednesday	2	<i>Día de la Comunidad</i> holiday (University closed)
Thursday	3	Spring 2018 final day of classes
Friday	4	Spring 2018 final exams
Monday-Thursday	7-10	Spring 2018 final exams
Friday	11	University Housing move-out date
Saturday	12	Commencement
Sunday	13	Professors' deadline to submit spring 2018 final grades

University Statement on Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals. The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

University Title IX Statement: Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus. If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLU-Madrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLU-Madrid's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

Students with Special Needs: In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservices-madrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.