

JOUR 460 – Research Methods
Syllabus – Spring 2020

Mugur V. Geana, MD, Ph.D.
2001 Dole Center
geanam@ku.edu

Office hours; Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 am – 12:00pm and by appointment

Introduction:

This course aims to familiarize you with the basic methods of social sciences and mass media research. The class is a combined lecture-seminar class and will be based on both individual and teamwork assignments. It is expected from you to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and participate in class exercises.

Goals:

Know-How. This course is aimed to introduce you to concepts and methods of strategic communication research, and to enhance your understanding of how research fits within the broader framework of media professions.

Hands-on Experience. This course is aimed to afford you valuable hands-on experience in designing and conducting research, in interpreting research results and in understanding how different research methods can work together to provide a more accurate image of the researched subject.

Professional Career. This course aims to prepare you with refined abilities to present and defend complex research-based strategic communication decisions in a clear and concise manner and teach you how to develop project-specific research protocols.

Diversity. As you prepare your research instruments and interact with your audience, you will have to be aware, understand and address social, cultural, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic diversity. Your research method will have to reflect these aspects of your target audience and/or your topic.

Textbook: Social Research Methods. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches, by Sigmund Gronmo. ISBN 978-1-5264-4124-9

Recommended readings (in addition to the suggested readings for each class):

1. The Craft of Research (Booth, Colomb and Williams)
2. Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods (Balnaves and Caputi)
3. Media Research Techniques (Berger)

Course Structure:

The course may be different than other courses you have taken in college, as it combines your building of knowledge with directly applying it on a project you will be working on during the semester, as part of a team. Furthermore, there are no mid-term or final exams in the course – your progress will be evaluated through a series of tests during the semester in combination with the grades you'll receive for several deliverables related to your chosen team project.

Lectures:

The class meets twice per week. There is a lot of material to go through, so time in the class will be mostly dedicated to lectures and exercises. Reading the book chapters assigned for the class lecture is MANDATORY, as the instructor may use examples or exercises related to the readings, even if they were not covered in the lecture.

The lectures will be delivered by the instructor, the teaching assistant or invited speakers and will be either in person or video recorded. It is expected for you to take notes, as some of the topics in the lectures are not covered in the textbook.

Written examinations:

There will be at least eight written examination in this class, at specific dates included in the weekly planner. I expect you to continuously learn, improve, and be active participants in class, so these written examinations should not pose a significant challenge.

You will also have to complete several projects and assignments as part of a team, which will count towards your final grade.

In addition to your research projects for class, you are expected to get involved with at least three external research projects during the semester, as this class is part of the school's research pool. Research opportunities will be announced during the semester, and each participation will count either one or two percent towards your final grade (depending on the complexity of your involvement – decided by the researcher). If you choose not to participate in research projects at all you will have to turn in at the end of the semester a 5-page review paper on a specific media research topic (of your choosing) based on your reading and understanding of the literature on that specific topic. Your review paper should be based on no less than ten published papers on the topic (you will submit copies of the papers with your final paper). If you have not participated in enough research studies to account for five percent towards your final grade, you will have then to write a summary of a peer-reviewed research article instead, for each missing point of your research participation quota.

Research participation is MANDATORY and will count 5 percent towards your final grade.

Note: There may not be enough research opportunities for everybody to participate, so the earliest you can complete your external research participation, the better.

Course Requirements:

Attend all class lectures and meetings.

Prepare for class by reading the assigned chapters from the textbook.

Turn in all papers on time.

Use Blackboard and online tools (if required) as directed by your instructor.

All of the above course requirements count for **5 percent** toward your final grade.

Proposed schedule:

Date	Topic	Type	Readings	Deliverables
21-Jan	Introduction	Open discussion		
23-Jan	Research and social sciences	Lecture	Ch 1	
28-Jan	Questions in social sciences	Lecture	Ch 21 & 22	
30-Jan	Q&A and Test 1			
4-Feb	Research Ethics and IRB	Lecture	Ch 3	
6-Feb	Methods and Methodologies	Lecture	Ch 2	HSR training certificate
11-Feb	Q& A and Test 2			
13-Feb	Research topics and questions	Lecture	Ch 4 & 5	
18-Feb	Choosing the research design	Lecture	Ch 6	Research question
20-Feb	Sources of data	Lecture	Ch 7	Proposed research design
25-Feb	Q&A Test 3			
27-Feb	Concepts, Constructs and Variables	Lecture		
3-Mar	Sampling	Lecture	Ch 8	
5-Mar	Q&A and Test 4			Operationalization paper
10-Mar	Spring Break			
12-Mar	Spring Break			
17-Mar	Ethnography and Participant Observation	Lecture	Ch 9	
19-Mar	Interviews and Focus Groups	Lecture	Ch10	Participant Observation report Interviews and Focus Groups Report
24-Mar	Q&A and Test 5			
26-Mar	Content Analysis	Lecture	Ch 11 & 14	
31-Mar	Questionnaires and Surveys	Lecture	Ch 13	Content analysis report
2-Apr	Data Quality, Reliability and Validity	Lecture	Ch 15	Qualtrics survey draft Qualtrics survey final
7-Apr	Q & A and Test 6			
9-Apr	Analysis of Qualitative Data	Lecture	Ch 16	
14-Apr	Q&A and Test 7			
16-Apr	Analysis of Quantitative Data 1	Lecture	Ch 17	
21-Apr	Analysis of Quantitative Data 2	Lecture	Ch 18	
23-Apr	Statistical Generalization	Lecture	Ch 19	Data analysis report
28-Apr	Mixed Methods and Combining Data	Lecture	Ch 20	
30-Apr	Q&A and Test 8			
5-May	Relations, networks and structures	Lecture	Ch 23	
7-May	Big Data and Computational Social Sciences	Lecture	Ch 24	Individual Reflection Paper

Test scores will account for 50% of your final grade

Grades on deliverables will account for 40% of your final grade

Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct:

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.

Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not limited to, extensive use of materials from another author without citation or attribution; extensive use of verbatim materials from another author without citation or attribution; extensive use of materials from past assignments; and extensive use of assignments from other courses. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult the course instructor.

For exams, academic dishonesty and misconduct includes conferring with classmates during an exam in any way; copying or reading another's test; and using notes and other materials without permission of the instructor.

Academic dishonesty and misconduct also includes forgery; obstruction or disruption of teaching; physical abuse or safety threats; theft; property damage; disruptive, lewd or obscene conduct; abuse of computer time and university facilities; repeated failure to attend class when attendance is required; and repeated failure to participate or respond in class when participation is required.

The academic community regards academic dishonesty and misconduct as extremely serious. Violations of any of the principles outlined above may lead to consequences ranging from failing the course to probation to expulsion.

Academic and Professional Ethics:

The School of Journalism is committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics and expects its students to adhere to those standards.

Students are expected to observe strict honesty in academic programs and as representatives of school-related media. Students enrolled in media-related courses are expected to avoid any potential conflict of interest and should consult with faculty editors if there are questions about what might constitute a violation.

Violations of any of the principles outlined above may lead to consequences ranging from failing the course to probation to expulsion.

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification -- Adopted May 7, 2004:

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor(s) of this course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

Plagiarism

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance:

"No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

"Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

"The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting."

"The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.

"Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid."

Inclement Weather and Special Needs:

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW). The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620 (v/tty), coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.

Revised 8/3/06

Copying or Recording:

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

Religious Holidays:

Students are excused for religious holidays. Please let your instructor know in advance if you have a conflict.

Policy on conceal and carry:

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with state and federal laws and KU weapons policy.**

Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Lab classes

This course takes place in spaces that will require students to leave belongings such as backpacks and purses away and unattended for the duration of class time. Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

Individuals who violate the KU weapons policy may be asked to leave campus with the weapon and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate university code of conduct.

Tests and Quizzes

Instructors are allowed by Kansas Board of Regents policy, to require backpacks, purses and other bags be placed out of reach of students during exams and quizzes, and as such those items will not be under the constant control of the individual. Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

Individuals who violate the KU weapons policy may be asked to leave campus with the weapon and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate university code of conduct.

Ambler Rec Center (and other studio or workshop lockers)

The recreation center lockers are not approved secured storage for handguns. Individuals who choose to carry a concealed handgun must plan their day accordingly and transfer their handgun to an approved secure storage device in their vehicle or their residence before arriving for recreational activities.

Miscellaneous:

This information is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor and/or the University.

Grading Policy:

Class attendance and overall class participation: 5%

Research participation: 5%

Individual and team projects and assignments: 40%

Test: 50%

Note: Each test or deliverable is graded on a 1 to 100 points scale, and its weight towards the final grade will be determined by the instructor and will be announced at the day of the test.

Grades:

Grades will be awarded based on the following percentage:

A (94-100)

A- (93-90)

B+ (87-89)

B (84-86)

B- (80-83)

C+ (77-79)

C (74-76)

C- (70-73)

Note: The present syllabus can be changed at any time at the discretion of the instructor.