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**I. PREREQUISITES**

None.

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION & STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

SPCM 2310 will provide you with a basic mastery of communication research methods along with an understanding of the assumptions and questions behind those methods. This course encourages an enthusiasm for research that will continue on into advanced research. You should gain an appreciation of the relevance of communication research to communication practice and develop a sense of why we find human communication so fascinating as a research field. The UT at Tyler 2017-2018 Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog describes this course as follows:

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

By the end of this course, each of you should be able to:

1. define basic research concepts such as hypotheses, research questions, variables, operationalization, sampling, statistics, measurement, reliability, validity, unobtrusive measures, observational measures, rhetorical analyses and criticism.
2. describe and evaluate such approaches as empiricism, and critical and interpretive research.
3. explain, describe, and compare specific research methods such as experiments, surveys, interviewing, focus groups, observation, content analysis and critical and rhetorical analyses.
4. design and conduct a research study addressing a specific research question in your area of interest.
5. critically evaluate the research of others.
6. assess the advantages and disadvantages of different research approaches and methods.
7. compute basic descriptive and inferential statistics.
8. explain the ethical responsibilities of scholarly researchers.
9. write professionally formatted and cited research papers.

### III. REQUIRED AND/OR RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

You must have access to this course on Canvas. One textbook is required:

- *Treadwell, Donald. (2017). Introducing communication research: Paths of inquiry.* 3rd edition. Sage Publications. ISBN-13: 9781483379418

The book can be purchased directly from the UT Tyler bookstore, Sage publishers, or from various online sites, including Amazon.

Additional readings and other materials, if required, will be posted on Canvas.

### IV. LATE WORK

This is a face-to-face course, not an online or independent study course. It is important, therefore, that you familiarize yourself with the course schedule and be prepared each week before class. It is also important that you monitor both your patriots email account and the Canvas site for course updates.

As a general rule, I do not accept late work. I often make exceptions, however. If I do elect to accept late work, I will almost always impose a grade penalty. This penalty will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the degree of lateness and on the specific circumstances involved. If you need to turn in late work, please contact me to discuss your specific situation.

For additional information, see the UT at Tyler Handbook of Operating Procedures, Section 5.10.2.D.2 (<http://www.uttyler.edu/ohr/hop/>), and/or a list of student rights and responsibilities on the Student Services website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/>.

### V. COURSEWORK AND GRADING

#### A. Summary of Grading Categories

Grades are assigned to the following categories with weighted averages:

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| <b>Module Reports</b>                   | <b>10%</b>        |
| <b>Chapter Quizzes</b>                  | <b>15%</b>        |
| <b>Exams (three short-answer essay)</b> | <b>30%</b>        |
| <b>Application Exercises</b>            | <b>20%</b>        |
| <b>Group Research Project</b>           | <b><u>25%</u></b> |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>100%</b>       |

#### Tentative Grade Ranges:

90%+ = A  
80%+ = B  
70%+ = C  
60%+ = D  
<60% = F

*[Note: I reserve the right to lower grade cutoffs points, but I will not raise them. For example, I may decide at the end of the course that 89%+ is sufficient for an "A" or that 78% is sufficient for a "B," but I will not raise the cutoff for an "A" above 90% or the cutoff for a "B" above 80%, etc.]*

**B. Module Reports (10%)**

This course is divided into twelve (12) modules (see the course Canvas site). Each module includes a module report, which is an opportunity for you to indicate that you have completed the tasks outlined in the “Do and/or Deliver” section of each module. Links to these reports are included in each module folder on Canvas.

**C. Chapter Quizzes (15%)**

There is an online quiz for each assigned chapter in the Treadwell textbook. These quizzes are randomly generated from a pool of test questions. There is a 20-minute time limit, and each quiz may be taken a maximum of three times; the highest score counts. Other assignments that don't fall into one of the other grading categories (e.g. peer review assignments) are also included in this category.

**D. Three Exams (10% each)**

Three written exams will be included in our course. The first two are scheduled during the semester and the third is the final exam (non-comprehensive). Each exam will consist of short-answer essay questions covering all the textbook chapters and articles discussed in class. Writing the exam should take approximately 1 to 1½ hours.

**E. Application Exercises (20%)**

At the end of each chapter, you will find several *Application Exercises*, which the textbook author has provided to apply the content in the chapter. You will be required to complete two or three assignments per module. Each Application Exercise is listed in the course schedule and its due date is at the beginning of class. There are about 25 total assignments over the course of the semester. I will drop five of the lowest grades and calculate the average grade of the remaining assignments. For this reason, there will be no make-ups or late assignments.

**F. Group Research Project (25%)**

This class research project consists of the following six steps. A separate document in Canvas explains each of these steps:

- (1) choosing a communication topic to research,
- (2) writing an introduction and literature review of the concept,
- (3) stating research question(s) on which data can be gathered,
- (4) presenting clear, step-by-step written procedures and a methodology section,
- (5) reporting results of your research descriptively, and
- (6) concluding with analysis and substantive depth about the results and how to interpret them.

**G. Grading Feedback and Notification**

In almost all cases, I will grade submitted work within 3 business days. Grades will be posted to Canvas.

## VI. STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

### A. UT Tyler Honor Code

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.

### B. Students Rights and Responsibilities

To familiarize yourself with 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>.

### C. Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 years old 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>.

### D. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University

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 <http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free/>.

**E. Grade Replacement/Forgiveness** Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. 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.

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.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions for which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid.

#### **F. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

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 12th day of class (See Schedule of Classes for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

#### **G. Student Accessibility and Resources**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator.

If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

#### **H. Student Absence due to Religious Observance**

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

## **I. Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

## **J. Social Security and FERPA Statement**

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.

## **K. Emergency Exits and Evacuation**

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.

An electronic version of these statements and policies can be found here:  
<http://www.uttyler.edu/academicaffairs/syllabuspolicies.pdf>.

## **L. Student Standards of Academic Conduct**

Student Standards of Academic Conduct 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.

- i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:
  - copying from another student's test paper;
  - using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
  - failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
  - 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;
  - using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
  - collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
  - discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
  - 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;

- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
  - 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;
  - falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
  - 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 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.
- ii. "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.
- iii. "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.
- iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by Turnitin™ available on Canvas. This software is similar to SafeAssign on Blackboard.

**M. UT Tyler Resources for Students**

- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)
- 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 UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254) Note: An electronic version of these statements and policies can be found here:  
<http://www.uttyler.edu/academicaffairs/files/syllabuspolicy.pdf>