

City University of Hong Kong

Information on a Course
offered by Department of Media and Communication
with effect from Semester A in 2013/ 2014

Part I

Course Title: Communication Research Seminar

Course Code: COM5112

Course Duration: 1 semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Prerequisites: None

Precursors: None

Equivalent Courses: None

Exclusive Courses: None

Part II

Course Aims

The course will provide advanced knowledge and skills on conducting communication research, including discussions on various issues in communication research, and offering students practical guide on completing research projects. The course is appropriate for students who want to learn more about communication research, and use applied knowledge and skills to complete a research project. The course will especially suite the needs of those students who has a research related career goal and those who may use knowledge and skills of communication research in their future career. The course will also provide foundation for those who plan to continue with Ph.D. study. A primary outcome of the course will be a completed research paper acceptable for presentation at a conference or publication.

The course will work on the following aspects:

1. To provide additional depth on research methods following the basic research methods course.
2. To provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills in a research project.
3. To combine knowledge of research methods and communications theory into a research project that explores an important issue(s) in media and communication.
4. To guide students in their data analysis for a research project.
5. To re-emphasize the research foundation developed in the basis research methods course as a systematic means of conducting media and communication research.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Demonstrate knowledge and skills of conducting research using appropriate research methods	
2.	Demonstrate knowledge and skills of managing a research project	
3.	Critically analyze the literature and scholarly works in the field of media and communication	
4.	Apply knowledge and skills of statistical analysis to process data and solve problems of a research project	
5	Apply knowledge and skills of communication research to produce papers of scholarly standard	
6	Apply creative perspectives to produce papers of high quality for conference presentation and for publication in academic journals	

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No.	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Class discussions on knowledge and skills of conducting research using appropriate research methods	Throughout the class
2	Class discussions on knowledge and skills of managing a research project	Throughout the class
3	Critiques on literature and scholarly works on various topics using different research methods	Throughout the class
4	Exercises on data analysis using different statistical tools	Throughout the class
3, 4, 5	Research paper assignment on topics important to the field of media and communication	Throughout the class
1, 2, 6	Class discussions and presentations of research ideas and completed research projects	Throughout the class

Assessment Tasks/Activities

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No.	Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
1-3	Class participation, critiques and leading the class discussions on issues regarding research	10%	

1-2, 4	Class assignment on statistical analysis of data	10%	
1-3, 5	Research proposal in accordance with established deadlines & content quality and proposal presentation	20%	
1-6	Complete research paper and class presentation	60%	

Grading of Student Achievement: Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-....F). Grading is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities.

Courses are graded according to the following schedule:

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definitions	
A+ A A-	4.3 4.0 3.7	Excellent:	Superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge and skills of the subject; Strong evidence of good writing, visual information processing, organization, and capacity to apply knowledge and skills in television news reporting and production (with a total score of 90-100 weighted points).
B+ B B-	3.3 3.0 2.7	Good:	Evidence of grasp of subject, evidence of knowledge and skills of the subject; evidence of good writing, visual information processing, organization, and capacity to apply knowledge and skills in television news reporting and production (with a total score of 80-89 weighted points).
C+ C C-	2.3 2.0 1.7	Adequate:	Some grasp of subject, evidence of knowledge of the subject and the basic skills; some evidence of capacity to apply knowledge and skills in television news reporting and production (with a total score of 70-79 weighted points).
D	1.0	Marginal:	Familiar with the subject matter; some knowledge and skills of television news reporting and production to enable the student to progress without repeating the course (with a total score of 60-69 weighted points).
F	0.0	Failure:	Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter, and little evidence of knowledge and skills of television news reporting and production; unable to apply knowledge and skills to produce minimally acceptable television news programs (with a total score below 60 weighted points).

The overall grade is based on student's overall performance in all assessment tasks/activities considered together. The meanings of the overall letter grades will be in line with those listed in the Academic Regulations.

Research Project and Presentation:

- Students will work individually or in pairs on a research project on an approved research topic using an appropriate methods(s).

- Each student (group) is expected to present a research proposal and findings to the class.
- Each student (group) is expected to write a data-based research paper, following the appropriate academic style and requirements. Attention will be paid to the quality of writing, including the spelling, syntax, and grammatical structure of the paper.

Specific grading criteria for selected assessment tasks/activities are as follows:

Research proposal

Adequate review of literature

Critical analysis of the literature and strong argument presentation for the study

Meaningful and innovative hypotheses and research questions

Proper selection and justification of research method

Adequate description of research method and procedures of project completion

Research paper and presentation:

Quality of the ideas – originality, significance, etc.

Appropriateness, logical coherence and clarity of the arguments and hypotheses

Appropriateness of research method and clear description

Appropriateness of the analysis and the presentations of the results

Thought-provoking discussions of the research findings and the significance of the study

Format, style, writing and length of paper

Presentational skills

Weighting of the different criteria and other details will be given to the students during class.

Part III

Keyword Syllabus

Communication research, applied research, media research, research methods, quantitative research methods, survey, content analysis, experimental study, empirical research, statistical analysis

Recommended Reading

Text(s)

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Babbie, Earl (2007). *The Practice of Social Research, 11th Edition*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Wimmer, Roger D., and Joseph R. Dominick (2006). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.
- Daniel Riffe et al (2005). *Analyzing Media Messages, Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*, Lawrence Erlbaum..
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Quantitative Data Analysis with SPSS Release 14, 15 & 16 for Windows: A Guide for Social Scientists*, New York: Routledge.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Barrie Gunter (2000). *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact*. London; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Berger, A. A. (2011). *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Brennen, B. (2012). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Earl Babbie (1990). *Survey Research Method*, second edition, Wadsworth
- Fred Pycszak (2002) *Evaluating Research In Academic Journals*. Los Angeles, CA: Pycszak Publishing
- Guido H. Stempel, David. H. Weaver, & Cleveland G. Wilhoit (2003). *Mass Communication Research and Theory*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Jensen, K. B. (2012). *The handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.
- Mildred L. Patten (2002). *Proposing Empirical Research: A Guide To The Fundamentals*. Los Angeles, CA: Pycszak Publishing
- Wodak, R., & Krzyzanowski, M. (2008). *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences*. Basingstoke [England] ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.