California State University, Long Beach

**JOUR 494 -**

**RESEARCH METHODS**

**IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

**(Flipped Format)**

**Spring 2016**

Tuesday/Thursday 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

LA4-105

Class taught by:

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Office: LA4-101B

Face-to-face office hours: Wednesday 1-3 p.m. or by appointment; online (virtual) office hours as needed

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In emergencies only, text or call my cell (562) 291-8013

**Course Overview**

You will learn the basic techniques for research in mass communications and mass media with emphasis on their utility in academic and industry settings. The class will review theoretical concepts and hypothesis-testing procedures as applicable to the current problems in the field. You will learn about a variety of scientific methods, both quantitative and qualitative, survey and experimental design, field studies, analysis of data. The class includes a hands-on research project completed by the students under professor’s supervision. A prerequisite for this class is math proficiency at the college level. Some basic understanding of statistical concepts will be very helpful, too.

**“Flipped” classroom**

This class is taught in what is known as “flipped” format. That is, you will watch recorded lectures, listen to podcasts from the instructor, read the assigned chapters and other relevant materials IN ADVANCE. Face-to-face time in class will be used for discussions, exercises and other hands-on activities that will enable you to utilize the material in a practical way. You will be asked to complete a quiz (multiple choice or short answer) after reading the chapter and/or supplementary materials, as well as watching the professor’s lecture and other video materials. These preliminary quizzes become a part of your final grade. If you do not complete them by class time, you will be losing points, but – more importantly! – falling behind in your understanding of the material. Please understand that you will not be LECTURED during class, but before that. Class time is to be used for understanding the material better through practice and discussion, not to learn about it for the first time.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

The primary purpose of JOUR 494 is to introduce you to modern research methods in mass communication. The practical component of this “flipped” class teaches you applicable skills in using scholarly concepts to fulfill given practical needs.

During JOUR494, you will:

* Learn the basic theoretical concepts in mass communication research – and how to apply them in various practical situations;
* Learn about quantitative and qualitative research approaches – and how to choose the most appropriate method;
* Learn how to conduct research in ethically and legally responsible manner;
* Develop and enhance your research skills by practicing under different research scenarios;
* Enhance your critical thinking and reasoning;
* Improve your ability to work effectively and efficiently in a group (team) setting;
* Learn how to use primary and secondary sources to prepare a research project; learn how to evaluate the quality of research publications and use them in your own work;
* Learn how to use diverse research methods based on different populations and study needs; train your multicultural sensitivity as it applies to mass communication research;
* Enhance your skills in writing reports and papers; learn proper rules of APA scientific style;
* Learn SPSS software for data input and analysis.

These learning outcomes will be accomplished through:

* Watching the instructor’s pre-recorded lectures (including audio-only podcasts);
* Reading chapters in the course textbook and other relevant materials (generally, in advance of class meetings – see the schedule below);
* Participating in hands-on class exercises (e.g., generating hypotheses, writing up survey questions, working on questionnaire design, practicing with respondents on campus, conducting interviews and focus groups, brainstorming about research design and other particulars, designing experiments to test different hypotheses, writing consent forms, and comparing different research methods, among other activities);
* Responding to test questions (multiple choice and open ended);
* Correcting references to fit proper APA style;
* Writing up an annotated bibliography and research essay;
* Practicing in a lab or with your laptops how to use SPSS software;
* Working in a group on literature review, hypotheses, research design, administration, data input, analysis and presentation of a survey project.

**Readings**

The main text for this class is **Wimmer, R. D., and Dominick, J. R. (2014). Mass Media Research: An Introduction (10th Ed.). New York: Wadsworth.**

For scholarly style references, you will be using the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.)** You do not need to buy it – it is available in the library, and I will provide you with handouts on the essentials. A lot of information is available at[**http://www.apastyle.org/**](http://www.apastyle.org/)**.** You will also use these online tutorials: <http://csulb.libguides.com/content.php?pid=115235&sid=2560863>

BeachBoard will a place to communicate and learn. You will also use supplemental materials from the textbook’s web site, too: <http://www.rogerwimmer.com>.

In addition, I will assign a variety of scholarly publications (articles, chapters), which you will find in the course packet or receive as electronic handouts. As your expertise in research methods grows, you will learn to find scholarly materials on your own and will be required to complete literature reviews using library resources.

**Assignments and Grading**

Your grade for JOUR 494 will be formed by the following components:

***APA style quiz: 100 points***

***Class research project (groups): 200 points***

***Before-class quizzes (20 pts x 15 chapters) 300 points***

***Three in-class content tests***

***(multiple-choice + open-ended questions): 300 points (100 each)***

***Annotated bibliography and research essay: 100 points***

***Total: 1,000 points***

***Accumulation of 900 to 1,000 points at the end will mean an A for this class, 800 to 890 will get you a B, 700 to 790 – C, 600 to 690 mean D, and anything below 600 points is a failing grade. Possibilities for extra credit may exist, but I cannot guarantee that. Extra credit will not be offered to those, who skip any regular assignments or have more than two unexcused absences.***

**Class participation** is essential to your success in this class. The idea of the flipped classroom is to create a collaborative learning environment; however, it will benefit most those who have taken the time to prepare in advance and display an active attitude. All class participants must share the responsibility for the learning experience. Your task, however, is to make yourselves noticed. I will give you a running participation grades as we go along, so you can adjust your activity should it be lagging.

**APA style quiz** will come very early in the class and will require you to master the basics of the American Psychological Association citation style. You will use the APA Publication Manual and other materials to prepare, but the actual test will be given in a classroom setting. This exercise assures that you will know the APA style well, which will enable you to write with competence scholarly literature reviews and other papers.

***Class research project and group presentations*** are based on the research topic assigned to this class. You will be divided into several groups (depending on the number of enrolled students). These groups will work on:

* Preparing a literature revue, which includes finding and using a sufficient number of sources;
* Designing the study (research instrument), which includes pre-tests of the questionnaire;
* Conducting the actual study, which includes recruiting participants and administering the questionnaire in a controlled setting;
* Conducting the basic analysis of data using SPSS, which includes hypotheses-testing.

Each group will make class presentations of their work (about 20-25 min.) and write a group-specific report. Please log in how many hours you dedicated to each task, when and how you accomplished those tasks, any group meetings you had, library work, notes on challenges and frustrations, etc. – that is, keep a complete record of your progress. You will be graded individually, but your overall performance depends on the quality of your group work, of course.

The entire class will participate in the formulation of the study hypotheses. I will explain more details in class and will give you the minimum requirements for each collective task. At the end of the class, members of each group will submit self-evaluations and peer evaluations, which will allow me to judge the individual contributions. Again, remember that in group assignments your grade represents a share of this group’s final product.

**In-class exercises** are essential to this flipped-format class. Students are asked to work individually and in groups during these exercises (which include discussions, mock research sessions, instrument design, focus groups, among other activities). Students keep an online diary of their participation and fill it in after each class. The instructor supervises the exercises and keeps track of each student’s learning activity. Quizzes (graded and non graded) may be given on a surprise basis for periodic assessment of students’ progress. As mentioned above, you will have a running grade of your participation (updated weekly), before you receive the final grade during the last class session.

**Three content tests** will quiz you on basic concepts in research methods. Questions (both multiple-choice and open-ended ones) will come from the textbook chapters or, rarely, from other readings. The schedule of readings and tests is provided below. **All readings are due by the class session for which they are assigned.** Chapter tests will be preceded by in-class review sessions.

Each student will prepare an **annotated bibliography** on a selected topic and also write a related short **research essay** (I will explain the details in class). You will have to find and prepare brief notes on at least 10 sources from **peer-reviewed** journals. Each student will have to research a different concept/topic from any area of mass communications. I may help you with the selection or you may choose on your own.

**More than two unexcused absences** during this semester will deduct 50 points from your final tally for each additional absence. To repeat, I allow you to have two unexcused absences, no questions asked, but after that I will be trimming your score. Coming to class is as important as going to work – please treat it that way. You are expected to come to every single meeting, period. I will excuse only legitimate absences as defined by the Journalism Department and CSULB (see the addendum) and only with an adequate supporting document or my explicit written consent.

Cell phone/laptop/tablet Policy

1. Please silence your cell phones during the class period, and keep them stashed away. Texting or using your smartphone in any manner during class is grounds for my asking you to leave, with an absence marked against your record. I will not tolerate any disruptive behavior of this nature in my classroom, period. It is disrespectful to your peers and to me. If you have to make or accept an urgent call (rarely needed!), you are free to leave the classroom for a while, just as you are at liberty to go visit the bathroom.

2. I will only approve the use of computer stations or personal laptops/tablets during classes if you have been specifically directed to do so. **You are effectively required to take notes by hand.** If needed, I will provide you with a legal pad for writing.This has been proven to be a more effective approach for material retention and also eliminates possible distractions that are otherwise present in online environments. Not to mention that it is highly disruptive to the instructor when students are not paying attention, browsing or otherwise zoning out during lecture. I have prepared to be in front of the class and want your full attention for lectures, discussions, exercises, guest speakers or multimedia viewing.

I will enforce this policy **strictly across my classroom** for pedagogical and etiquette reasons. The only exception to this policy will occur when I am asking you to bring laptops to class, so we can work on data input or some other exercise that requires you to have computer access.

**Conclusion**

There will be no freeloaders in this class. You must understand that at this point in your career you will not succeed unless you take your assignments as a serious job and apply yourself accordingly. If you don’t do your part, others will suffer – but your grade will go down, too. Be patient and courteous with your peers during discussions and at the times of collective work. Do not distract or interrupt anyone, and do not allow disruptions into the classroom, such as not-class-related use of computers, eating, talking. Make full use of your time – after all, you are paying for your own education.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, problems or concerns. You will be surprised to know how many brewing crises can be solved by timely communication with your professor.

**WEEKLY READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS**

**SCHEDULE – SPRING 2016**

**NOTE: All readings are from the Wimmer/Dominick textbook, unless otherwise specified. The chapters must be read in advance as specified. Lectures must be viewed as uploaded, too. Supplementary materials are provided where noted. Student assignments must be uploaded to BeachBoard on the day they are due.**

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| **Weekly Topic/Day** | **Tuesday** | **Thursday** |
| 1. **Introduction** | **Jan. 19: Introduction; class policies, rules & regulations** | **Jan. 21:**  **Read Ch. 1 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Science and research basics** | **Jan. 26: Ch. 1, cont.** | **Jan. 28: Ch. 2 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Library** | **Feb.: 2: Class meets in the library** | **Feb. 4: Practice** |
| 1. **Hypothesizing/**   **Ethics in research** | **Feb. 9: Hypotheses/RQs formulation** | **Feb. 11: Ch. 3 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Sampling** | **Feb. 16: Practice** | **Feb. 18: Ch. 4 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Sampling, cont’d/**   **Content analysis** | **Feb. 23: Practice** | **Feb. 25: Ch. 6 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Surveys/Focus groups** | **March 1: Ch. 7 (watch lecture)** | **March 3: Ch. 8 (watch lecture)**  **(APA Style Quiz online)** |
| 1. **Review/Test 1** | **March 8: Chapter review** | **March 10: Test #1 (Ch. 1-4, 6)** |
| 1. **Experiments/**   **Hypothesis testing** | **March 15: Ch. 9, 10 (watch lecture)** | **March 17: NO CLASS – JOURNALISM DAY!**  **Annotated bibliography & research essay due Literature review report** |
| 1. **Experiments/**   **Hypothesis testing cont’d** | **March 22: Ch. 11, 12 (watch lecture)** | **March 24: Chapter review** |
| 1. **Test 2/Research in print media** | **April 5: Test #2 (Ch. 7, 9-11)** | **April 7: Ch. 13 (watch lecture); Survey instrument report** |
| 1. **Research in broadcast & advertising** | **April 12: Ch. 14 (watch lecture)** | **April 14: Ch. 15 (watch lecture)** |
| 1. **Research in PR/Review** | **April 19: Ch. 16 (watch lecture)** | **April 21: Chapter review** |
| 1. **Test 3/Survey administration** | **April 26: Test #3 (Ch. 12-16)** | **April 28: Survey administration** |
| 1. **Data input/Conclusion** | **May 3: Supervised SPSS data input (lab)** | **May 5: Last class; conclusion & evaluations; participation grades** |

**Study results presentation during final exam time slot.**

***Addendum 1: Department Information***

**Advising**: If you are a journalism major or minor, the department recommends that you see one of our advisers at least once a year. We have two experienced advisers – Professor Jennifer Fleming ([Jennifer.Fleming@csulb.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Fleming@csulb.edu)) and Professor Danny Paskin ([Danny.Paskin@csulb.edu](mailto:Danny.Paskin@csulb.edu)) – to assist you with your course selection, answer questions about requirements, help you stay focused on your chosen path to graduation, and offer other relevant advice. Their information and advising hours are posted around the department and available in the department office (LA4-106).

**Internships**: The department recommends that you pursue internships, service-learning experiences, and extra-curricular activities to enhance your career preparedness and marketability when you graduate. Employers will expect to see examples of your work; they prefer applicants with experience. Therefore, you will find all internships and job opportunities that come to the department posted on the department’s *BeachBoard* site. A binder with hard copies of all internships is also kept in the department office for your review. In addition, internship postings are available online through the CSULB Career Development Center. Students pursuing opportunities through our *BeachBoard* or CDC sites should be aware that the department and CDC do not screen these opportunities for JOUR 498 credit. If you are seeking JOUR 498 credit, you must attend one of the mandatory orientations conducted the semester prior to your enrollment in JOUR 498. Students enrolled in a section of JOUR 498 will also receive advance notice of the orientations from their instructor.

**Student Media**: The department is home to the *Daily 49er* and *Dig Magazine* and closely tied to *KBeach Radio* and *College Beat TV*. Getting involved in student media will help you hone your skills and give you real-life experiences. Stop by the *Daily 49er* and *Dig Magazine* offices in LA4-201 and talk to the staff. Introduce yourself to the faculty advisers – Professor Barbara Kingsley-Wilson (*Daily 49er*, Barbara.Kingsley-Wilson@csulb.edu), Professor Gary Metzker (*Daily 49er* and *Dig Magazine*, Gary.Metzker@csulb.edu), and Professor John Shrader (*KBeach Radio* and *College Beat TV*, John.Shrader@csulb.edu) – who can answer any questions you may have.

**Bateman Case Study Competition**: Consider joining the *Bateman Case Study Competition Team*. The *Bateman Competition* (<http://prssa.prsa.org/scholarships_competitions/bateman/>) is a prestigious inter-collegiate contest, often called the Super Bowl of collegiate public relations competitions. It is one of the most intense and rewarding experiences for our students. Participants on the *Bateman Team* receive JOUR 485 credit. See Professor Joni Ramirez (Joni.Ramirez@csulb.edu), our *Bateman* coach, for more information.

**Student Organizations**: The department is home to three active student organizations – the *National Association of Hispanic Journalists*, *Public Relations Student Society of America*, and *Society of Professional Journalists*. Each group has its own leaders and sponsors a variety of activities, including esteemed professionals as guest speakers. These three groups also work closely with the department to co-sponsor special events, such as Journalism and Public Relations Day. Get involved and have a blast with your classmates! Contact the respective faculty advisers for more information: Professor Danny Paskin ([Danny.Paskin@csulb.edu](mailto:Danny.Paskin@csulb.edu)) for **NAHJ**, Professor Holly Ferris ([Holly@Ferriscomm.com](mailto:Holly@Ferriscomm.com)) for **PRSSA**, and Professor Chris Karadjov ([Chris.Karadjov@csulb.edu](mailto:Chris.Karadjov@csulb.edu)) for **SPJ**.

**Social Media**: Be sure to get connected to the department’s Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CSULBJournalism>) and website (<http://www.cla.csulb.edu/departments/journalism/>) for photos and information about department happenings.

**Office Hours**: Each faculty member holds office hours to help you perform well in your classes, answer any of your questions, and offer advice. Take advantage of office hours and get to know your faculty.

**Accreditation**: The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at California State University, Long Beach is accredited by the *Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*s (ACEJMC, <https://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/>). Accreditation by ACEJMC is an assurance of quality in professional education in journalism and mass communication. Students in an accredited program can expect to find a challenging curriculum, good facilities, and a competent faculty.

ACEJMC lists **12** **professional values and competencies** that must be part of the education of all journalism, public relations, and mass communication students. Each one of your required courses in the journalism major addresses at least one of the 12 professional competencies. Therefore, graduates who majored in journalism and public relations should be able to do the following:

* understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
* demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
* demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communication;
* demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communication in a global society;
* understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
* demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
* think critically, creatively and independently;
* conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
* write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
* critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
* apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
* apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

***Addendum 2: Grading, Conduct of Classes, Drops, Absences and Cheating***

**Grading:** The grading policies and practices in this class are explained elsewhere in the syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to read them and to seek clarification if necessary. The student should be fully aware of what is required for success in the course, such as group participation, writing, speaking, completing assigned readings, etc.

**Seat in Class:** An enrolled student may lose his/her seat in class if he/she misses the first class meeting without notifying the instructor. At the instructor’s discretion, a student who attends the first class but not subsequent classes may also be dropped from the course.

**Withdrawal from Class:** Students may withdraw from a class from the third to the 12th week for “serious and compelling reasons.” Normally these are defined as anything of import that is beyond the control of the student. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, death or serious illness in a student’s immediate family or a documented change in a student’s work schedule. Poor performance, tardiness and unexcused absences are not considered a serious or compelling reason beyond the student’s control for purposes of withdrawal.

**Absences from Class:** Grades in a course may be adversely affected by absences, and students should seek clarification from the instructor regarding the course absence policy. Make-ups usually are granted in strict accordance with CSULB policy, which defines excused absences as (1) illness or injury to the student; (2) death, injury or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like; (3) religious reasons; (4) jury duty or government obligation; (5) CSULB-sanctioned or approved activities. *These and any other requests for an excused absence must be documented.*

**CSULB Cheating/Plagiarism/Fabrication Policy:** CSULB takes issues of academic dishonesty very seriously. If you use any deceptive or dishonest method to complete an assignment, take an exam, or gain credit in a course in any other way, or if you help someone else to do so, you are guilty of cheating. If you use someone else’s ideas or work and represent it as your own without giving credit to the source, you are guilty of plagiarism. This does not apply if the ideas are recognized as common knowledge, or if you can show that you honestly developed the ideas through your own work. Any instructor can show you the correct ways of citing your sources, and you should use quotation marks, footnotes or endnotes and bibliographic references to give credit to your sources according to the format recommended by your instructor.

**Responses, Penalties and Student Rights:** Students should consult the appropriate sections of the Catalog for examples of cheating, fabrication and plagiarism, and instructor and/or CSULB response options in such circumstances. The Catalog also outlines student rights. Any instance of academic dishonesty may result in your immediate expulsion from the class with a grade of “F” and/or other sanctions, as the instructor deems appropriate.

***Addendum 3: Accommodation of Students With Disabilities***

Students with disabilities who need assistant or accommodation to participate in or benefit from university programs, services, and/or activities should inform the instructor and then contact Disabled Student Services. Students needing support services or accommodations should contact the instructor of the course within the first week of class. In addition, students should establish their eligibility for assistance by contacting the Disabled Student Services Office (Brotman Hall 270) at 562-985-5401.

Students are to provide to the instructor verification of their disability from Disabled Student Services. Typical accommodations available from Disabled Student Services, working with the journalism instructor, includes extended time for tests, test proctoring, private test rooms, note taking, Braille transcriptions, and referral for tutoring.

If the service offered is insufficient or inadequate, the student should confer with the instructor and the director of Disabled Student Services. If these efforts are unsuccessful, students have the option of directing their concerns to the Office of Equity and Diversity (University Student Union 301) at 562-985-8256. Responsibility for oversight and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act has been delegated to the campus director for disability support and accommodation.