

**CMGT 597: Communication Research Practicum**  
**Spring 2008 Monday Thursday**  
**Course Syllabus**

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Office:	ASC 221	ASC 221	SGM 801
Office hours:	TBD	Mon Wed 4:00-5:15 pm	Tue 3:30-5:30 pm
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Check your email linked to Blackboard regularly. The instructors will send important emails about class agenda and logistical arrangements through Blackboard's email system.

### **Course Description**

Congratulations! You have accomplished much to reach this end stage of your program at Annenberg. In the next 15 weeks, you will cross the finish line by completing the project you have started.

You should begin this course with a research topic and research questions already well defined, and with the relevant literature reviewed and presented. Your research methods, measurements, and protocols should be finalized soon (by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the semester). The goal is to start collecting data by the 4<sup>th</sup> week. If you are not prepared, please meet with the instructors. Be prepared to put in significant effort to get caught up, or consider taking this course at a later semester.

### *Course Materials*

#### Required materials

- *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> edition)* (abbreviated as APA), by the American Psychological Association (2001).
- *The science of scientific writing*, by George D. Gopen and Judith A. Swan (in *American Scientist*, 78, 550-558).

#### Recommended materials

##### Materials on data analysis

- *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh (4<sup>th</sup> edition)*, by Samuel B. Green and Neil J. Salkind.
- *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*, by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994).

##### On presentation of data

- *Visual and statistical thinking: Displays of evidence for making decisions* (abbreviated as VST) by Edward Tufte (1997).

##### On writing

- *The clockwork muse: A practical guide to writing theses, dissertations, and books*, by Eviatar Zerubavel (1999).
- *The elements of style (4<sup>th</sup> edition)*, by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White (1999).
- USC Writing Center, [www.usc.edu/schools/college/writingcenter/information\\_for\\_students](http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/writingcenter/information_for_students)

### **Evaluation of Performance**

Research ethics module	05%
Comprehensive examination	15%
Reading group activities	05%
Peer evaluation of contribution to group	05%
Meeting with instructors and making progress on your project	30%
Presentation	10%
Final draft of course project paper	30% (45% if not taking the examination)

### *Grading Practice and Philosophy*

This course uses the following grading scheme:

A	95% and higher
A-	90%-94%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C	70%-79%
F	69% or lower

To get a better sense of what these numbers may mean, consider these scenarios.

You are a professional engaged by your client to deliver a service wrapped in the form of a project. The project earns a B+ to A- grade, if you delivered the service competently, on time, within budget, and with adequate quality. Your client is reasonably pleased, and you are on her short list of people to call for the next job.

To earn an A for the project means the equivalent of impressing your client, outperforming her expectations. For example, you manage to deliver on time and with quality even when the job scope and demands unexpectedly expand under unreasonable deadlines. This earns you the equivalent of being called first when your client has another job, or being asked to join the client's firm.

On the other side of the spectrum, a C represents a minimally acceptable result, often delivered grudgingly. An example of a C experience is this: You are at a local franchise restaurant ordering breakfast to go for your colleagues. The service staff packs your order, and moves on to the next customer. You check the bag, and realize that the receipt is missing. You ask for the receipt because you want to be able show your colleagues what their order costs. However, the service staff says, "No, I can't give you a receipt because the order is closed." You ask to talk to a supervisor. The supervisor comes to the counter. The staff and the supervisor then speak to each other in a non-English language, saying essentially, "What's her problem? Why the eff does she want a receipt for?" You understand perfectly the non-English language, and you say to them, "I need the receipt to show my colleagues, to collect money from them. So give me my effing receipt." The supervisor reopens the order, and gives you a receipt, making a tremendously displeased face the whole time. So, in this scenario, you got your food and your receipt, so the restaurant staff delivered, but the quality of your experience is poor. The restaurant in this scenario earns no better than a C.

In terms of your performance in this course, an example of earning a C would be turning in a 15-page report when the instructors ask for 25 pages, or failing to fulfill required criteria.

At end of the poor outcome spectrum, F grades represent failure. This may occur when a student fails to attend more than half of the classes, or fails to turn in assignments, or does something remarkably bad, such as committing plagiarism.

### *Research Ethics Module*

The research ethics module is a set of lessons focusing on the awareness and care you should take when you collect and present data about subjects. Refer to the document "Research Ethics Module;" it has explicit instructions on how to enroll. Enroll and complete the module by Week 3. Present to the instructors that evening proof that you have completed the lessons.

### *Comprehensive Examination*

The comprehensive examination is required if you choose to earn a Master of Arts in Communication Management. It is not required if you opt to earn a Master of Communication Management (MCM). Please check with Gail Light regarding which degree for which you are eligible. The comprehensive examination is to be turned in by 9:00 pm on February 25, 2008 (for the Monday class) or February 28, 2008 (for the Thursday class).

### *Reading Group Activity*

Form a reading group with two of your peers. Choose your partners carefully: you want someone rigorous in editing, and encouraging when giving feedback. Someone who is mindlessly congratulatory when you need improvement will not be helpful. Give your peers' writing the same care you hope to receive. You are still responsible for your writing, including any issues related to plagiarism. Form your groups, and inform all instructors who the members are by Thursday, January 24.

The exercise is to improve the thoroughness of citations and compliance with APA style. To that end, you should review the relevant sections of the APA Publication Manual, for your own writing and for editing others'. Among your group, choose one member to read your draft. For example, in a three-person group, A reads B's, B reads C's, and C reads A's draft. Submit your current draft of the introduction and literature review to your peer editor by 6:00 pm February 4 (for the Monday class) or February 7 (for the Thursday class).

Review and edit your peer's draft. Prepare two copies of your edited draft, one for your writer, and one for the instructor(s) when you next meet. Meet your group on February 11 (Monday) or February 21 (Thursday) to give feedback on the citations and compliance to APA style. Attendance counts. For those days, each person will sign in at ASC 221, and proceed to find a quiet place to meet with others.

When giving feedback, take care to use a tone that encourages the recipient to improve. Be gentle and factual, rather than harsh and obnoxious. Your editing and guidance will be evaluated by your peer.

After you received your draft from your peer editor, make the revisions.

*Meeting with Instructors*

To ensure that you are making good progress on your project, you are required to meet with the instructors at regular intervals throughout the semester.

You will initiate contact with your instructor to arrange at least three meetings. We should meet every 3-4 weeks, and each meeting should last 30-45 minutes. At every meeting, we will review where you are currently, and decide what progress you need to make by the next meeting. Progress takes the form of expanding and elaborating your research report, and starting or continuing your data analysis.

You must take note of what we decide and agree about the progress you should make, and email the instructor within 48 hours a summary of the decisions and agreement.

For the subsequent meetings, you will deliver whatever progress we agree you should make. You must send any draft or material requiring review 72 hours before the meeting.

Each meeting and demonstration of satisfactory progress constitute 10% of the total evaluation.

*Presentation*

At the end of the semester, you will have an opportunity to present your research to your peers, instructors, other Annenberg faculty, and other professionals. Both C597 sections will come together for a combined presentation session on Tuesday May 6, 6:00 pm. There will be 4-6 presentations. We appreciate any volunteers. If you are not presenting, attend and participate by asking questions or joining the discussion.

*Research Project*

The final deliverable is a paper ranging from 25 to 50 pages in length (depending on the method used), written in APA (5<sup>th</sup> edition) style, proof-read. Two formats are required: (1) a physical copy printed on good quality paper and spiral bound with a clear plastic front cover, and (2) an electronic copy via email.

The project is due May 6, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. More details will be provided as the date approaches.

### **Academic Integrity**

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication Management program.

The School and the University is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by Turnitin technologies (<http://www.turnitin.com>) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and Turnitin is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure this letter is delivered to your TA or professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in the Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Jan 14, 2008 (M) Jan 17, 2008 (Th) Week 1	Introduction and overview. Check w. Gail Light re eligibility to take comprehensive examination for M.A. degree Form reading groups. Review draft to include all citations.  Lesson Activity: Enroll in research ethics module.
<del>Jan 21, 2008 (M)</del> Jan 24, 2008 (Th) Week 2	Meetings with instructors  <b>Project Deadline:</b> Inform instructors re: reading group members.
Jan 28, 2008 (M) Jan 31, 2008 (Th) Week 3	Seminar: Avoiding plagiarism and citing sources properly. Readings: APA, p. 306-316 (sample article), pp. 112-115 (organization of headings), pp. 117-122 (quoting sources), pp. 207-214 (citations in text), pp. 215-281 (reference list). Brochure: <i>Avoiding Plagiarism</i>  <b>Project Deliverable:</b> Finalized methods, procedures, and instruments. <b>Lesson Deliverable:</b> Proof of completion of research ethics module.
Feb 4, 2008 (M) Feb 7, 2008 (Th) Week 4	Meetings with instructors  <b>Project Deadline:</b> Start collecting data; <b>Project Deliverable:</b> (To reading group) Revised introduction and literature review
Feb 11, 2008 (M) Feb 14, 2008 (Th) Week 5	Project Activity: Meeting with reading group, focusing on thoroughness of citations and compliance with APA style (Monday class only)  <b>Project Deliverable:</b> Edited comments on peer's draft (Monday class only)
<del>Feb 18, 2008 (M)</del> Feb 21, 2008 (Th) Week 6	Project Activity: Start analyzing data Project Activity: Meeting with reading group, focusing on thoroughness of citations and compliance with APA style (Thursday class only)  <b>Project Deliverable:</b> Edited comments on peer's draft (Thursday class only)
Feb 25, 2008 (M) Feb 28, 2008 (Th) Week 7	Lesson Activity: SPSS workshops (Monday only)  <b>Examination Deadline:</b> Comprehensive examination
Mar 3, 2008 (M) Mar 6, 2008 (Th) Week 8	Meetings with instructors  <b>Project Deadline:</b> Finish collecting data

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Mar 10, 2008 (M) Mar 13, 2008 (Th) Week 9	Lesson Activity: SPSS workshops (Monday only)
<del>Mar 17, 2008 (M)</del> <del>Mar 20, 2008 (Th)</del>	<i>Spring Break</i>
Mar 24, 2008 (M) Mar 27, 2008 (Th) Week 10	Meetings with instructors
Mar 31, 2008 (M) Apr 3, 2008 (Th) Week 11	Meetings with instructors
Apr 7, 2008 (M) Apr 10, 2008 (Th) Week 12	Meetings with instructors  <b>Project Deadline:</b> Close to final draft for instructors' review; Peer evaluations.
Apr 14, 2008 (M) Apr 17, 2008 (Th) Week 13	Meetings with instructors
Apr 21, 2008 (M) Apr 24, 2008 (Th) Week 14	Meetings with instructors
Apr 28, 2008 (M) May 1, 2008 (Th) Week 15	Meetings with instructors
May 6, 2008 (Tue) 6:00 pm	Presentation (combined Monday and Thursday classes)  <b>Project Deadline:</b> Final draft of paper.