



蘇州大學
Soochow University

COM 392 Research Methods in Communication

Studies

Summer 2024

Course Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 56 hours

Instructor: TBA

Email: TBA

COURSE OBJECTIVES

COM 392 introduces students to the fundamental concepts, principles, and techniques of conducting research in the field of communication studies. Emphasizing a postmodern perspective, the course explores both qualitative and quantitative research methods adjusted to contemporary cultural contexts. Students will learn how to design and execute research studies, analyze data, and communicate their findings effectively. Topics include focus group research, survey research, historical research, text analysis, feminist methodology, internet, and social media research.

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

1. Understand the foundations of communication research within postmodern culture.
2. Develop skills in designing and conducting research studies.
3. Learn various research methodologies and their applications in communication studies.
4. Gain proficiency in analyzing and interpreting data.
5. Enhance written and oral communication skills through research report writing and presentations.

PREREQUISITES

N/A

GRADING



Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
Class Participation	15 Points
Assignments	30 Points
Midterm Exam	20 Points
Final Project	35 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$.

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Texts:

Larry Z. Leslie, *Communication Research Methods in Postmodern Culture*, 2nd Edition, Routledge, 2018.

Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:

Supplementary readings will be provided throughout the course to supplement understanding and align with specific topics covered.

COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	Topics: Topic 1: Understanding Culture and Research Topic 2: Overview of Research in Communication Studies Topic 3: Understanding the Research Process Topic 4: Ethical Considerations in Communication Research Assessments: Assignment#1



Module 2	Topics: Topic 5: Designing a Research Study Topic 6: Methodologies: Focus Group Research Topic 7: Survey Research Topic 8: Historical Research Assessments: Assignment#2
Module 3	Topics: Topic 9: Text Analysis Topic 10: Survey Research Topic 11: Feminist Methodology Topic 12: Internet and Social Media Research Assessments: Midterm Exam
Module 4	Topics: Topic 13: Quantitative Research Methods Topic 14: Sampling Techniques Topic 15: Data Collection Methods Topic 16: Data Analysis Techniques Assessments: Assignment#3
Module 5	Topics: Topic 17: Writing a Research Report Topic 18: An Individual Research Proposal Topic 19: A Group Research Project Topic 20: Presenting Research Findings Assessments: Final Project

ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately



prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (e.g., note taking, reading course documents).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that



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students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.