

MCOM 440 Research in Mass Media
Briar Cliff University Department of Mass Media
Term III 2006-07

Instructors:

Michael Crowley Associate Professor
 Office H-311 Phone 279-5459
Michael.Crowley@briarcliff.edu

Kristen Hansen, Instructor
 Office H-328 Phone 279-
Kristen.Hansen@briarcliff.edu

Lecture: TTH 1:50 to 3:00 PM

Syllabus

Course Description: Individual exploration of a research topic in mass communication. Student will analyze and evaluate research and development an understanding of research as it relates of the field of mass communication. Prerequisite: Senior level status.

Expectation of Students: Students will be expected to share their understand of mass media research through class participation, presentations and discussions.

Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment
Form an understanding of the technical aspects of research Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Research • Media Research and the Scientific Method • Research Procedures • Elements of Research • * Research Ethics 	Article Review Class Participation
Research and analyze relevant issues in the field of mass communications	Proposal Topic Final Proposal - Written
Present new knowledge gained in the course to the other students and instructor.	Final Proposal - Presentation
Demonstrate public speaking and presentation skills	Final Proposal - Presentation
Form a clear understanding how research is applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print Media • Electronic Media • Advertising • Public Relations • The Internet 	Class Participation

My teaching philosophy

I believe that each student is an individual, and learns in various ways. It is my role as a facilitator of learning to create an environment that students feel comfortable and willing to challenges themselves. I use various independent and collaborative methods and activates so that students can find what works for them. It is my hope that students become pro-active problem solving independent learners, after their traditional education ends. I believe learning is a life-long two way process, and that I become a better person form the experience.

Evaluation:

- Article Review = 30%
- Research Paper = 30%
- Research Presentation = 30%
- Proposal presentation = 5%
- Class Participation (inc. resume) = 5%

Grade Scale: The grading scale for this course, as in all courses in the Department of Mass Communications, is as follows:

A = 96-100

A- = 92-95

B+ = 88-91

B = 84-87

B- = 80-83

C+ = 75-79

C = 70-74

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

Classroom Behavior : I believe that learning is a group activity, and the behavior of each person in class in some way or the other affects the learning outcomes of others. A professor is not here to give you what you *want* , but rather to help you obtain what you *need* . I promise to listen when you are talking to me and to treat you with respect. The following are suggestion for classroom behavior.

1. Class begins promptly at the beginning of the class period. You should be in your seat and ready to start participating in class at that time.
2. Always bring the required supplies (text, paper, and any other items suggested by the instructor or the syllabus) and be ready to be actively engaged in the learning process. This communicates preparedness and interest.
3. In deciding whether to attend class, please do not ask your professor if she/he is covering anything important on that day. The course is carefully planned out – every day is important.
4. Do not study material from other classes during this class. If you feel that you must spend our class time studying or doing homework, please go to the library.
5. Turn your cell phone off or to vibrate if you anticipate an essential incoming call. Please notify me at the beginning of class if this is the case. I'll also turn mine off.

6. It is fine to bring a drink (must have a lid to avoid spills) to class, as long as it isn't distracting. However, please remember that someone else will be coming into the room after your class is done, so **PICK UP YOUR TRASH.**
7. I expect to have your attention for the full class period. This means:
 - a. Avoid conversations with people sitting around you. It's a small room – even if you whisper, please realize that other people can certainly *see* you, and that's distracting to them (and to me.)
 - b. Do *not* start zipping up your backpack and rustling papers before the end of the class period. There's sufficient time for you to get to your next class to another without disrupting the last few minutes of this class. If one person does it, it seems to trigger others to do it, and it makes the last few minutes (when announcements are often made) less than optimal for everyone.
8. If you know that you'll need to leave before the class is over (please let me know), try to sit as close to the door as possible so as not to disrupt others. Remember leaving class early or coming to class late **WILL** hurt your grade
9. If you are so tired that you cannot keep your head up, you should leave. I realize that environmental factors affect this, including warm rooms, dimmed lights, and material that may not be interesting to you. However, laying your head on the desk or sleeping in class is rude, and it is distracting to others. You may be asked to leave the class. I'll try to make class interesting, but remember that my primary goal is to teach you, not to entertain you.
10. Turn in assignments on time. Earthquake, fire, flood, and catastrophic illness are the only reasonable excuses for a late submission. You want the professor to know who you are for the right reasons.
11. The rules of the syllabus, content of the exams, content of lectures, and calculation of the grade you earned are not a starting point for negotiations. While I am always willing to work with students on an individual basis, I cannot negotiate individual terms with each student.
12. Your questions are **NOT** an imposition – they are welcome and one of the professional highlights of my day. Chances are, if you have a question, someone else is thinking the same thing but is too shy to ask it. Please – ask questions! You'll learn more, it makes the class more interesting, and you are helping others learn as well. But when you have a question or comment, please raise your hand first. Blurting out a question or comment when someone else has already raised their hand is rude – it's like jumping ahead of someone else in line.
13. If emergencies arise that require an absence from a session, be sure to get the notes and all other information that was covered in class from a student you trust. Expecting the faculty member to outline the class session in an independent message to you is not realistic as a professor typically has many students in his/her classes each term.
14. Showing up late (even 5 minutes) for a final exam will not be tolerated. The exam is scheduled to begin at the scheduled time not any time between two times. Some exams have explanations and should only be made once. If you're late for the final the penalty will be up to the instructor and may include points off or not allowing you to take the exam.
15. The time to be concerned about your grade is in the first eight weeks of the course, not in the last two weeks.
16. I expect you to sit through a class session with out having to leave the class for a “restroom break.”
17. If you bring a laptop to class you must use the computer for class related notes. You will sit in the first two rows of the class.

18. **Cell phones must be turned off and not visible by the instructor or any student. Any visible cell phone may be confiscated by the instructor. If a cell phone rings please leave the class and DO NOT RETURN. It will be counted as an absence.**

Schedule

2/27	Syllabus and Introduction to Mass Media Research		
3/1	The structure of a Research Study		Intro, Chapter 1
3/6	Elements of Research		Chapter 2
3/8	Library Research – Rachel Crowley		Meet in Library Classroom
3/13	Part 2 Research Approaches		Chapter 5-9
3/15	Topic Decided Resume and Job Search	Due Due	
3/20	Deconstruct Article - Abstract Deconstruct Article – Research Question/Hypothesis		
3/22	Deconstruct Article – Literature Review Deconstruct Article - Methodology		
3/27	Research Ethics Internet Research – Rachel Crowley		Chapter 3
3/29	Plagiarism– Rachel Crowley		Meet in Library Classroom
4/3	Article Review Proposal Topic Presentations	Due Due	
4/5	Job Search		
4/10	Noodle Tools - Rachel Crowley		Meet in Library Classroom
4/12	Research in Print Media		Chapter 13
4/17	Research in Electronic Media		Chapter 14
4/19	Research in Advertising		Chapter 15
4/24	Research in Public Relations		Chapter 16
4/26	Mass Media Research and the Internet		Chapter 17
5/1	Job Search - Interview		
5/3	Job Search - Interview		
5/8	TBA		
Final	Paper and Presentations	Due	

Research Article Evaluation:

This exercise is designed to provide you an opportunity to locate, read, assimilate, and evaluate research articles. The general format of a research article should include an introduction, methodology, results, discussion and abstract/summary. The research study should be selected from a “scholarly” journal.

*Your evaluation will consist of a written report using the guide questions that follow. Your evaluation should **be written in narrative format** (paragraph format) rather than individual responses to the guide questions. **Responses should both answer the guide questions and provide information from the study related to the guide questions.** Questions for which responses are not possible should be noted. The report should begin with the author, title, and bibliographic information for the article/report being evaluated. The written report should be typed (10 pt. font) and doubled spaced with your name and the number of the analysis at the top. Length will be 3 pages minimum.*

INTRODUCTION

Problem

- Is there a statement of the problem?
- Is background information on the problem presented?
- Is the problem researchable (can it be investigated through data collection and analysis)?
- Is the education significance of the problem discussed?
- Does the problem stated indicate the variables of interest and the relationship(s) between those variables?

Review of Related Literature

- Is there a review of related literature?
- Is the literature review comprehensive?
- Is the review well organized--does it flow logically from more general? Information to information that is more specific to the problem under study?
- Does the literature review conclude with a brief summary?

Hypotheses/Research Questions

- Are specific hypotheses or research questions stated?
- Does each hypothesis or research question regard an expected relationship or difference?
- Do the hypotheses or research questions help define the variables under study?
- Is each hypothesis testable or research question answerable?

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

- Are the size and major characteristics of the population under study adequately described?
- If a sample was selected, is the method of sample selection clearly described?
- Are the size and major characteristics of the sample adequately described?
- Does the sample selection technique appear likely to produce a representative, unbiased sample?

Instruments

- Is each instrument described in terms of purpose and content?
Is a rationale given for the selection of the instruments (measurements) used?
- Are the instruments appropriate for measuring the intended variables?
- Are the reliability and validity of the instruments described or discussed?

Design & Procedure

- What type(s) of study design was (were) used in the study—e.g. historical, experimental, correlation, etc.?
- What evidence is there that this (these) type(s) of design were used in the study?
- Is the study design appropriate for testing stated hypotheses or answering stated research questions?
- Are procedures described in sufficient detail to permit replication of the study?
- Was a pilot study conducted? If so, did the pilot study results affect the subsequent procedures used in the study?
- Are control procedures described?

Results

- Are the results clearly presented and easy understandable?
- Was every hypothesis tested or research question answered?
- If tables or figures were included, were they well organized and informative?
- Are the data presented in the tables or figures discussed in the accompanying text?
- Are the tests of significance appropriate for the hypotheses/ research questions and the design study?
- Are the probability levels clearly stated for each test of significance
- Is there a summary of the salient results emerging from the study?

DISCUSSION (CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS)

- Is each result discussed in terms of the original hypothesis or research question to which it relates?
- Is each result discussed in terms of previous results obtained by other researchers?
- Are generalizations consistent with the results?
- Are theoretical or practical implications of results discussed?
- Are recommendations for the future action made?
- Are recommendations for future research made?
- Do all recommendations appear reasonable in light of the purpose of the study and results obtained?

Research Paper & Presentation Assignment

Write a 10-12 typed double spaced 12 point Times Roman font, stapled with a cover page on and approved topic in mass media. You may select any topic related to your course of study. You are to synthesize the literature and present your findings in a paper and a 15 minute presentation.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Paper

Format

- _____ Length (2)
- _____ Too short (0-1)
- _____ Font and type size (1)
- _____ stapled with cover page (1)
- _____ Submitted via e-mail (1)

_____ (5 total points possible.)

Theses Statement

- _____ Complete thesis statement is presented (10-15)
- _____ Partial thesis statement is presented. (4-7)
- _____ Lack of thesis statement is presented (0-3)

_____ (15 total points possible.)

Discussion

- _____ A complete discussion of the issue/topic is presented. (30-40)
- _____ Only a partial discussion of the issue/topic is presented. (15-29)
- _____ A vague discussion of the issue/topic presented. (0-14)

_____ (40 total points possible.)

Analysis and Conclusion

- _____ A complete analysis of the discussion and a conclusion is presented. (25-30)
- _____ An analysis is briefly discussed and a conclusion is not complete. (15-24)
- _____ Lack of a complete analysis and conclusion is not reached (0-15)

_____ (30 total points possible.)

Research Methods

- _____ Sufficient sources are explored and presented. (8-10)
- _____ Technical qualities briefly discussed on less then 3 images. (4-7)
- _____ Technical qualities are only discussed on 1 image or not at all. (0-3)

_____ (10 total points possible.)

_____ (100 total points possible.)

Presentation

Name _____

Format

- _____ Length (1-10)
- _____ Effective use of fonts (1-10)
- _____ Effective use of design (including not too much type on slide) (1-10)
- _____ Effective use of graphics (1-10)

_____ **(40 total points possible.)**

Content

- _____ All important information is presented well. (25-30)
- _____ Most important information is presented. (10-24)
- _____ Most important information is not presented. (0-9)

_____ **(30 total points possible.)**

Presentation skills (including eye contact, voice level and nonverbal gestures)

- _____ Good use of presentation skills (15-20)
- _____ Adequate use of presentation skills (7-14)
- _____ Poor use of presentation skills (7-14)

_____ **(20 total points possible.)**

Preparedness

- _____ Presenter was well prepared (8-10)
- _____ Presenter was somewhat prepared (4-7)
- _____ Presenter seemed unprepared (0-3)

_____ **(10 total points possible.)**

Total _____ **(100 total points possible.)**

Comments: