

COM4602: TOPICAL STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Topical Studies in Communication

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

4602

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

EN3564 Topical Studies in Communication

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course is designed to be an undergraduate seminar for high-performing students who may discover the joy of research by actually doing it. At the end of the semester, each student is expected to demonstrate the ability to conceptualize a research problem, to apply appropriate methods for data collection, and to write up the report in an effective way. The course would have a ceiling of 15 students.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 Systematically review the literature that informs research projects.	25	x	x	x
2 Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize a research topic.	25	x	x	x
3 Apply appropriate research methods for data collection.	25	x	x	x
4 Develop the skills to write a research-based report	25	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Take steps to conceptualize a research problem	1, 2	1
2	Review and synthesize a body of literature that informs the research problem	1, 2	Throughout the semester
3	Take steps to learn appropriate research methods	3	1
4	Develop the ability to collect evidence and assess its quality	3	0.5
5	Write a substantial research paper	3, 4	Throughout the semester
6	Present the ongoing research paper in a professional manner	3, 4	0.5

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Writing short essays to conceptualize the research topic with the support of the literature (10 pages)	1, 2	25	-	No
2	Developing a substantive research paper with appropriate research methods and sufficient evidence (20 pages)	3, 4	50	-	No
3	Presenting the research paper in a professional manner	3, 4	25	-	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

60

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Quality of presentation and discussion

Criterion

Clear and comprehensive understanding of the reading; full engagement in the discussion

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Superior ability to relate different ideas and integrate them into a whole

Good (B+, B, B-)

Considerable comprehension of the readings and active participation in discussion

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Acceptable level of presentation and involvement

Marginal (D)

Fair amount of work

Failure (F)

Severe lack of preparation and involvement

Assessment Task

Research proposal

Criterion

Development of clear and good claims, with strong logic to tie the claims to evidence

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Innovative and significant paper, with strong potential to be developed into a major project

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of systematic effort and good of the topic

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Good work that meets the requirements for thematic development and literature review

Marginal (D)

Fair level of development in the claims and logical reasoning

Failure (F)

Severe lack of theoretical and methodological development

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Media studies; Mass communication; research methods; research project

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	As an advanced level undergraduate class, the course will not use fixed texts/readings. Rather, the list of topics/theories to be covered and the readings to be assigned will be determined by the instructor each year according to recent developments in the field.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil