COMM 4533 – Communication Research
Summer 2020

Instructor: Dr. Dejun Liu
Section # and CRN: Z01 CRN 32862
Office Location: Hilliard Hall 106
Office Phone: (936) 261-3731
Email Address: deliu@pvamu.edu
Virtual Office Hours: MW 12:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Mode of Instruction: Internet-Asynchronous Instructional Method

Catalog Description: (3-0) Credit 3 semester hours. Universal research process from defining ideas and problems to reporting results. Causal inference and relative strengths of various research designs. Fundamentals and specific applications of most common data-gathering and measurement techniques in communication research; experimental, survey, content analysis, historical and qualitative.

Prerequisites: COMM 2513 or COMM 2523 or COMM 2533 or COMM 2543
Co-requisites: None


Student Learning Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Learning Outcome # Alignment</th>
<th>Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Communication Critical Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Critical Thinking Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>Communication Critical Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>Communication Critical Thinking Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Major Course Requirements

Method of Determining Final Course Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Grade Requirement</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Test One: Chapters 1-4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Test Two: Chapters 4-7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Test Three: Chapters 8-15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Critique of a research paper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Homework</td>
<td>5X4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 100

Grading Criteria and Conversion:
A = 90 - 100  
B = 80 - 89  
C = 70 - 79  
D = 60 - 69  
F = 59 or less

Detailed Description of Major Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Title or Grade Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test One: Chapters 1-4</td>
<td>Unit one test covers all the first four chapters. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 15% of your final grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Two: Chapters 4-8</td>
<td>Unit two test covers chapter 4 (overlap with test one) to 8. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 15% of your final grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Three: Chapters 8-15</td>
<td>This is considered the final exam. It covers chapter 8 (overlap with test two) to 15. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 25% of your final grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>There will be five homework assignments due throughout the semester. Each homework is worth 4% of your final grade. These homeworks are designed to help you apply course concepts to research. You may send your homework assignments to me by e-mail. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that they reach me on time by returning them either online or in person at class time. All late work is penalized. It is therefore in your best interest to make sure that your e-mail or in-class submission is posted by the due date. Back it up with a memory card in case your attachment cannot be opened successfully. If you are having problems with the work, please see me before the assignment is due. I frequently work with students who meet with me on an individual basis. Collectively, the homework assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique of a research paper</td>
<td>You will be required to write and present orally an in-depth critique of a research article at the end of the semester. The requirement is at the end of this syllabus. The critique will be worth 15% of your grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Procedures or Additional Instructor Policies

Taskstream
Taskstream is a tool that Prairie View A&M University uses for assessment purposes. At least one of your assignments is REQUIRED to be submitted as an "artifact," an item of coursework that serves as evidence that course objectives are met. More information will be provided during the semester, but for general information, you can visit Taskstream via the link in eCourses.

Late papers and make-up policy:
All assignments are due at class time. Assignments turned in after class on the due day will lose one letter grade immediately and an additional letter grade for each day thereafter. There will be no make-up for in-class exercises or examinations.

**Attendance Policy:**
I will take attendance each class period. It is your responsibility to make sure I have your name recorded as present each class period. If you must miss class, please let me know why. Coming late to class is very disruptive. You certainly get noticed for the wrong reasons! If you must come late on a particular day, please let me know ahead of time and make your entrance as quietly as possible. If you must leave early, I make the same request—please tell me in advance and go as quietly as possible. If late arrivals or early departures become a pattern, I will convert such occurrences into absences (three to one), and then the same loss in points will apply.

*Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Excessive absences will result in lowered grades. Absenteeism, whether EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED, may result in a student’s course grade being reduced or in a student’s being assigned a grade of “F.” Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class. The University undergraduate catalog provides more details. Accumulation of three (3) unexcused absences constitutes excessive absenteeism. However, in this class, **F will be assigned to anyone who has 6 or more absences for whatever reason.***
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One:</th>
<th>Topic Description</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The What and Why of Communication Research</td>
<td>M Introduction of the course, W Chapter 1, F The What and Why of Communication Research</td>
<td>M Memorizing the key terms on page 19, W Going over the discussion questions on page 19, F Doing “Try It” activities on page 19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Description</th>
<th>Ethics and Research</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Two:</td>
<td>Making Claims</td>
<td>M Chapter 4, W Chapter 4, F Chapter 4</td>
<td>M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 56, W Preparing the questions and activities on page 56, F Preparing the questions and activities on page 56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Description</th>
<th>Three Paradigms of Knowing</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Two:</td>
<td>What Counts as Communication Data</td>
<td>M Chapter 5, W Chapter 5, F Chapter 5</td>
<td>W Preparing the questions and activities on page 78, F Preparing the questions and activities on page 78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic Description</th>
<th>Warrants for Research Arguments</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Three:</td>
<td>Part II The How of Communication Research: Survey Research</td>
<td>M Chapter 7</td>
<td>M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 100, W Preparing the questions and activities on page 100, F Preparing the questions and activities on page 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 123
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 124
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 124

Test Two

Topic Description: Experimental Research
Reading(s)
M Chapter 8
W Chapter 8
F Chapter 8
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 145
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 146
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 146

Topic Description: Content Analysis
Reading(s)
M Chapter 9
W Chapter 9
F Chapter 9
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 161
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 161
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 161-162

Week Four:
Topic Description: Descriptive Statistics and Hypothesis Testing
Reading(s)
M Chapter 10
W Chapter 10
F Chapter 10
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 180
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 180
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 180

Topic Description: Inferential Statistics: Differences and Relationships
Reading(s)
M Chapter 11
W Chapter 11
F Chapter 11
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 205
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 206
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 206-207

Topic Description: Conversation and Discourse Analysis
Reading(s)
M Chapter 12
W Chapter 12
F Chapter 12
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 230
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 231
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 231

Topic Description: Ethnographic Research
Reading(s)
M Chapter 13
W Chapter 13
F Chapter 13
Assignment (s): M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 254
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 255
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 255

Presentation and Final Exam/Test Three
Article Critique Assignment: Interpretive and Critical Paradigms

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is to apply course concepts to an in-depth critique of a research article appearing in the communication research literature. Becoming a good consumer of research is not something that comes easily to most people (as I am sure many of you have discovered). It is a set of skills we have been learning throughout the semester. Research really is a way to generate new knowledge about human communication. As a result, it is important to know how to carefully evaluate the merits and demerits of a work.

Article selection: The article must report a study using a form of analysis from the interpretive and critical paradigms that we have explored in some detail during this semester. These include conversational analysis, discourse analysis, rhetorical criticism methodologies from the two paradigms, ethnography, critical ethnography, and critical studies. Please include a full citation of the article with the paper you turn in to me. Do not use experimental studies, survey research, or content/interaction analyses using statistical analyses to test research questions or hypotheses. You may use any article that fits the requirements you used for previous homework assignments.

Your paper should include the following sections (and please make these clear by main and subheadings):
I. Paradigm: Identify the paradigm from which the study is generated. Discuss at least three underlying assumptions that seem to apply directly or indirectly to your study.

II. Claim: Identify at least one central claim of the study. It may be in the form of a research question or hypothesis, or it may appear as a central purpose or thesis statement. Watch for language such as, “I contend . . .” as a clue to a thesis statement. Be sure to cite the page number where it occurs.

III. Data: In this section, you should have the following subheadings:
1. Selection: Identify the sampling unit and the method of sampling or how the text(s) was selected (students, romantic partners, advertisements, speech, film scenes, etc.).
2. Setting: Identify the setting in which the data are collected.
3. Source: Explain whether the data are self-report, other-report, observations, or texts.
4. Data collection strategy: Identify whether the data were collected by interview, questionnaire, observational coding scheme, and/or a textual framework. In the case of a text, include any description the author(s) may make regarding why particular texts were selected.
5. Interpretive or critical framework: The framework will change depending on the type of study done. Here are some general guidelines:
   a. Conversational analysis: Turns at talk are usually examined for some pattern or feature derived usually from a theoretic framework (like Tracy and Tracy’s use of speech act theory to examine adjacency pairs).
   b. Discourse analysis: General patterns of discourse are examined to show that various social roles and/or rules are enacted or constructed through discourse.
   c. Rhetorical criticism: One or more general theoretic approaches are selected to be applied to the analysis of the text, e.g., using Burke’s dramatistic criticism in the analysis of a film.
   d. Ethnography: Communicative practices of a culture are explored using a grounded theory approach where the researcher moves back and forth between the data and inferences drawn about the data to identify various patterns; examples of emergent patterns might be kinship rules for who may address and be addressed by various members of the group, what constitutes patterns of influence in a particular group, and so forth. Some external theoretic framework or concept may be applied (e.g., Eisenberg and Smith’s interpretive “root metaphor” concept or feminist critical theory).
   e. Critical studies: Texts of varied formats can serve as the basis for any critical studies analysis you wish to critique; among the easier to identify are structuralists’ positions (e.g., feminist studies, cultural studies).

IV. Warrants: You should discuss how at least one value and one warrant are established for your study. These vary by paradigm:
   1. Interpretive paradigm studies: Show how subjectivity or rich description is used as a value.
For example, subjectivity is often implicit in the arguments for the observer’s role in ethnographic studies. Rich description takes the place of quantitative analysis as researchers establish why it is important to explore more qualitative dimensions (rather than relying on reductive quantitative techniques). Then illustrate how the researchers use researcher credibility, plausibility of interpretations, or transferable findings as a warrant for their claims.

2. Critical paradigm studies: Show how the researchers value their claims by giving voice to and therefore liberating marginalized groups. Show how they warrant their claims by reflecting the positionality of the researchers. For this paradigm, also indicate how the form of argument is used by evaluating standard social policy or by moving beyond evaluation to advocating social reform.

V. Critique: Based on the approach of the particular study you chose to examine, identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of your particular study. These should include any limitations the authors note in discussing their research. Be sure to distinguish these from your own.

VI. Reference: At the end of your critique, include the study’s cite according to APA format.

VII. Article copy: Be sure to attach a copy of the full article (including references and appendices) to your critique.

Format: Your paper should be typewritten and single- or double-spaced. You are to present your article critique to the class.

Your presentation should be six to ten minutes in length and cover only the most salient features of your critique. You must provide me with a copy of your outline on your speaking date. The final written paper should be six to eight pages. If you find it is getting much longer than that (or if it is much shorter), I encourage you to see me about it. The oral presentation is part of this assignment. The whole project is worth 15 percentage points.
Student Support and Success

John B. Coleman Library
The library and its partners have as their mission to provide resources and instructional material in support of the evolving curriculum, as a partner in Prairie View A&M University’s mission of teaching, research, and service and to support the University’s core values of access and quality, diversity, leadership, relevance, and social responsibility through emphasis on ten key areas of service. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. https://www.pvamu.edu/library/
Phone: 936-261-1500

The Learning Curve (Center for Academic Support)
The Learning Curve offers Tutoring via peer tutoring. The services include workshops (i.e., Save My Semester, Recalculate Your Route), seminars (i.e., Tools You Can Use: TI-84), group review sessions (i.e., College Algebra Topic Reviews, GRE Preparation), group study opportunities (i.e., TSIA, HESI, Study Break, Exam Cram), and test-taking strategies (How to take Notes, Study Buddy, 5 Day Study Guide). The Learning Curve is a nationally certified tutoring program through the National Tutoring Association. The peer tutors are trained and certified by the coordinator each semester. Location: J.B. Coleman Library Rm. 207F. Phone: 936-261-1561

The Center for the Oversight and Management of Personalized Academic Student Success (COMPASS)
The Center for the Oversight and Management of Personalized Academic Student Success (COMPASS) is designed to help Prairie View students in their second year and beyond navigate towards graduation by providing the following services: Academic Advisement, Targeted Tutorials for Personalized Learning, Campus-Wide Referrals, and Academic & Social Workshops. Location: J.B. Coleman Library Rm. 306. Phone: 936-261-1040

Writing Center
The Writing Center provides student consultants on all aspects of the writing process and a variety of writing assignments. Writing Center consultations assist students in such areas as prewriting, brainstorming, audience awareness, organization, research, and citation. Students taking on-line courses or courses at the Northwest Houston Center or College of Nursing may consult remotely or by email. Location: Hilliard Hall Rm. 121. Phone: 936-261-3724.

Student Counseling Services
The Student Counseling Services unit offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and provides assistance to students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Owens-Franklin Health Center Rm. 226. Phone: 936-261-3564

Testing
The Department of Testing administers College Board CLEP examinations, the HESI A2 for pre-nursing majors, LSAT for law school applicants and MPRE for second-year law students, the Experiential Learning Portfolio option, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment, which determines college readiness in the state, and exam proctoring, among other service such as SAT and ACT for high school students. Location: Delco Rm. 141. Phone: 936-261-4286

Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services
As a federally-mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include: learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hard and software, adapted furniture, proctoring of non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, livescribe, Kurtzweil, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Evans Hall Rm. 317. Phone: 936-261-3585

Veteran Affairs
Veterans Services works with student veterans, current military and military dependents to support their transition to the college environment and continued persistence to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall Rm. 323. Phone: 936-261-3563

Office for Student Engagement
The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center Rm. 221. Phone: 936-261-1340

Career Services
Career Services supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The Office provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the Career Services website for information regarding services provided. Location: Evans Hall Rm. 217. Phone: 936-261-3570

University Rules and Procedures

Disability Statement (Also See Student Handbook):
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 contact Disability Services, in Evans Hall, Room 317, or call 936-261-3585/3.

Academic Misconduct (See Student Handbook):
You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures.

Forms of Academic Dishonesty:
1. Cheating: deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations.

2. Academic misconduct: tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.

3. Fabrication: use of invented information or falsified research.

4. Plagiarism: unacknowledged quotation and/or paraphrase of someone else’s words, ideas, or data as one’s own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting them as one’s own work also constitutes plagiarism.

Nonacademic Misconduct (See Student Handbook)
The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class, (2) the inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under nonacademic procedures.

Sexual Misconduct (See Student Handbook):
Sexual harassment of students and employers at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Title IX Statement
Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) is committed to supporting students and complying with the Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual assault or attempted sexual assault, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, the faculty member must report the basic facts of your experience to Ms. Alexia Taylor, PVAMU's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Title IX Coordinator is designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and can assist you with understanding your options and connect you with on- and off-campus resources. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached by phone at 936-261-2123 or in Suite 013 in the A.I. Thomas Administration Building.

Class Attendance Policy (See Catalog for Full Attendance Policy)
Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports full academic development of each learner whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or internet.

Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of "F". Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus.

Student Academic Appeals Process
Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rests with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the Undergraduate Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:
- Intel PC or Laptop with Windows 7; Mac with OS X; Smartphone or iPad/Tablet with Wi-Fi
- High speed Internet access
- 8 GB Memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15” monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit
- Sound card w/speakers
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer or Firefox

Note: Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the Web browser preferences

Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:
- Sending and receiving email
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Proficiency in the Acrobat PDF Reader
- Basic knowledge of Windows or Mac O.S.

Netiquette (online etiquette):
Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussions boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated.

Technical Support:
Students should go to https://mypassword.pvamu.edu/ if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Office of Distance Learning at 936-261-3283

**Communication Expectations and Standards:**

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

**Discussion Requirement:**

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can take place in a seminar fashion. This will be accomplished by the use of the discussion board. The exact use of discussion will be determined by the instructor.

It is strongly suggested that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, it/they should be copied and pasted to the discussion board.