**TAMUCC Department of Communication and Media Mission Statement**

“Our mission is to develop students who are effective and ethical communicators with the creative, critical, and collaborative skills necessary to succeed in a diverse global environment.”

**Course Title and Description**
Research Methods is a three-credit course facilitated to increase students’ knowledge of the research process used in the Communication Studies discipline. Specifically, the course will allow students the opportunity to learn the goals of communication research and scrutinize various techniques for creating academic research and assessing academic knowledge.

**Course Objectives**
The course is designed to expose students to the art and science of persuasion through enriching discussions and reading of classic and contemporary texts. This course is in partial fulfillment of the following Communication and Media Department outcomes. Specifically, students should be able to perform the following by the conclusion of the Spring 2018 semester:

- Identify the goal(s) of communication research.
- Identify the rudimentary procedures involved in formulating the purpose, determining the variables, and designing the procedures of any research project.
- Develop a set of criteria for evaluating the value of the research, the methods used in the research, and the general findings advanced by the research.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with both quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Develop and execute a communication research study.

**Required Texts**

Washington: APA.

Reading material for selected topics from other sources will be distributed in class and/or Blackboard.

**Attendance**
Student attendance in class is essential to learning. Assignments are expected to be delivered on the day assigned. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances at the discretion of the instructor. When absences are due to a University activity, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor of these absences at least one (1) week in advance of the occurrence to allow adequate time for rescheduling. Definitions of excused and unexcused absences will reflect university guidelines. **Only formally documented, “university excused” absences will be allowed.**

*More than 1 unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the course*
Grading Procedure
Grades will be based on the following scale:
100-90% - A  89-80% - B  79-70% - C  69-60% - D  Below 60% - E

Grading
Grades are comprised of classroom engagement activities, position papers, an individual research project, and a course project. There will be no opportunity to makeup in-class activities. Assignments submitted late will receive a 10-percent deduction for every day it is late.

Classroom Engagement Activities
During various class periods, students will complete classroom engagement activities that will be used for direct application and discussion of course topics, lecture material, and reading content. There will be ten classroom engagement activities in this course, each worth 5 points, for a total of 50 points.

Position Papers
There will be three position papers in this course, each worth 25 points, for a total of 75 points. The purpose of Position Papers is to encourage reflection, critical thinking, and argumentative skills. Position papers allow students to learn about an issue in the instructional communication discipline, take a stand on the issue, and then effectively argue their viewpoint with relevant supporting evidence. Grading will be based upon the quality of information presented to defend one’s viewpoint. Further directions and rubric for the Position Papers will be distributed and discussed in class at the appropriate time.

Individual Miniature Project
Working with Dr. Sollitto, students will create and execute a miniature research study involving approximately 50 research participants about a communication topic that is of most interest to them. This project will include an introduction and purpose section, literature review, a method section, results section, and discussion. The individual project will be worth 75 points. It will be the students’ choice if they want to continue the project and submit it for conference and publication at some point after the conclusion of the semester.

Course Project
As a class, Dr. Sollitto and the students will be conducting an empirical research study, which will involve designing/refining the study, writing sections of the literature review, method, and discussion sections; and collecting and analyzing data. The plan is for this project to be submitted for presentation at the 2019 National Communication Association convention. After that, it will be submitted for publication to a journal commensurate with the quality of project. The order of authorship will be determined largely by the quality of contributions to the project. It is no guarantee that everyone in the class will be included as an author.
**Academic Advising**

Students pursuing the Master of Arts in Communication will be paired with a graduate faculty member advisor in their first semester. Students should contact their advisors within the first two weeks of a semester to arrange a meeting during which degree plans, tracks, and opportunities for professional development should be discussed. If there is any question regarding whom a student’s academic advisor is, the student should contact Dr. Stephanie Rodriguez, Graduate Coordinator, for assistance (stephanie.rodriguez@tamucc.edu; 361-825-5753). To finalize your degree plan and register for graduation, you must also meet with the Graduate Student Academic Advisor in the Academic Advising Center for the College of Liberal Arts. This office is located in Driftwood 203E and can be reached at (361) 825-3466.

**Disability Services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Expectations of Graduate Students**

1. Ability to contribute engaging and thoughtful discussion points during class.
2. Demonstrated completion of all assigned reading material prior to class.
3. Proficiency in academic writing and use of APA Style.
4. Focus on learning instead of focus on grades.

**Student Conduct**

1. **Know the syllabus**: Be informed on what is to be read, discussed, and submitted for each class meeting.
2. **Respect**: Be courteous of the professor and fellow students and refrain from talking amongst yourselves during lecture and discussion. This also means that proper professional communication is also required.
3. **Preparation**: Attend class ready to contribute and interact with material presented in class.
4. **Punctuality**: Please make best effort to arrive to the classroom before class begins.
5. **Electronic Devices**: All devices that distract from the learning process are prohibited.
6. **Listening/Feedback**: Devote attention during class sessions and heed advice and constructive instruction on assignments provided throughout the semester.
7. **Effort**: This class will be fun and enlightening, yet challenging. Please put forth your best effort each day in the course.
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<td>Welcome; Introduction to Research Methods</td>
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<td>Thu Feb 01</td>
<td>Creating a Foundation: Philosophy and Theory</td>
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<td>Thu Feb 08</td>
<td>Creating a Foundation: The Literature Review</td>
<td>Position Paper 2: Philosophy of Research</td>
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<td>Discovering Quantitative Research: Validity and Reliability</td>
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<td>Discovering Quantitative Research: Correlations and Regressions</td>
<td>Miniature Study Literature Review</td>
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<td>Thu Mar 01</td>
<td>Discovering Quantitative Research: ANOVA &amp; MANOVA</td>
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<td>Discovering Quantitative Research: Factor Analysis</td>
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<td>Discovering Qualitative Research: Designing Qualitative Research</td>
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