This is a graduate-level course required for the Master’s degree in Strategic Communication program.

**Course description**

This course will introduce you to methods and techniques used by media and communication industries to understand the public’s preferences and tastes on the one hand, and analyze media messages on the other. Reliable, valid, and responsibly gathered information derived from these methods typically drives dynamic communication campaigns, greater accuracy in targeting audiences for news and information, and contributes to eliciting desired attitude, opinion, and behavior change responses among the public. These methods are important for both information-based communication (such as news) and persuasive communication (such as public relations, media relations, social media communication for organizations, etc.), regardless of where they are housed – whether in media and communication industries, or communication units within other organizations, both non-profit and for-profit.

The objectives of this course are:

1. To think critically about what we routinely read, hear, and see in the media such as poll data, survey reports, business reporting, or consumer preferences;
2. To accurately identify, explain, and evaluate the stated problems, key findings, and suggested solutions (if provided) in published research (in popular media and industry or trade publications; in journals)
3. To select appropriate methods for finding answers to specific questions by learning the approach, features, purposes, advantages, and limitations of various research methods most commonly used in media industries;
4. To apply appropriate research concepts to tackle questions related to media audiences and content;
5. To learn practical aspects of research, like developing a basic understanding of typical numerical information used in media research, constructing research instruments, summarizing and writing a cogent review of previously published research on a selected problem or question; and developing a coherent research design.

**Required Textbook:**
The textbook is available for purchase in the Iowa Hawk Shop (UI Bookstore) located in the Iowa Memorial Union. It is also available online. New, used, and e-book copies are available. The Hawk Shop website also suggests alternate sources for purchasing or renting the book. (319-335-3179; M-F 8:00 am – 5:00 pm).

**Other materials:**
In addition to the textbook a variety of readings is prescribed for the course. They are specified in the course calendar further down in the syllabus, and posted on ICON either in the form of chapters and articles, or links through which the readings can be accessed online.

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**Media/System Requirements**
Technical requirements for completing University of Iowa Distance and Online Education classes include:

- Student-provided personal computer.
- Computer with reliable Internet access. A wired Ethernet connection to the internet is very strongly suggested. Wireless and cellphone data connections may experience connection problems. Android and iOS operating systems are not fully supported at this time. See specific requirements on the Distance and Online Education Technical Requirements/Download page.
- While tablets, smartphones and other mobile devices may allow for some completion of coursework, they are not guaranteed to work in all areas. Please ensure you have a Windows or Mac based computer available to complete coursework in the event your selected mobile device does not meet the needs of the course.

Students who need assistive technologies will have different computer and technology requirements. Please check with your Student Disability Services to determine the requirements for the specific technologies needed to support your online classes.
For questions, with virtual classrooms (i.e. Zoom) or UICapture (Panopto), please contact Distance and Online Education Technical Support (319 335-3925).

Need help with ICON or your Hawkid? Please contact the ITS Helpdesk (319 384-HELP).

**Course Work**

This course consists of the following activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the course and modules objectives. The detailed course calendar provided in this syllabus groups readings by modules, but provides assignment and quiz reminders by date.

**Discussion posts – refer discussion post guidelines, or calendar in brief, or course calendar in syllabus for the deadlines and due dates**

- For this assignment, you will post responses for topics, all based on course materials (readings, reports, video clips, etc.).
- You will write a 100-word post in the discussion area on ICON. Treat each post as a mini paper in response to the prompt. The writing in this first post should be formal, as you would write a paper for submission.
- Once you have posted your paragraph, you will be able to see others’ posts. Post one response to any of your classmates’ first post. This response to your classmate’s post can be informal in tone.
• Details and due dates are available in the guidelines that will be posted for this assignment on ICON.

Assignments – refer to ICON for assignment details, deadlines, and due dates
• Details and due date are available in the guidelines that will be posted for this assignment on ICON.

Quizzes
• Quiz format – the expected format will be a combination of multiple choice and other items like true/false or match items.
• Quiz dates -- refer calendar in brief or course calendar in syllabus for the deadlines and due dates.

Research design assignment
Develop a research proposal paper. Inspiration for this research proposal can come from your own experiences or from a provided list of sample communication samples (Final paper - 100 pts), (Rough draft – 50 pts), and (Outline – 25 pts). In stages – various due dates. Final assignment due during finals week. Details and guidelines will be made available on ICON. (Refer to list in ICON for ideas on topics)

Grading Criteria
Discussion posts: 4 @ 25 = 100 points
Quizzes: 3; @ 25 points each, 1; @ 30 points. Total= 105
Assignments: 5 @ 25 points; 1 @ 50 points; 1 @ 100 points. Total = 275
Course total = 480

Grading Scale
The percentages represent a percentage of the course total. For example, 300 points, or 100%, would be an A+

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
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<td>A</td>
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Course Policies
Communication Policy
• The primary tool that you will use to communicate is e-mail.
• Send your questions on the subject matter of the course and/or the assignments, or any personal concerns related to the course to me at charles-hoffman-zinnel@uiowa.edu
• You can reasonably expect a response within 24 hours of sending your query, except during weekends when it may take up to 48 hours.
• Check the ICON news area in the course homepage frequently for various announcements.
• I will provide feedback on assignment submissions only as needed, and I will do this as well as grade on average within about a week of the submission.

Due Dates & Missed Deadlines
This is a graduate-level course. It is my expectation that all homework is competed by due date each week. Please email me if you are having issues meeting this requirement.

Late Submissions Policy
No late assignments will be accepted

Quizzes
Quizzes will have to be taken in the time window that I will specify for each quiz. The quiz will be open for certain dates. Once you begin taking the quiz, the time window will begin. You can take the quiz at any time during that day but once you begin taking the quiz you will have 30 minutes to complete it after which the quiz will close. It cannot be reopened.

Extra Credit
This is a graduate-level course. There are no extra-credit assignments.

Electronic Communication
As per university policy, you are responsible for all official correspondence sent to your University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

Netiquette
Students need to communicate with each other and their instructors appropriately when working online. Although it may not be intended, tone in communication is often read differently than when it is presented in the form of speech. For tips on "Netiquette" technique, go to: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/

A note on Academic Misconduct (http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code)

Academic Misconduct
The assignments for this course will require you to read carefully and convey in your own words your understanding of the material. Appropriate citing and quoting practices should be followed. Plagiarism, even if inadvertent, will not be tolerated. Per college policy, we are required to report academic misconduct the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

According to the University of Iowa Academic Policies, academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:
• Using direct quotations without quotation marks and/or without crediting the source
Paraphrasing information and ideas from sources without crediting the source
Failing to provide adequate citations for material obtained through electronic research
Downloading and submitting work from electronic databases without citation
Submitting material created/written by someone else as one’s own, including purchased papers, artistic works, photography, and electronic media.
Submitting material in part or whole from one’s own previous work or work in other classes

In short, plagiarism occurs whenever someone else’s work or idea is presented as your own, or when your own work in other classes in the past or present is presented as work done for this course in this term. Students are responsible for understanding this policy. For full information see http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code

Resources for Students
Students may find the University of Iowa’s Writing Center to be useful for this course as well as OWL; the Tutor Iowa site is also very valuable for students seeking extra help. In addition, the campus library is very accommodating to distance students.

- U of I Writing Center: http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/
- The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): https://owl.english.purdue.edu/
- Tutor Iowa: http://tutor.uiowa.edu/
- Distance Education Library Services: http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/distance
- APA reference formatting style: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Course Calendar

Note: This is a working calendar. Deviations may be necessary at times. It is the student’s responsibility to keep informed of the calendar at all times. Changes to the calendar, if any, will be announced on the ICON opening page. Changes may involve change of dates and deadlines, additions and deletions of readings, etc.

(All assigned content; such as assignments, discussion questions, and quizzes are due at the end of each week (Sundays), by 11:59 Central Standard Time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One – Getting Started: Possibilities and Decisions (1/15/19 – 1/20)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read text, Chapter 1, Getting Started</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review Pew Research Center website: <a href="http://www.pewinternet.org">www.pewinternet.org</a> (create a free account, if you haven’t already - bookmark/review this page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watch videos:</td>
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<td>o Qualitative vs. Qualitative</td>
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<td>o Ad Council’s anti-texting PSA (Review all six PSAs before/while you read Chapter 1 – be thinking about questions you would ask a a communication researcher about what you’d be interested in knowing more about in regards to these PSAs)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Supplemental reading**
- Poindexter & McCombs chapter – pdf on ICON
- Saldaña, chapter 1 -- pdf on ICON

**Due in ICON by 1/20/19 @ 11:59pm (CST) – submit assignments to appropriate link:**

**Bio sheet – brief biography about yourself. (No more than 1-2 pages)**

**Assignment:** Complete Exercise 3: Researching Internet Communication. Refer to ICON module for more information about assignment requirements and supplemental material. (25pts)

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- Read text, Chapter 2, First Decisions
- Read: “Learning the difference between three types of reasoning”
- Watch videos:
  - Deductive, inductive, and abductive reasoning.
  - What is a research question?
  - Hypotheses vs. research question

**Supplemental reading**

**Due in ICON:**

**Complete Exercise 2: Finding Your Worldview and post your results to the discussion post. Do you agree with the results of this exercise? Why/why not? Was there anything that you found interesting about the results? (25pts)**

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**Week 3 – What are my responsibilities as a researcher? (1/28 - 2/3)**

- Read text, Chapter 3, What are my responsibilities as a researcher?
- Watch video: The Belmont Report (Basics of Ethical Research)
- Review website: U.S. Center for Disease Control – The Tuskegee Timeline
- Watch videos:
  - The Deadly Deception: Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment
  - What is an IRB?
  - What is peer-review?

**Due in ICON:**

**Quiz – refer to ICON for instructions** (25pts)
**Week 4 – Reading, Recording, and Reviewing Research (2/4 - 2/10)**

- Read text, Chapter 4, Reading, Recording, and Reviewing Research
- APA style – Purdue OWL guide
- Watch videos:
  - APA formatting (Purdue OWL)
  - Understanding databases
  - Primary vs. secondary sources
- Review website: (Purdue OWL) Primary vs. secondary research

**Supplemental reading**

- Benefits of annotated bibliographies (not required, but may help in the research process)

- Locke et al, Reading Research chapter – pdf on ICON

**Due in ICON:**
Review instructions in ICON for research proposal outline (25pts). Sample research proposal outline and paper templates available in ICON.

**Week 5 – Research Using Measurements (2/11 – 2/17)**

- Read text, Chapter 5, Research Using Numbers
- Watch video: Nominal, ordinal, interval, and ration (NOIR):
- Review website: Likert vs Semantic Differential Questions in Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Watch video: Reliability vs. validity
- Read: Reliability vs. validity

**Due in ICON:**
Assignment – Exercise 1: Basic Statistics (review ICON for instructions regarding this assignment)

**Week 6 – Summarizing Search Results (2/18 – 2/24)**

- Read text, chapter 6, Summarizing Search Results
- Watch videos:
  - Descriptive statistics and mean, median, and mode:
  - Minimum, maximum, range, variance, and standard deviation:
**Due in ICON:**
*Exercise 1: Basic Statistics - instructions in ICON (25pts)*

### Week 7 – Inferential Statistics (2/25 – 3/3)

- Read text, Chapter 7, Inferential Statistics
- Watch videos:
  - “The Normal Distribution: A Crash Course”
  - “What is a hypothesis”
  - Type 1 and Type II errors
  - Understanding t-Test

**Due in ICON:**
*Quiz – refer to ICON for instructions (30pts)*

### Week 8 – Sampling (3/4 – 3/10)

- Read text, Chapter 8, Sampling
- Watch videos:
  - “Nonprobability sampling”
  - “Simple Random Sampling”
  - “Stratified Random Sampling”
  - “Cluster sampling”
  - “Systematic sampling”

**Due in ICON:**
*Rough draft of research proposal (50 pts) – this is a working draft of your research proposal. Refer to “Sample Research Proposal template” for direction on how to write your research proposal. Utilize your outline from week four to help create this rough draft. The rough draft should follow APA guidelines for formatting.*

### Week 9 – Surveys (3/11 – 3/17)

- Read text, Chapter 9, Surveys
- Read “How to” infographics (5)
- Website: “What is a Likert Scale” (SurveyMonkey.com, 2018).
- Watch videos:
  - “Better user research through surveys”
  - “Semantic differential scale”
  - “What is a Likert scale?”
  - “Creating a Likert scale in Word”

**Due in ICON**
*Quiz – refer to ICON for instructions (25pts)*
Week 10 – Experiments (Cause and Effect) (3/25 – 3/31)

- Read text, Chapter 10, Researching Cause and Effect
- Review website, Center for Innovation and Research in Teaching”
- Watch videos:
  - “Introduction to experimental design”
  - “Types of experimental design”
  - “Between and within subject design”

**Due in ICON**

DP1 and response to fellow classmates. Ethics Panel: Two Famous and Controversial Experiments – read case study and answer two questions in your discussion post. (Discuss your results in an initial post and respond to others in class) (25pts)

Week 11 – Qualitative Research (4/1 – 4/7)

- Read text, Chapter 11, Watching and Listening
- Supplemental reading:
  - Lenhart et al, Social media and romantic relationships (Pew study) (website)
- Watch videos:
  - “Overview of Qualitative Research”
  - “Themes don’t just emerge – Coding Qualitative Data”
  - “How to know you are coding correctly”

**Due in ICON**

Complete Exercise 3: Understanding Social Media Stress (25pts – refer to ICON for directions)

Week 12 – Content Analysis (4/8 – 4/14)

- Read text, Chapter 12, Understanding Communication Content in Numbers
- Website: Content Analysis (Pew Research Center, 2018)
- Watch video: “Content Analysis Overview”

**Due in ICON**

DP1 and response to fellow classmates. Ethics Panel: Could Analyzing Media Content Results in Harm? – read case study and answer two questions in your discussion post. (Discuss your results in an initial post and respond to others in class) (25pts)


- Read text, Chapter 13, Understanding Communication Content in Words
• Watch video: “Semiotics 101”
• Websites:
  o Narrative analysis (RWJF, 2018)
  o Ethos, Pathos, Logos

**Due in ICON**
**Quiz – refer to ICON (25pts)**

### Week 14 – Writing and Presenting Research (4/22 – 4/28)

- Read text, Chapter 14
- Read, Angela Thody's Writing and Presenting Research
- No assignments due this week. Start/continue your research proposal.

### Week 15 – (4/29 – 5/10)

Use this time to complete your final draft of your research proposal.

**Final design project due: Friday, May 10th by 11:59pm**

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### Teaching Policies & Resources — Syllabus Insert

#### Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

#### Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](https://operationsmanuals.library.uiowa.edu/)).

#### Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then contact the course instructor to make specific arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See [https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu](https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/) for information.

#### Nondiscrimination
The University of Iowa is committed to making class discussions inclusive and respectful of all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates in the bio sheets provided for the class and during introductions on the discussion space in ICON. It is important to be sensitive to online communication in this class because it is asynchronous, dependent to a large extent on written communication, and therefore we are unable to see each other and gauge non-verbal communication cues as well. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and
harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

**Academic Honesty**

All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s [Code of Academic Honesty](https://clastuiowa.edu/academic-honesty): "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the [IOWA Challenge](https://clastuiowa.edu/). I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled ([CLAS Academic Policies Handbook](https://clastuiowa.edu/student-life/)).

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident ([CLAS Academic Policies Handbook](https://clastuiowa.edu/student-life/)).

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI [Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator](https://clastuiowa.edu/student-life/) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.