Meeting Days, Times and Room: Wednesdays; 3:30 to 5:20; ASCJ 202-C

Office Hours:
- Tuesdays: 3:30-5:00
- Wednesdays: 10:00-11:30; 1:30-3:30
- Thursdays: 10:00-10:40; 3:30-5:00
- Other times by arrangement.

Text:

Course Description:
This course gives you practical skill in conducting empirical communication research. The course will give you experience in every phase of conducting empirical research, including formulating proper research questions, finding relevant theoretic and empirical research, formulating hypotheses, developing an appropriate research method, conducting and gathering data, analyzing findings statistically, and writing a research report. All of you will work as members of a research team under my direction.

Each semester is different. What you will experience depends upon the phase of the research process a specific study is at and the complexity of the study. A study may take two and sometimes three semesters to complete.

Format of the Course:
We meet every Wednesday from 3:30-5:20 in ASCJ 202-C. This is not a lecture class. Everything we cover will be done as a research team. What we cover on a specific date depends upon what has to be done. I will send you an agenda about 6 days before each class meeting. The agenda will indicate what tasks we'll be addressing and your assignment for the coming week.

Keep a weekly log. I will send the form to you. In the log you'll note what you've done in connection with the study and how much time you've spent. You'll turn your log in to me at the end of the semester. At that time you will assess the quantity and quality of your work based on criteria that will be described below.

Each of you must take the online CITI course that qualifies you to do research with human subjects. You must also get an Annenberg Qualtrics
account. Surveys we create are typically distributed through Qualtrics. For you to have editing access to any survey that we create as a collaborating researcher, you must have taken the CITI course.

**Grading:**

Your grade will be based on three factors: (1) Contribution to the research project (60 percent), (2) Team self-evaluations (20 percent), and (3) Weekly logs (20 percent).

First, my evaluation of your contribution to the research project based on the following criteria:

1. **Attendance:** You must attend a minimum of 85 percent of the classes to earn a superior attendance grade.
2. **Assignments:** Did assignments on time with high quality.
3. **Time Contributions:** Gathered journal articles and books, collected data, entered data into SPSS, prepared charts, tables and graphs, etc.
4. **Intellectual Contributions:** Proposed projects, suggested methods and procedures, suggested statistical tests and analyses, interpreted prior research, analyzed research findings, wrote/edited final paper.
5. **Leadership:** Suggested areas of focus, distribution of assignments, methods of coordinating work, motivated team members, handled conflict.
6. **Team Player:** Was supportive, positive, and cooperative.
7. **Overall Contribution**

Second, team self-evaluations based on the seven criteria above.

Third, my evaluation of your weekly logs and self-evaluation. I will judge the quantity and quality of the work you report in your logs and the quality of your self-evaluation.

**Research Projects for Spring Semester 2015:**

**Project 1:** In the spring of 2014 students in Comm 494 developed a beta version of a study analyzing the effect of “trivial” disagreements in intimate relationships on relational satisfaction. Trivial disagreements have not been previously studied because researchers assumed that such disagreements had no effect on relational satisfaction. The current study, however, hypothesizes that trivial disagreements have a cumulative negative effect on relational satisfaction, especially if a partner is consistently on the “losing end” of such disagreements.

In the spring of 2015, the survey will be finalized, submitted to the University Park Institutional Review Board (UPIRB), administered, analyzed statistically, and reported in a final paper. The study will be submitted to NCA or ICA for possible presentation at their annual conventions.
Project 2: In the fall of 2014, students in Comm 494 developed a beta version of a study to examine perceptions that non-communication majors have of the field of communication and communication majors. A proposal was submitted to the USIRB, which approved the study.

In the spring of 2015, the survey will be finalized, administered, analyzed statistically, and reported in a final paper. The paper will be submitted to NCA or ICA for possible presentation at their annual conventions.

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code as detailed in the SCampus guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code to the Office of Student Conduct. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.