



## Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

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**Semester:** Spring

**Year:** 2025

**Course Prefix:** COMM

**Course and Section #:** 3020-002

**Course Title:** Communication Research Methods

**Credits:** 3

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### ***Course Description***

Covers basic communication research methods in both quantitative and qualitative research. Focuses on the research process and discusses the methodological tools for understanding and conducting basic communication research. Includes examples based on research and promotes awareness of the importance of quantitative and qualitative research perspectives as well as of data collection and analytical procedures.

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### ***Course Attributes***

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

**Other:** *Click here to enter text.*

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### ***Instructor Information***

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Maria Blevins

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### ***Student Learning Outcomes***

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the importance of theory and the research issue in determining choice of quantitative versus qualitative research methodology;
2. Demonstrate competence in quantitative research methodology including measurement, sampling, designing research, hypotheses testing, and interpreting quantitative data;
3. Demonstrate competence in qualitative research methodology including designing qualitative research, applying appropriate methods of data collection, and analyzing, interpreting, and reporting qualitative data;
4. Use acquired research skills to propose a study, collect data, analyze data, and report research finding

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## ***Course Materials and Texts***

Merrigan, G., Huston, C. L., & Johnston, R. (2019). *Communication research methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN-10: 0190652748

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## ***Course Requirements***

### **Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy**

Application Assignments: Students will complete weekly application assignments. In these assignments, students will apply the concepts and theories they learned that week in class. To complete these assignments, students will need to be familiar with the weekly reading. On average, application assignments can be completed in 1-3 hours. In these assignments students will be evaluated on their familiarity of course concepts, idea development, and writing conventions.

Discussions: Students will participate in weekly discussions. Discussions will ask students to reflect on and practice material from that week's reading and lecture. In discussions, students will be evaluated on their idea development and writing conventions.

Quizzes: Students will complete weekly quizzes that cover material from the required reading.

Research Assignments: Throughout the semester students will complete 5 core research assignments. These assignments are the building blocks to the final proposal in the course due at the end of the semester. All research assignments must be completed to pass this class. If one of the following research assignments is not completed, regardless of the total grade in the class, the student will not earn a passing grade.

5 COM Research Statements

2 Research Questions

Final Research Question

Annotated Bibliography

Introduction Draft

Lit. Review Draft # 1

Intro/Lit. Review Draft # 2

Methods Section Draft # 1

Final Proposal

### Grading Scale:

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

A	94 – 100%	C	73 – 75.99%
A-	90 – 93.99%	C-	70 – 72.99%
B+	86 – 89.99%	D+	66 – 69.99%
B	83 – 85.99%	D	63 – 65.99%
B-	80 – 82.99%	D-	60 – 62.99%
C+	76 – 79.99%	E	59.99% and below

*\*Note: Final grades will not be rounded.*

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### **Required or Recommended Reading Assignments**

Required readings are from the chapters in the course textbook.

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### **General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion**

Week 1: Class introduction.

- Read syllabus and textbook forward

Week 2: Introduction to communication research methods

- Read Ch. 1. Discuss claim, data, warrant approach to research questions.

Week 3: Three paradigms of knowing

- Read Ch. 2. Discuss differences in research paradigms and how to use library resources.

Week 4: Communication research and ethics

- Read Ch. 3. Discuss ethics and the Stanford Prison Experiment.

Week 5: Finding, reading and synthesizing communication research.

- Discuss citing academic resources and creating an annotated bibliography.

Week 6: Making arguments for association and causality

- Read Ch. 4. Introduction to quantitative research methods.

Week 7: Measuring and designing quantitative social science research.

- Read Ch. 5. Overview of sampling, types of data.

Week 8: Survey research: explaining and predicting attitudes and behaviors.

- Read Ch. 7. Learn how to explain and predict attitudes and behaviors, as well as how to critique survey research.

Week 9: Professional writing

- Discuss components of literature reviews.

Week 10: Making arguments for multiple plausible realities.

- Read Ch. 11. Introduction to qualitative research methods.

Week 11: Interviews and focus groups.

- Read Ch. 12. Learn how to interpret guided responses.

Week 12: Ethnography.

- Read Ch. 13. Learn how to interpret and evaluate cultural communication.

Week 13: Discourse analysis.

- Read Ch. 14. Discuss writing methods sections.

Week 14: Rhetorical studies.

- Read Ch. 15. Learn rhetorical methods. Revise papers.

Week 15: Critical studies.

- Read Ch. 16. Learn how to evaluate reforming ideologies.

Week 16: Final proposals due.

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## ***Required Course Syllabus Statements***

### **Generative AI**

*Use of AI, including ChatGPT, is a tool available to students, however, to adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty. Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.*

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### **Using Remote Testing Software**

This course does not use remote testing software.

□ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

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## ***Required University Syllabus Statements***

### **Accommodations/Students with Disabilities**

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu) or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at [DHHservices@uvu.edu](mailto:DHHservices@uvu.edu)

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

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### **Academic Integrity**

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

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### **Equity and Title IX**

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment,

admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – [TitleIX@uvu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@uvu.edu) – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

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### **Religious Accommodation**

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu). If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.