

## Educational Policies Committee

### Course Proposal Form

Date: Nov 15, 2012

Submit **Twenty-four Copies** of this form with **Attachments** to the chair, Educational Policies Committee. The **Registrar** must assign a tentative number to the course.

Department: School of Communication Proposed course number: COM 3385-SL

Course Title: Applied research in strategic communication

Prerequisites: COM 1110, 1111, 2225.

Course Description : (Please use the format of the current catalog.)

This course introduces students to research methods commonly used to better understand clients, audiences, messages and the media. Research methods include the use of secondary sources, media research services, observational methods, in-depth interviews, focus groups, survey research, etc.

#### Please answer the following:

Semester Credit Hours: 4 Graded or Non Graded: Graded

Course will be offered?: Fall X Spring    Alternate Years Beginning?   

Will this course be offered in the Evening? Yes    No X Do not know   .

#### This course is designed to be: (check all appropriate lines):

- |                                     |  |                          |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | a course to satisfy the University Core Requirement in _____ (C) | <input type="checkbox"/> | a Special Topics Course        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a required course in the major                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | an Honors course               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | an elective for majors   | <input type="checkbox"/> | an UR/CW course (UR/CW)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | an experiential learning course (EL)                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | a Global Studies course (GBS)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | a general elective for majors and non majors                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | a civic engagement course (CE) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | an information literacy (technology infused) course              | <input type="checkbox"/> | new course                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | existing course:   | <input type="checkbox"/> | meets Area II requirement      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | combination of previous courses                                  |                          |                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | meets Area I requirement   |                          |                                |

#### The following should be attached:

(1) **Rationale** for the course: (a) How it **supports** the program. (b) If your course appears similar to other departments' offerings at HPU, how is your course **unique**? (c) **Similarity** or **uniqueness** relative to courses at other institutions?

I am proposing that a section of COM 3385—Applied research in strategic communication—be designated as a service-learning course. Research methods are best taught through practice, so in this class, we will partner with a non-profit and conduct research for them. Working with a client will reinforce the course concepts and provide students an opportunity to understand the challenges of collecting and analyzing data. We offer three research methods course in a year; only one will be a service-learning offering.

(2) Do your attachments mention any **related changes**, such as changes in the departmental majors/minors and their associated catalog copy? Note: If you are **significantly revising a major**, please include a two-column before-and-after table, showing the current major and the proposed major. Also include your plan for students who will graduate using older catalog versions – new courses which substitute for ones you are dropping, etc.

There is no significant change to the course.

(3) **Expenditures**: If the proposal requires expenditures beyond those covered by the current Dept budget, please attach a memo from the Dept chair to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, outlining the needs. For new majors, which typically require significant increases in library resources, please also consult with the Director of Library Services. **EPC approval of the proposal does not guarantee budgetary approval.**

There are no additional expenditures.

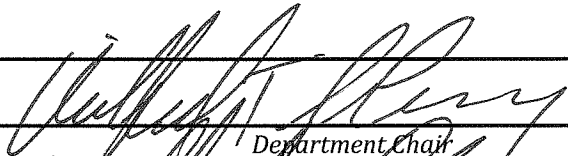
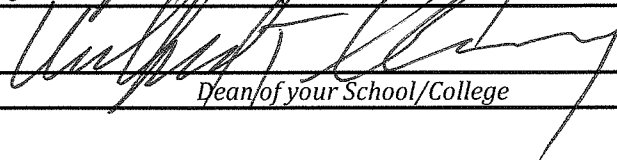
(4) If the changes affect other department(s), include the **signed EPC Departmental Consultation form(s)** in which they acknowledge they have been consulted in detail (their signature does not imply approval).

The changes to not affect other departments

(5) A **thorough syllabus** including:

- Course description
- course objectives (specific and clear)
- course texts and other reading requirements
- writing and speech detailed requirements (esp. if course is intended for Gen. Education credit)
- special projects, research, etc. required
- grading scale and % of grade from each assigned area
- instructional facilities other than classroom/lab
- a tentative week-by-week list of course topics.

Attached

<b>Approved</b>	 Department Chair	Date:	11/16/12
<b>Reviewed</b>	 Dean of your School/College	Date	11/16/12
<b>Reviewed</b>		Date	

Vice President for Academic Affairs

# COM 3385: RESEARCH METHODS-SL

**Instructor:** Dr. Virginia McDermott "Ginny"  
**Office:** NQSC 358  
**Hours:** T/Th 12:30-1:15; 3:00-4:00; M 5:00-6:00; &  
by appointment  
**Class:** NQSC 217 (1:20-3:00)  
**Email:** ginny@highpoint.edu  
**Phone:** 1-336-841-9384



*"Researchers say I'm not happier for being richer, but do you know how much researchers make?"*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to concepts and practices commonly used to better understand clients, audiences, messages, and the media. Students will experience research through both traditional classroom lectures and discussions and working with a real client on a service-learning project. Students will use surveys, interviews, and focus groups to analyze the clients' target audience and/or assess the effectiveness of promotional efforts. Ethical issues of conducting research and working with clients will be explored.

## REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

1. Wimmer, R. D., Dominick, J. R. (2011). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, 9th Edition ISBN-13: 978-1-4390-8274-4
2. Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.  
CBPR

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Explain and apply the various research methods commonly used in the development and evaluation of strategic communication campaigns.
- Describe the relative strengths and weaknesses of various research methods used in strategic communication.
- Interpret both quantitative and qualitative data and explain its implications for the development and evaluation of strategic communication campaigns.
- Work productively in small groups and with diverse communities.
- Articulate the importance of commitment to service, social justice, and community involvement.
- Analyze the ethical responsibility of conducting research on and with community members.
- Reflect on one's own assumptions and values as applied to community issues and research processes

## THIS COURSE MEETS THE FOLLOWING AEJMC STANDARDS:

- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which you work.
- Think critically, creatively, and independently.

In addition to the above objectives, this course also seeks to reinforce certain attitudes and behaviors that are consistent with the strategic communication field. These include being present, meeting rigid deadlines, producing professional quality work, listening to the needs of the client, and adopting a consultative, problem-solving attitude. Work produced in this course should be appropriate for inclusion in students' professional portfolios.

## COMMUNITY PARTNER & CONTACT INFORMATION

High Point Area Arts Council  
136 Northpoint Ave, High Point, NC 336-883-3483  
Executive Director: Debbie Lumpkins



## TIME COMMITMENT—Approximately 180 hours over the course of the semester

Success in this class is dependent on your motivation, time management, and effort. You should expect to spend approximately 12-hours per week focused on research methods. This time will be divided among a number of activities, including in-class time, working at the Arts Council, data collection, data analysis, report writing, studying for exams, writing reflection essays, completing additional assignments, and preparing for the final presentation. To be successful, some students will need to spend more time studying and writing.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Service learning projects represent mutually beneficial partnerships between academic courses and nonprofit organizations. The nonprofit group will provide you with real workplace contexts for practicing the skills taught in the class, and you will provide valuable services for the organizations services for which they could not afford to pay and which might otherwise go undone. All parties have an equal stake in the success of these projects.

For your service-learning project in this course, you and 2-3 other classmates will form a team to provide research services for a non-profit organization in our area. The whole class will work as an extended creative team, supporting each other and acting as a consulting group as we contract out our services to meet needs in our community. By the end of the course, you should have a collection of research analysis and writing from which to compile a portfolio to take to job interviews.

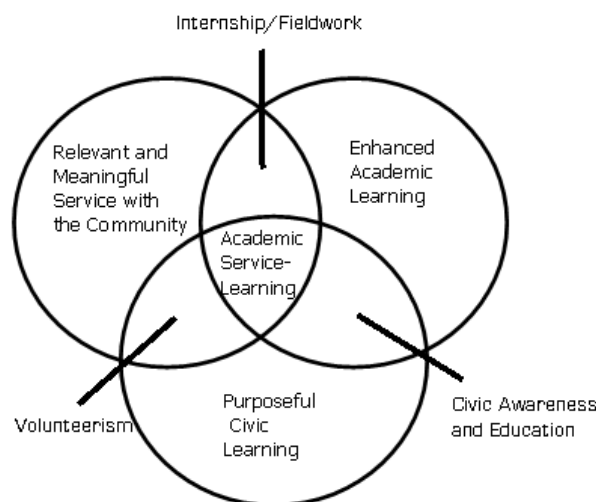
## WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING

All students in the course are required to spend 25 hours in service to the organization with which they are paired in the course. Before beginning your service hours, you will be introduced to representatives of the organizations, receive an orientation to service learning as a pedagogy, agree to the Service Learning Code of Professional and Ethical Behavior, and sign a Partnership Agreement. You must begin your service learning experience by **(A date in the first three weeks of class)**, as it is necessary for your first reflection.

All students in the course will be required to abide by the policies set forth by the HPU Service Learning Program in its Service Learning Code of Professional and Ethical Behavior and Partnership Agreement. Failure to abide by these policies will be treated as a breach of the University's Honor Code and you may be referred to the Honor Council for punishment. You are expected to take the initiative to complete your required service hours and you are responsible for the penalties to your grade if you do not complete the hours.

Service learning is not an internship or simply volunteering – it is a pedagogical model that will deepen your understanding of the course material by exposing you first-hand to the ethical issues we discuss in class. You will perform service work that aids our local community and that service work will advance your thinking about ethics and education.

The following Venn Diagram illustrates the three central components of a service learning pedagogy and how it is different from other activities.



The Diagram is a synthesis of two sources: [http://www.csus.edu/cec/director\\_msg.stm](http://www.csus.edu/cec/director_msg.stm) and [http://mgmoses.com/Jumpstart/SectionII/Chap1%20Overview%20SL/Defining\\_SL.html](http://mgmoses.com/Jumpstart/SectionII/Chap1%20Overview%20SL/Defining_SL.html)

## GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES:

**Attendance:** Successful students go to class. We will cover material that is not in your textbook, so the only person hurt by your absence is you. I will take attendance every class period, and each student will be allowed to miss four class periods. There are no excused or unexcused absences—only absences. The fifth absence will result in probation; a subsequent absence will result in the student being dropped from the class. In addition, there is an arrive late/leave early policy. Each time you are more than 10 minutes late, I will count you as absent. Also, if you leave early, you will be counted as absent. Please keep track of your absences.

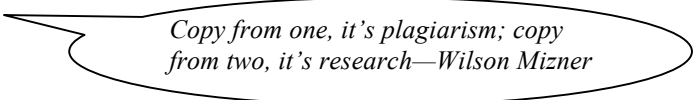
**Preparation:** Plan to spend an additional six to nine hours a week outside of class completing work. You will need this time to read the text, conduct research projects, prepare reports and presentations, and study for exams. This course is supported by Blackboard. Use the link on the HPU website to access your Blackboard. Blackboard is set up with your HPU email address. Please check your email and Blackboard regularly. This class will rely heavily on discussion and your participation. Complete the readings before class so we can have a meaningful discussion. Assignments turned in must be professional—neat, **stapled**, include your name, etc.

**Due Dates:** Only work handed in on the assigned due date, at the beginning of class, will be considered for full credit. To receive credit, assignments must be turned in on time. Late work turned in within 24 hours will only receive a full letter grade deduction; work turned in between 24 and 48 hours will receive a two-letter grade deduction; work turned in between 48 and 72 hours will receive a three-letter grade penalty. After 72 hours, assignments will no longer be accepted for credit. Only truly extraordinary circumstances will be accommodated. These circumstances require prior, or as timely as possible, notification and all the requisite documentation. Making up a missed exam also requires legitimate documentation. The only University approved excuses are (1) illness documented by a physician; (2) death in the family with requisite documentation; (3) religious observance; (4) University sanctioned activity. If you will not be in class because of religious observance or a University activity, you need to inform me prior to the absence so we can make other arrangements. Legitimate documentation for other absences must be produced the next time you are in class. You are also expected to make every effort to notify me prior to the date of the assignment. Only hard copies of assignments will be accepted, so please do not email your papers.

**Diversity:** This course encourages different perspectives related to such factors as gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other relevant cultural identities. This course seeks to foster understanding and inclusiveness related to such diverse perspectives and ways of communicating.

**Academic Accommodations:** Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Students who require classroom accommodations due to a diagnosed disability must submit the appropriate documentation to Disability Support in the Office of Academic Development, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Smith Library. Accommodations should be made at the beginning of the semester and are not retroactive.

**Academic Misconduct:** The course emphasizes ethical practices and perspectives. Above all, students and instructors should strive to communicate and act, both in class interactions and in assigned coursework, in a manner directed by personal integrity, honesty, and respect for self and others. Included in this focus is the need for academic honesty by students. Students need to do **original** work and properly cite sources. For example, be aware of plagiarism—directly copying more than 3 or 4 words from another author without quoting (not just citing) the author is plagiarism. Further, all work produced and submitted in this class is expected to be original work created this semester for that class assignment *only*. Work submitted for any assignment that was created, in part or in whole, for another class or another assignment will face the same punishment as plagiarism and cheating. Finally, course content will encourage the ethical practices and analysis of research methods. Cheating or plagiarizing will not be tolerated and will result in the student being reported to the honor court. If found guilty, the penalty will be a "0" for the exam/assignment and a "F" for the course. Please familiarize yourself with the rules, regulations, and penalties for academic misconduct as noted in the Student Handbook.



*Copy from one, it's plagiarism; copy from two, it's research—Wilson Mizner*

**Please have consideration for others** - turn off cell phones. Cell phone use in communication classes is strictly prohibited. This includes voice, text, video, data or any other current or future transmission technology. Also, please refrain from doing other work while in class. Side conversations and inattentiveness are a distraction and discourteous.

Any audio or video recording in the class, including the instructor's lecture/discussion, or other classroom activity, is strictly prohibited unless authorized by the instructor and students in the classroom. Inappropriate use of a laptop, desktop or other electronic computing device during the class will result in the student being asked to leave the room. An absence will be recorded for that day's class and the student will not be readmitted until they have met individually with the Director of the School of Communication.

**Course evaluations:** All students are expected to complete course evaluations in the week preceding final exams. These evaluations, which are delivered online, are an important part of HPU's assessment program, so your cooperation in completing them is greatly appreciated. As the end of the semester or academic year draws near, you will receive information from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment about how to complete the online evaluations. All communication from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will be sent to your HPU email account.

Service commitment: You will be working with a real client on a real research project, so you must be prepared to

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

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**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND CONTRACT POINTS:**

For this course, you can decide which assignments you want to complete. On 9/14, you will turn into me your semester contract. For your semester, you must have 1000 assignment point values. There are six required assignments: mid-term, final, arts council project, inquiry essays, self-presentation analysis, and IRB training. All other assignments are optional; it is up to you to decide how you want to divide your points. On the last page of the syllabus, there is a contract.

Assignment	Points	Your points
Exam #1		
Exam #2		
Arts Council Project		
Analysis of self-presentation		
IRB training		
Inquiry Essays		
Journal article critique		
Quantitative design paper #1		
Qualitative design paper #2		
Graduate level research project		
Participation and homework		
"other"		
Total points	1000	

"First get your facts; then you can distort them at your leisure."  
--Mark Twain

It is important that students bring a certain ragamuffin, barefoot, irreverence to their studies; they are not here to worship what is known, but to question it.  
-- J. Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man*

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

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"What do you think . . . should we get started on that motivation research or not?"

A+	97.5%-100%	C+	77.5%-79.4%
A	92.5%-97.4%	C	72.5%-77.4%
A-	89.5%-92.4%	C-	69.5%-72.4%
B+	87.5%-89.4%	D+	67.5%-69.4%
B	82.5%-87.4%	D	62.5%-67.4%
B-	79.5%-82.4%	D-	59.5%-62.4%

## ARTS COUNCIL RESEARCH PROJECT

Our primary project focuses on helping the Arts Council better understand the community and how the community access arts. We will work in small teams focused on four separate topics:

(A) Who attends Day in the Park and why? Why don't others attend? What could improve attendance? How should this be promoted?

(B) Who attends Expo Vino and why? Why don't others attend? What could improve attendance? How should this be promoted?

(C) What is the general perception of the Arts Council? How do community members perceive the efforts and activities? Which types of people support the arts? Which types of people don't value the arts?

(D) How do the affiliates perceive the council? What support and services would they like? What do they think is working well?

### COMPONENTS:

Organizational needs analysis and report (5%)

Audience analysis report (5%)\*

Instrument development (5%)

Data collection I (15%)\*

Data collection II (15%)\*

Data analysis (10%)\*

Results report (25%)

Status report (5%)

Peer and self-evaluation (10%)\*

Results presentation to the High Point Area Arts Council Board (10%)

Prepare and deliver a professional presentation to the board of directors. This need to be a multimedia and presentation requires handouts. All team members must participate in the presentation in some form. The presentation is 5-7 minutes long. Be prepared for a Q/A.

Data collection diary (5%)\*

After you have collected data (i.e., surveys, focus groups, interviews), think about how you felt during this process and what you learned about people. What surprised you? Frustrated you? Challenged your perceptions?

\*These are individual components

## ETHICAL INQUIRY QUESTIONS

Question the intersection of ethics, service-learning, and research methods

Pre: What are your goals for this course? How will you achieve these goals? How will you know if you have achieved these goals? What's your plan for achieving these goals?

#1: Why do you think we selected the Arts Council as our partner? Are the Arts important to communities? Is it important for forming good people? Compare the community events sponsored by the arts council. What are the differences? What do these differences say about our community?




#2: What does it mean to be an ethical researcher? Given our partnership with the Arts Board, what ethical issues should we be sensitive to? How do we need to conduct ourselves during the research process? What are the implications if a researcher behaves unethically? What if someone in our class behaves unethically? Find an example of unethical research practices. Briefly describe the situation and the ethical issues. Why do you think the researchers engaged in this behavior? What consequences were there? If you were responsible for these researchers, what consequence would you have instituted?

#3: What are the potential harms to the community members? How about to the arts board? Does the information we found outweigh the potential harm to the subjects? How important was confidentiality to the research process?

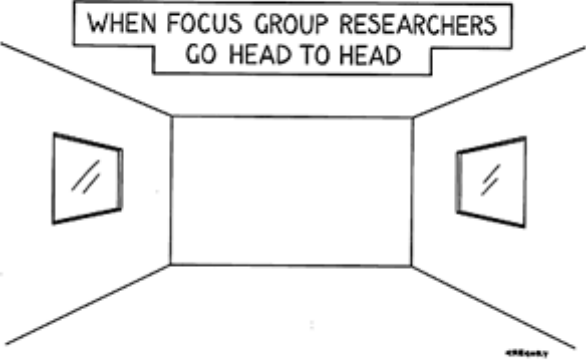
#4: A lot of time and effort was spent on helping the arts community. Was this the best use of our time? Who access arts and is it worth the money? Please reflect on the ethical implications of selecting to work with one group over another group. Why do we privilege certain groups? What are the outcomes of helping the arts? Should we be put the money into the arts or something else?

#5: What did you learn about research from this project? Do you think working with a partner was the best way to learn about research? Thinking specifically about the support of the arts, what did you learn about how the benefits and burdens of society are distributed? What implications does this have for your future commitments to your community?

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	<p><i>"Every path to a new understanding begins in confusion."</i> Mason Cooley</p>	TOPICS	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
1 8/20 & 8/22	<p>"The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not "Eureka!" ("I found it!") but rather "hmm....that's funny..." -- Isaac Asimov</p>	Introduction to communication research methods and service learning	Chapter 1—Science and Research  Read article about service learning	A one-page overview of the High Point Area Arts Council's activities. Identify three areas that might be interesting research projects.
2 8/27 & 8/29	<p><i>"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known."</i> Carl Sagan</p>	Making claims  Understanding communication data	Chapter 2—Elements of Research	CONTRACT DUE: 8/29
3 9/3 & 9/5	<p>The great tragedy of science - the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact. - T H Huxley (English scientist)</p>	Creating research arguments  Ethics of research	Chapter 3—Research Ethics	IRB ethics training NIH Certificate Due <a href="http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php">http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php</a>
4 9/10 & 9/11	 <p><i>"I'm not trying to sell you anything, sir. I'm doing market research, and all I ask is two or three hours of your time to answer a few thousand questions."</i></p>	Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods	Chapter 4—Sampling  Assigned reading—validity and reliability	Developing the project survey for Day in the Park
5 9/17 &	<p>Research ! A mere excuse for idleness; it has never achieved, and will never achieve any results of the</p>	Survey Research	Chapter 7—Survey Research	

9/19	slightest value. -- Benjamin Jowett, British Theologian			
6 9/24 & 9/26	"A fool ... is a man who never tried an experiment in his life." -- Erasmus Darwin (1711-1802, English physician, grandfather of Charles Darwin)	Experimental Research	Chapter 9—Experimental Research	
7 10/1 & 10/3	"Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work." - Thomas Edison (1847-1931)	Experimental Research Review for Midterm (10/4)	Chapter 11—Hypothesis Testing	
8 10/8 & 10/10	"You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions." Naguib Mahfouz	EXAM #1 (10/9) STUDY!! (Administered in) Review exam (10/11) Finish up material on statistics		
9 10/15 & 10/17	"Research is the process of going up alleys to see if they are blind." --Marston Bates	FALL BREAK		
10 10/22 & 10/24	"First you guess. Don't laugh, this is the most important step. Then you compute the consequences. Compare the consequences to experience. If it disagrees with experience, the guess is wrong. In that simple statement is the key to science. It doesn't matter how beautiful your guess is or how smart you are or what your name is. If it disagrees with experience, it's wrong. That's all there is to it." --the quote is from a PBS show on Dr. Feynman. He was describing to his class how to look for a new law of physics	Data entry and analysis workshop  <b>COMPLETED SURVEYS DUE!!</b>  <b>In class reflection on the service-learning process—come with questions, concerns, and suggestions</b>		
11 10/29 & 10/31	"Experimental confirmation of a prediction is merely a measurement. An experiment disproving a prediction is a discovery." Enrico Fermi, Italian physicist, 1901-1954	The basics of qualitative research	Chapter 10—Introduction to Statistics Chapter 12—Basic statistical procedures	Quantitative research design paper due
12 11/5 & 11/7	"No amount of experimentation can every prove me right; a single experience can prove me wrong" —Albert Einstein	Interviewing	Chapter 5—Qualitative Research Methods  Assigned reading—collecting data by talking to others	Report #1 due
13 11/12 & 11/14	"Most people, sometime in their lives, stumble across truth. And most jump up, brush themselves off, and hurry on about their business as if nothing had happened." --Sir Winston Churchill	Participant Observation  Focus groups		Focus group protocol due

<p>14 11/19  (11/21 Turkey)</p>	<p><i>If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn't be called research, would it?</i></p>	<p>Focus groups</p>		<p>Reflection question #4 due</p>
<p>15 11/26 &amp; 11/28</p>	<p>© Cartoonbank.com</p> 		<p>Chapter 15-Research in Advertising  Chapter 16—Research in Public Relations</p>	<p><b>11/27—Arts Council results and report due</b></p>
<p>16 12/3  (12/5-reading day)</p>	<p>If a man will begin with certainties, he will end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he will end in certainties. -Francis Bacon</p>	<p>Review for final</p>		<p>Presentation to the Arts Council  Qualitative research design paper due</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>It is not always possible to know what one has learned, or when the dawning will arrive. You will continue to shift, sift, to shake out and to double back. The synthesis that finally occurs can be in the most unexpected place and the most unexpected time. My charge ... is to be alert to the dawnings. --Virginia B. Smith</p>	<p>EXAM #2</p> <p>STUDY!!</p> <p><b>JOURNAL ARTICLE CRITIQUE DUE</b></p> <p>Reflection question #5 due</p>		

**DO NOT MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS THAT CONFLICT WITH AN EXAM. EXAMS MUST BE TAKEN ON THE SCHEDULED DAY.**

# Guidelines for Journal Article Critique

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Article reference in APA style.

## I. Research Question or Problem

Is the question or problem clearly stated? State it in your own words.

What is the purpose of the research project? What is the Independent variable? The Dependent Variable? Is the hypothesis one-tailed or two-tailed? What is the conceptual definition of the variables? What is the operational definition?

## II. Theoretical Base

Is there a review of the literature related to the problem or question? How many references are cited? Summarize the theory base presented.

## III. Methodology

Does the researcher explain the methods used in the study? Who is the population studied? How were they selected? What instruments were used to gather data? Do you think this was an appropriate way to answer their question?

## IV. Results

What did they find out? Are the results clearly stated and understandable? Did the results answer the question or clarify the hypothesis? What did you find out? Are there tables or graphs?

## I. V. Discussion

Are the results discussed? What does it mean? Are there suggestions for practical implications? Do they discuss limitation? Are there recommendations for further research? Do they tell you why it is important?

## II. VI. Personal Reaction

What did you learn from reading the study? What further questions did it generate? Was it a good or bad study?

# QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN ASSIGNMENT

In quantitative research your aim is to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables. An experiment establishes causality.

For this assignment, address each of the following questions. Please use this format, not essay format.

- (1) What is your research question or hypothesis? Is it one-tailed or two-tailed?
- (2) What is your communication variable?
- (3) What do we know about this topic? Please provide the conclusions (in your own words) from 5 academic research journals. Address each article in a separate paragraph and include the APA citation at the start of the paragraph.
- (4) Why is this topic practically and theoretically important?
- (5) What is your Independent variable?
- (6) What is your dependent variable?
- (7) Can you think of any confounding variables? How might they be a problem?
- (8) How are you going to operationalize your variables?
- (9) Population and Sample Characteristics
  - a. Who is your population and sample?
  - b. Why did you select this sample?
  - c. How big is your sample?
  - d. How will you get them to participate?
- (10) Design
  - a. What is your design (survey, experiment, etc.)? In other words, how are you going to measure what you want to measure?
  - b. Why did you select this design?
  - c. What are its advantages and disadvantages?
  - d. What assumptions come with this design?
  - e. What is going to be done – when, where, how and by whom; how is the data to be recorded (tape, video, field notes etc)? Fully explain every step to the design.
  - f. What measures are you going to use to assess your IV and DV? **Attach them.**
  - g. How will you ensure reliability and validity?
- (11) Data Analysis: How will the data be analyzed? Provide a one-paragraph overview of what you would do with your data.
- (12) What are your findings? (Make up results and explain in one paragraph).
- (13) What do your hypothesized findings tell us about your topic? Why is this important information?
- (14) What were the ethical dilemmas of this project?
- (15) Identify 2 limitations of research – What factors might limit the extent to which the research can be generalized or be considered rigorous?

# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN ASSIGNMENT

For this assignment, address each of the following questions:

- (1) What is your research question?
- (2) Why are qualitative methods the best choice to answer this question?
- (3) What do we know about this topic? Please provide the conclusions (in your own words) from 5 academic research journals. Include the APA citation for each journal.
- (4) Why is this topic practically and theoretically important?
- (5) Qualitative Design
  - a. What is your design (ethnography, interview, focus-group, etc.)?
  - b. Why did you select this design?
  - c. What are its advantages and disadvantages?
  - d. What assumptions come with this design?
  - e. What is going to be done – when, where, how and by whom; how is the data to be recorded (tape, video, field notes etc)? Fully explain every step to the design.
  - f. What are you going to use to assess your research question? **Attach your investigator guidelines**
  - g. How will you ensure qualitative reliability and validity?
- (6) Selection of site—where are you going to conduct your research? Why did you select this site? How will you gain access?
- (7) Selection of participants
  - a. Who are your participants and why did you select these participants?
  - b. How many participants will you have? Why is this the correct number?
  - c. How will you get them to participate?
- (8) What is the timeline of your project? Why did you select this time frame?
- (9) What role will you take as a researcher? What does this role entail? Why is this the appropriate role?
- (10) Data Analysis and Management: How will the data be analyzed? Provide a one-paragraph overview of what you would do with your data.
- (11) What are your findings? (Make up results and explain in one paragraph).
- (12) What do your hypothesized findings tell us about your topic? Why is this important information?
- (13) What were two ethical dilemmas of this project? Why are these problems?
- (14) Identify 2 limitations of your research design. How could you address them?

## COM 3385 INDIVIDUAL CONTRACT—Instructor Copy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Minimum Points	Maximum Points	My Points	Due Date
Exam 1	100	225		
Exam 2	100	250		
Arts Council project	250	400		
IRB ethics training	25	25		
Analysis of self-presentation	25	50		
Inquiry Essays	50	50		
Journal article critique	25	50		
Quantitative research design	50	100		
Qualitative research design	50	100		
Graduate level research project	100	200		
Participation	25	50		
Other	??	??		

I, \_\_\_\_\_, in good mind and semi-free will, do hereby agree to complete in a professional manner the assignments indicated above. I know that I am responsible for turning in all assignments in paper form, stapled, neatly compiled, and with my name on the front page. I have made note of all due dates. On exam days, I will show up with a writing utensil and a brain full of knowledge. I promise not to cheat in any fashion. For written assignments, I will type and proofread my papers. If I have trouble with grammar, punctuation, or organizing my papers, I will see the professionals at the tutoring center. If I agree to work on a research project, I will attend all the meetings and complete my assigned tasks by the due date. I will always be willing to ask a question if I do not understand. I will be supportive of my class members' contributions. I will laugh at my professor's jokes. In sum, I come prepared to work hard and learn a lot.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## COM 3385 INDIVIDUAL CONTRACT—Student Copy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Minimum Points	Maximum Points	My Points	Due Date
Exam 1	100	225		
Exam 2	100	250		
Arts Council project	250	400		
IRB ethics training	25	25		
Analysis of self-presentation	25	50		
Inquiry Essays	50	50		
Journal article critique	25	50		
Quantitative research design	50	100		
Qualitative research design	50	100		
Graduate level research project	100	200		
Participation	25	50		
Other	??	??		

I, \_\_\_\_\_, in good mind and semi-free will, do hereby agree to complete in a professional manner the assignments indicated above. I know that I am responsible for turning in all assignments in paper form, stapled, neatly compiled, and with my name on the front page. I have made note of all due dates. On exam days, I will show up with a writing utensil and a brain full of knowledge. I promise not to cheat in any fashion. For written assignments, I will type and proofread my papers. If I have trouble with grammar, punctuation, or organizing my papers, I will see the professionals at the tutoring center. If I agree to work on a research project, I will attend all the meetings and complete my assigned tasks by the due date. I will always be willing to ask a question if I do not understand. I will be supportive of my class members' contributions. I will laugh at my professor's jokes. In sum, I come prepared to work hard and learn a lot.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

### CODE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Students enrolled in service learning courses are provided with many opportunities to work in various capacities within communities outside of the campus. Along with these opportunities come the serious responsibilities of the student to community partners and the University. Each student must to comply with the following expectations:

1. Adhering to the University Honor Code adopted and endorsed by the faculty and Board of Trustees of High Point University and the Service Learning Code of Professional and Ethical Behavior.
2. Maintaining regular attendance, being punctual and when engaged in service work, staying for the time scheduled. Only illness or true emergencies excuse an absence or tardy. Students are expected to notify the community partner and the Service Learning Community Liaison immediately if the schedule cannot be met.
3. Never engaging in any inappropriate social interaction (including, but not limited to, profane or lewd remarks, dating, etc.) with members of the community partner organization.
4. Never misrepresenting one's professional qualifications.
5. Conforming to the community partner's policies regarding standards of behavior.
6. Safeguarding all personal and confidential information concerning community partners. *This includes refraining from texting and discussions on social networking websites and e-mails.* Sharing inappropriate information can do much damage to the community partner.
7. Acknowledging the diverse views of community partners. Students should be open to being challenged to look at all sides of controversial issues and refrain from simply exerting their own personal beliefs on others.
8. Following the rules of basic courtesy toward members of the community. It is especially important to refrain from making unfavorable remarks about community members.
9. Dressing appropriately. Personal hygiene and grooming should be of the highest order. Provocative or sloppy dress is always unacceptable.
10. Maintaining good professional relationships. Always deal with community partner personnel in an open, honest, and fair way.
11. Refraining from using personal cellphones, computers and other personal devices in the community partner setting unless approved by the site supervisor.
12. Refraining from using social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, in the community partner setting other than for instructional purposes. Texting and friending community partners, unless approved, are not permitted.
13. Protecting the community partner's assets and ensuring their efficient use.

14. Placing the community partner's duties and responsibility as a first priority and willingly accepting all reasonable duties assigned.
15. Reporting to your professor any criminal prosecutions or pending criminal charges you have at the beginning of the course and any that you incur during the semester in which you are enrolled. You should report this information as soon as they occur.
16. Adhering to any additional instructions by your instructor.

**FINAL NOTE:** We must all work to ensure prompt and consistent action against violations of this Code. However, in some situations, it is difficult to know right from wrong. Since we cannot anticipate every situation that will arise, it is important that we have a way to approach a new question or problem.

First, make sure you have all of the relevant facts – making good moral decisions requires that we be as fully informed as possible.

Second, ask yourself questions like: “What am I being asked to do?” “Does it violate my own sense of morality?” “Are there alternative approaches?” This will help you focus on the specific issue at hand, see the alternatives, and act out of your own sense of moral conviction.

Third, discuss the situation with your community partner supervisor, other students, and/or raise the issue in class. The supervisor is often quite knowledgeable about the clients their organization serves and the issues in the community; he/she can be a strong resource.

Finally, you can always directly contact the Director of Service Learning, Dr. Joe Blosser ([jblosser@highpoint.edu](mailto:jblosser@highpoint.edu) or 336-870-9471), if you do not feel comfortable talking with others. The University is committed to offering you a safe and valuable service experience.

If you encounter problems, it is your responsibility to reach out so we can ensure you receive the best experience and education possible.

(This code is adapted from the *Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators* approved by the North Carolina State Board of Education in March 2002).

Approved by the Service Learning Committee Fall 2011