

Communication 650:
Investigating Communication through Interactive Technologies
Spring 2009 Syllabus

Instructor:	Dr. Chad Mahood	Lecture Time:	T / TH 11:30am – 1:18pm
Office:	3045E Derby Hall	Lecture Location:	JR 342
Office Hours:	T / TH 2 – 3pm		
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Course Objectives

In this class students will design a quantitative research study on a communication topic of their choosing, use interactive communication technologies to study that topic, collect data to test their ideas, and compile a research report on their findings. Over the course of the quarter this class will (1) familiarize students with the basic methodologies used in quantitative communication research, (2) examine several published research articles on specific new communication technologies (the exact articles will be partially determined by the interests of the students), and (3) devote significant class time to group research projects conducted by the students.

Required Readings

All reading for this class will be made available electronically through the CARMEN system (<http://carmen.osu.edu>).

Grading

Your grade for this course will be based on 3 exams, 2 papers, several short homework assignments, a group presentation, peer evaluations of group participation, completion of the CITI Course on The Protection of Human Research Subjects, and participation in communication research studies announced by the instructor.

The weighting of each component is as follows:

Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	10%
Exam #3	10%
Paper #1	15%
Paper #2	15%
Class Assignments	10%
Group Presentation	5%
Peer Evaluations	5%
CITI Course	5%
<u>Research Participation</u>	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%

Course Details

Exams:

All exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. No early or late exams are allowed except in the case of an extreme emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is your responsibility to do the following. First, you must inform the instructor of the emergency BEFORE the scheduled exam time. Second, you must provide the instructor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., a medical note from a certified physician).

Research Project Papers and Presentation:

The most important and significant part of this class is to test an original research idea conceived independently by your research group (with a little help from the class instructor). Although students are encouraged to do as much independent thinking as possible to come up with this original research idea, there are a few restrictions. First, the research project must involve the use of communication technology in some way. Second, a quantitative content analysis, survey, or experimental methodology must be used.

Students will work on this project all quarter long and will be graded on it in three ways. First, each group member will write a 4 – 5 page paper outlining the literature review and hypotheses / research questions relevant to the group project. Second, at the end of the quarter each group member will write another 4 – 5 page paper outlining their findings. Third, each research group will give a group presentation on their findings to the class.

Papers are graded individually but every group member will get the same presentation grade. Note: failure of any group member to either show up or take part in the presentation will result in a zero for that group member alone. More details on the papers and the presentation will be provided later in the quarter.

Class Assignments:

Prior to each class where a published research article has been assigned as a class reading you will be required complete a homework assignment on that article and bring it to class (refer to the Tentative Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus). The purpose of these homework assignments is to foster in-class discussion. Therefore, you will ONLY receive credit for each assignment if you attend class that day AND show your work to the instructor. With the exception of an emergency, credit for homework assignments will NOT be given without attendance. Each of the 5 assignments is worth 1 point. The remaining 5 points will be given upon completion of 5 group assignments.

Peer Evaluations

It is essential that each group member help out with the group project, group assignments, and the presentation. Of course, sometimes not every member puts in equal effort and the instructor is not always aware which group members aren't doing his or her fair share. Therefore, peer evaluations will be used to motivate every member to put in an effort. Each group member will rank the effort that each of the other group members put into the project on a scale of 1 to 5. The average of these scores will count for 5% of your overall grade.

CITI Course:

The Ohio State University requires that all research on human participants, such as asking them to complete a survey or be in an experiment, be conducted by individuals that have an extensive understanding of the rights of human participants. As such, anyone conducting a study on human participants must first complete the CITI Course on The Protection of Human Research Subjects. This course can be found at: <http://www.citiprogram.org/>. According to The Ohio State University rules, you must receive an 80% or above on this course. In order to receive credit for completing the CITI course you must print out a "Certificate of Completion" (it must show a "Basic Course Passed" date and a reference number) and turn it in to the class instructor.

Research Participation:

A few times throughout the quarter you will be given the opportunity to participate in a research study. These studies are conducted by both faculty and graduate students in the School of Communication and will allow you to experience communication research first-hand. It is not yet known how many hours of research you will be asked to participate in but this number will NOT exceed 2.5 hours. More information on the research participation requirement will be given later in the quarter.

Students with Disabilities:

If you are a student with a disability and would like to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact the instructor as early as possible during the quarter. Also, please contact the office for disability services at 292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty on any course assignment will result minimally in receiving zero points on that assignment and may also lead to further disciplinary action. Students should also familiarize themselves with the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp). Instances of misconduct will be prosecuted through the appropriate university channels.

Tentative Course Schedule

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Solo Work Due:</u>	<u>Group Work Due:</u>
T 3-31	Introduction		
TH 4-2	Basic Methodology Read: S&S Intro	CITI Course	
T 4-7	Content Analyses Read: FB&K 236 – 243; SL&T (2003)	SW #1	
TH 4-9	Surveys Read: FB&K 198 – 213; A&D (2000) Study 1	SW #2	GW#1: Variable List
T 4-14	Experiments Read: FB&K 169 – 182; A&D (2000) Study 2	SW #3	GW#2: Research Articles
TH 4-16	Exam #1		
T 4-21	Hypothesis Construction 2 Readings: To be determined	SW #4	GW#3: Final Article List
TH 4-23	Procedure Construction 2 Readings: To be determined	SW #5	GW#4: Hyps / RQs
T 4-28	Questionnaire Construction	Paper #1	
TH 4-30	Questionnaire Construction		GW#5: Questionnaire
T 5-5	Exam #2		
TH 5-7	Set-up Experiment / Post Surveys		
T 5-12	Data Entry Basics		
TH 5-14	Basic Statistics and SPSS		
T 5-19	Basic Statistics and SPSS		
TH 5-21	Data Analysis		
T 5-26	Data Analysis		
TH 5-28	Design Group Presentations	Paper #2	
T 6-2	Give Group Presentations		Group Presentation
TH 6-4	Exam #3		