

SPCM 2310.001 Investigating Communication
9:30 – 10:50 a.m.
Fall 2019

Professor: Joe Provencher
Office: CAS 232
Office Hours: Wed 11:30-3:30 and by appointment
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I. Course Description:

- A. A review of research in the speech communication discipline. Broad application of both quantitative and qualitative investigative methods. Students learn to read and review work within the discipline.

II. Learning Objectives:

- A. Understand communication from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives.
- B. Identify key epistemological approaches underlying communication theories and appropriately associate different theories and methodologies for any given epistemological approach.
- C. Execute thoughtful and appropriate criticism of communication theories, questions, and problems via deductive, inductive, and intuitive modes of reasoning.
- D. Identify, access, and comprehend appropriate scholarly sources necessary to answer communication-based research questions and problems.

III. Course Text:

- A. Required (and by required, I mean you must possess your own copy!):
 - 1. Baxter, L.A. and Babbie, E. (2004). The basics of communication research. Thomson Wadsworth: Belmont, CA.
- B. Recommended:
 - 1. MLA Styleguide

IV. Course Policies:

- A. No cell phones. All cell phones should be either turned off or put into a silent mode. Vibration mode does not count as off or silent. You do not need a phone in this class. If something is going on in your life that you must have a phone, I would suggest that you probably should not be in class that day anyways. Violation of this policy will result in your dismissal from that class period.
- B. Attendance is mandatory. Since this is a twice a week class every meeting is critical to your learning. I know that we all get sick, have emergencies, etc. so in order to account for that, you may miss three (3) classes without penalty. After that, your total grade in the course will decrease by one letter grade per absence. After six (6) total absences, a passing grade is not possible.
- C. Tardiness: Being late to class is unacceptable in any situation. I know life happens, but you need to make every effort to be here on time. Each class is significant event,

so missing part of it hampers your ability to learn and entering class late distracts others from learning. Please plan ahead for parking or other issues.

- D. Academic Honesty: Any form of plagiarism, whether intentional or not, will be punished according to the University's guidelines. Included in this category are efforts to cheat, thwart, or otherwise undermine assignments in the class with unethical behavior including, but not limited to, buying papers online or from other students, using someone else's work as your own, the use of electronic devices to store test information or to look up answers to questions, other modes of data storage for the purpose of assistance on exams or quizzes. **(See University Policies Section VIII – D for more details.)**
- E. Respect one another. This is not a competition, nor is it a zero-sum game. We are all human and deserve to be treated as such.

V. Course Expectations/Suggestions:

- A. This course is difficult. It might be the most difficult class you have taken to this point. There are no "easy" ways to take this class. You have to take control of your learning and be an active learner. This means you may have to read and reread a chapter in the book a couple of times before class.
- B. This is not a last-minute class. Assignments in this class are structured so that you come to class prepared to discuss the topic. It is difficult for me, and unfair to others, to only move at the speed of the student who chooses not to prepare for class.
- C. This course is the fundamentals of our discipline. That means that understanding the concepts in this course are critical to your viability as a graduate and ultimately a job prospect.
- D. It is ok to not know everything. I do not expect mastery of everything, but a familiarity with concepts in this course.
- E. Make a friend.
- F. The library is a great place. We have amazing resources and librarians at your disposal, use them.
- G. Read don't scan. The book has the beginning of all of the answers.

VI. Course Assignments:

- A. Research Prospectus: At the end of the semester you will turn in a comprehensive research prospectus proposing a study of a communication event. This prospectus will detail the relevant scholarly articles about the communication event, discuss an appropriate method of discovery, and proposed route of study.
- B. Exams: There will be three exams throughout the semester. The exams will be short answer/essay. A review sheet will be distributed.
- C. Annotated Bibliography: In order to prepare for the prospectus you will turn in an annotated bibliography of no less than ten (10) scholarly (first order) articles following MLA format.
- D. In-Class: Various assignments through Blackboard to help you progress through the prospectus and research process.

- E. Participation: A grade which depends on your ability and willingness to answer questions in class and engage in discussion.

VII. Course Grading:

A. Prospectus:	20%
B. Exam One:	15%
C. Exam Two:	15%
D. Exam Three	15%
E. Bibliography:	10%
F. In-Class Assignments:	20%
G. Participation:	5%

Grading Criteria:

A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 0-59%

VIII. University Policies

A. UT Tyler Honor Code:

1. Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do. Students Rights and Responsibilities To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:
<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

B. Campus Carry:

1. We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

C. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:

1. All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

D. Student Standards of Academic Conduct

1. Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are

attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

a) "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) copying from another student's test paper;
- (2) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- (3) failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- (4) possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- (5) using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- (6) collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- (7) discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- (8) divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- (9) substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- (10) paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- (11) falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- (12) taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- (13) misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or

financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

- b) "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.
- c) "Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
- d) All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

E. **The U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: CAS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

F. **Disability/Accessibility Services:**

- 1. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application.
- 2. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

G. **Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:**

- 1. Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (STE 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Spring, the **Census Date is September 9, 2019.**) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

2. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.
3. The **Census Date (September 9, 2019)** is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:
 - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
 - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
 - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
 - d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
 - e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

H. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

I. Social Security and FERPA Statement:

1. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

J. Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

1. Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

K. UT Tyler Resources for Students:

1. UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
2. UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
3. The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
4. UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

Course Policies:

Elasticity Clause: I reserve the right to modify the existing course calendar and assignments. If changes must be made, I and/or my teaching assistants will notify students as soon as possible.

Classroom Civility: People and ideas must be treated with respect. Please avoid disruptive behavior that makes it difficult to accomplish our mutual objectives.

Changes to the schedule: Changes may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. I will do my best to notify you via email, in class, and with a hard copy of the changes. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced. Readings must be completed for the day they are assigned on the course schedule. Lectures are intended to complement the readings.

E-mail: E-mail is my preferred form of contact (note the address above). I cannot guarantee a response to e-mails sent to other addresses, including blackboard. You should expect email communication to take 1-2 business days. This is especially true if I am traveling with the debate team (usually long weekend trips, meaning I will not be accessible many weeks from end of business Thursday, to start of business Monday). You should treat our online correspondence with the same respect as any business or legal communication. Emails that do not conform to these standards will not be answered. Be sure to include your course number and first and last name in either the body text or subject of your email (Messages sent through Canvas will already have this information).

Attendance: Much of the learning will take place inside the class and labs through discussions, presentations, and interactions. Attendance and participation are counted toward your final grade in class. **All assignments must be turned in on time.** If you know you will be missing class due to religious observance, athletics, or competitions, you must inform me no later than the second week of classes. If you are going to miss class or be late, especially on an assignment day, you must let me know via email BEFORE the class begins to be considered for an assignment extension (which is an *extremely rare* occurrence).

If you are absent from class, it is *your* responsibility to determine what was missed and to hand in any work or to do any readings that were announced during your absence. If you need assistance because of university-related absences (e.g., debate, sports, etc.), contact me before the missed class. This goes for any personal related absences as well. It is always better to communicate with me when there is a problem than not.

Arriving late to class twice will count as one unexcused absence. Leaving the class early is not permitted without prior permission and will count as an unexcused absence. If you need to leave the class for an emergency, please do so with minimal distraction to others—this needs to be a rare and extraordinary occurrence. Permission will not be given to leave early or arrive late on a regular basis (e.g. because of work, classes, etc.)

Assignments: All papers must be typed using Times New Roman in 12-point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins (with no extra spaces between paragraphs), and proper APA style. You must cite ALL bibliographic sources used in your papers (using APA) within text and in a references page. For help with APA style and writing, please do not hesitate to visit the Undergraduate Writing Center on campus or online.

Late Assignments & Make-up Work: There is no such thing as late work, nor is there make-up work for unexcused, missed or failed assignments. I do not give make up exams or quizzes.

General Classroom Infractions

- Cell phones, ear buds, headphones and other electronic devices are not welcome in the classroom.
 - *It doesn't matter why you have a phone out. Without prior permission to have it out, you will be told to leave.*
- Working on unrelated material, copying, or writing on someone else's notes during class is prohibited.
 - *If you need a pen, paper, etc., then raise your hand and wait for the professor to acknowledge you.*
 - *A lack of preparedness on your part does not give you the right to interrupt a lecture.*
- Private comments, jokes, nudges, pokes, texts, or written notes between students are a major disruption.
 - *If your attention is not exclusively on the board, your notes, or me, then you will be told to leave.*
 - *Laptops and tablets are not allowed in the classroom (see laptop policy). Also keep tablets, phones, and smartwatches put away!*
- Inattention, sleeping, or the appearance of sleeping (as decided solely by the professor) is prohibited.
- Disruptions such as closing books, zipping bags, or packing up before being dismissed are not welcome

Consequences: Attendance/Participation grade dropped. Further infractions will result in your permanent dismissal from class. Also, I reserve the right to permanently assign seats to counter disruptive behavior.

Major Course Infractions

- Arguing during class time with your instructor, especially when you've been accused of an infraction.
 - *We can discuss your behavior later in my office, but arguing with me during class only worsens your offense.*
 - *If you ever find yourself being sent out of class, gather your things and quietly leave. Be aware that, from the moment the infraction started, everything you are saying and doing will be written in a report to the Dean.*
- Disrespectful or uncivil conduct of any form, either online or in the classroom.

- *While you have the right to your own opinion, inflammatory language, including discriminatory language based on race, appearance, class, ethnicity, gender, dis/ability, sexual orientation, or national origin, is unacceptable.*
- Religious diversity must be represented in a respectful manner.
 - *Be aware that at no time will I allow you to proselytize your own religious view or bash another's religious view.*
- Academic dishonesty is prohibited in any form.

Consequences: You will be dismissed from class and sent to the Dean for disciplinary action. The Dean may determine that a note be permanently placed on your transcript, barring you from any future college plans.

The “Common Knowledge” Clause: Material does not have to be cited if it is common knowledge—that is, knowledge that most American high school graduates already know. (E.g. Humans once painted in caves. Berlin is the capital of Germany. Etc.)

The “Textbook” Clause : Material does not have to be cited if both of these points are true:

1. If the information contained in a student’s work is found in a course textbook or other assigned reading
2. And if that information is presented in such a way that the work is not copying or nearly copying the reading material word-for-word.

For example, if a student's textbook lists the Stone Age as beginning in 3,000 BCE, then a student can simply include this date. But, if a student copied full sentences from the textbook, then that would be plagiarism.

The “10% Rule”: As a general rule, a college assignment is considered an original work only if the vast majority of text is original. Generally, no more than 10% of a work can be someone else’s words, regardless of proper quotes or citation.

Intent: When reviewing a possible case of plagiarism, the student’s intent will not be taken into consideration. In other words, an act of plagiarism is plagiarism whether or not the student claims to have intended plagiarism.

Mistakes & Accidents: The possibility that the student mistakenly or accidentally committed plagiarism will not be taken into consideration. I strongly suggest that you discuss your sources with the Writing Center before turning in work.

Appeal to Ignorance: A student’s claim to ignorance with concern to policy will never be treated as a valid justification of plagiarism.

Collaboration: Students are not permitted to collaborate on an essay, discussion post, quiz, test, or any written assignment. Having someone proofread your work is ok, but that can only entail matters of style, grammar, and spelling.

Disciplinary Action for Plagiarism: Per departmental policy, the first offense of plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment. Any additional acts of plagiarism will result in an F for the course and possible disciplinary action by the Dean (e.g. expulsion).

Tentative Calendar

8/27 Introduction

8/29 Chapter 1

9/3 Chapter 2

9/5 Chapter 3

9/10 Chapter 3

9/12 Chapter 4

9/17 Chapter 5

9/19 Exam Preparation

9/24 **Exam #1**

9/26 Chapter 6

10/1 Chapter 7

10/3 Chapter 7

10/8 Chapter 8

10/10 Chapter 8

10/15 Chapter 9

10/17 Chapter 9

10/22 Chapter 10

10/24 Chapter 10

10/29 Chapter 11

10/31 Chapter 12

11/5 Exam Preparation

11/7 **Exam #2**

11/12 Chapter 13

11/14 Chapter 13

11/19 Chapter 14

11/21 Chapter 15

11/26 No Class- Thanksgiving

11/28 No Class- Thanksgiving

12/3 Chapter 16

12/5 Chapter 16

Exam #3 Due (Final Exam Date)

SPCM 2310
Research Prospectus

Research Prospectus Guide

A research prospectus is only a proposal for research, not the research itself. For all practical purposes it is the foundational work of any research. The main goal of a research prospectus is to argue that a particular study would be a beneficial course of research. In application, the prospectus is what a researcher writes in order to ask for funding, release time, a graduate assistant, etc. There are a few critical parts to every prospectus.

1. **The Research Problem:** What are you researching? Following the guidelines for writing a good problem statement, you are attempting to communicate a narrow, yet important, course of study.
2. **The Literature Review:** What previous work covers your area of research? Have there been similar studies performed in the past? What are the strengths and shortcomings of those studies? The key to this section is to make sure to cover the critical (foundational) studies in a area of research while also covering the most recent work.
3. **Research Questions:** What research question(s) do you propose?
4. **Study Design:** If you performed study how would you go about doing it? Does it require a lab setting? Fieldwork? Statistics? Rhetorical criticism?
5. **Anticipated Benefits:** What is the benefit of performing your study? What will it tell us about communication?
6. **Length:** As with any good work, it should be as long as it needs to be. You need to become comfortable with your own sense of completion.