

COM 408: Quantitative Research Methods in Communication

Instructor:	Office Location:
Office Hours:	E-mail:

Course Description and Objectives

Course Description

This class is an introduction to quantitative research methods and basic statistics. The majority of the course focuses on how statistics are calculated; using and understanding SPSS for Windows as a statistical software package; understanding the substantive meaning of statistical results; and being able to describe these results in writing. No previous experience in statistics is assumed or required.

Learning Objectives

I have several goals for you during the course; by semester's end, I anticipate that you will:

1. Understand, conceptually, statistical procedures employed in Communication research
2. Be able to select appropriate statistical tests to answer research questions
3. Be able to conduct a variety of statistical procedures "by hand" and using SPSS
4. Be able to "write-up" the results of statistical procedures you perform

Course Textbook (Required) and Course Materials

There is one required textbook for this class:

Privitera, G. J. (2015). *Statistics for the behavioral sciences*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. (2nd Edition)

This is available via the ASU Bookstore

You also need the following resources:

Access to APA 6th edition guidelines

A calculator *with* a square root button and *without* text capabilities

Access to BlackBoard and email

Access to SPSS versions 22 or 23 (available on ASU classroom computers, campus computer labs, and for download to personal computer through ASU's *MyApps* service)

Access to *myFiles* through my.asu.edu

Course Policies

Please read the following course policies very carefully. You are responsible for abiding by and adhering to these course policies.

What I Hope for You:

I want you to succeed in this class, and I hope this will be a positive, stimulating learning environment for you. I also hope and expect that you will put forth your best effort, and want to encourage you to use your abilities to the fullest. However, I realize students often go through difficult experiences that present a challenge to completing or excelling in a course. I encourage you to meet with me in the event of such difficulties. Do not wait until the end of the semester! You have a choice to receive the help that I can offer throughout the semester. Your choices and priorities correlate with your grade.

Time Spent Working Outside of Class:

This is a capstone course, and as a student, you should expect to be working quite a bit outside of class. Most universities and colleges hold a similar viewpoint regarding time spent outside of class: for every 1-hour you spend in class per week, you should spend 2-3 hours outside of class studying/working for that particular class. **This class meets for approximately 3 hours per week; thus, you should expect to spend 6-9 hours outside of class per week (about 2 hours per day) working on course assignments/reading.**

Attendance

Coming to class may be the most important thing you can do this semester; as a student, you should take the learning process seriously! The concepts and ideas can be somewhat difficult to grasp in this class; therefore, attending class regularly will not only improve your grade but also your overall understanding of communication research methods. Because I feel that attendance is such an important aspect of this class, you must be present each day.

Showing up late is considered arriving to class after I have begun talking, and this is unacceptable, as it is distracting and disrupts class. Be on time!

There is no formal attendance policy. However, I will take attendance each day so I know who is frequently coming to class and who is not. If you do miss class, **do not e-mail me!** It is your responsibility as a student to get and learn the material that you miss.

I will not give make up exams, activities, or presentations for unexcused absences. The only *excused absences* are:

- Religious holidays
- University-sponsored events (e.g., athletic teams, debate, forensics)
- A documented extreme illness or emergency (i.e., car accidents, death in the family, etc.)

In all three cases, for an absence to be excused, you will need to provide me with **appropriate documentation**. If you are a member of a University sponsored activity that requires you to be absent, please speak to me on the first day of class to make alternate arrangements. Finally, if you do miss class, it is your sole responsibility to find out what you missed and to obtain notes from a fellow student, not from me.

Although no portion of your grade comes directly from attendance and class discussion, I have found that classroom attendance correlates positively with final grades. In courses like statistics and foreign language, you cannot take a week off and expect to come back to class and follow

course material. As exams come from primarily from lectures and PowerPoint slides (and to a lesser extent from the text), attending class is important to fully understanding course material and performing well on assignments. Studying PowerPoint slides without attending the class will likely provide a less than ideal understanding of course material. Students who miss class have the responsibility of getting class notes from another student(s) and determining if an assignment was distributed.

Assignments, Due Dates, and Late Policy

Assignments and tests will be graded and returned no more than one week after their due date, labs will be graded and returned no more than two weeks after their due date.

All assignments must be typed in Times New Roman, size 12 font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins all around, and **stapled** before being turned in (except for Labs and final group paper, which will be turned in via SafeAssign) or they will not be accepted.

ANY PAPER THAT IS NOT STAPLED WILL RECEIVE AN AUTOMATIC ZERO.

Furthermore, we will be using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6th edition* (APA) as our formatting guidelines for submission of all papers.

All homework assignments and labs are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due.

Turning in an assignment late (after the instructor begins that class) will result in an automatic 50% deduction. Late assignments may only be turned in up to 24 hours after the due date; after this, you will receive a zero on the assignment (however, you still must complete all assignments to pass the class, even if you receive a zero for it).

Note that computer problems are not a valid excuse for turning in an assignment late. Technology fails on occasion, so aim to finish assignments and quizzes with time to spare.

Do not email assignments to me. I suggest exchanging emails and contact information with several of your classmates in case you must miss a class when an assignment is due. They may print and/or turn in your assignment for you. Otherwise, you are responsible for submitting your assignment. Half credit can be received if the assignment is submitted within 24 hours. You can submit HW to the main Communication Office, Stauffer Hall Room 412, M-F 8:30am-5pm. Please have the staff record the date/time submitted. If no date/time recorded, no credit is given.

Homework assignments (only those turned in on time) may be corrected for half credit. These must be turned in on the Exam date following the HW Due Date. (HW 1 due on Exam 1 day...etc.)

Makeup Exams

Make-up exams are only given when you have a university-sanctioned excuse, such as participation on a university athletic team or a documented illness. If possible, you must notify us prior to the exam to secure permission for taking a make-up exam at a later date. If you are involved in a university activity, such as being part of an athletic team or the speech team, you

must provide us with a copy of your schedule at the beginning of the course. Similarly, if you need to miss class because of a religious holiday, you should notify us by the end of the second week of class regarding the date(s) you will be absent. Please note that a plane ticket home before the end of the semester does NOT excuse you from taking the final on the day it is scheduled. In fact, except in certain circumstances, university policy requires permission from the Dean of the College to reschedule a final exam.

24/7 Grade Policy

I endeavor to be clear in my expectations of assignments and fair in assessing the grade a submitted assignment has earned. I may make mistakes in grading, or you may disagree with me on a grade, therefore I have a 24/7 policy. Use the first 24 hours after a graded assignment is returned to review the instructions, your work, and my feedback. After the initial 24 hours, you may come see me or email asking me for clarification on why you earned the grade you did. I will do my best to reply promptly. You have seven days to make these requests; after 7 days I will assume all scores are accurate and the grade earned is understood. I do not entertain highly emotional interactions; thus, if you are highly emotional (i.e., crying, acting aggressively or frustrated) when you come to discuss your grade, I will ask you to leave.

E-Mail, Computer, & Web Access

I make an effort to respond to emails in a timely manner. While I will generally reply within 24 hours during *weekdays*, this is not a guarantee. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends may *or may not* receive a reply until the next workday. If you do not receive a response from me within 48 hours, I recommend resubmitting the email. Students need to have a valid ASU e-mail address and access to the ASU online e-learning environment *Blackboard* to remain enrolled in this course. We will be using Blackboard in this class, and you will be given access to the Blackboard site based on your enrollment in this course. On this site, you will find important information to assist you with assignments. Please check Blackboard frequently. *If class needs to be cancelled for any reason, an announcement will be posted to Blackboard.

Also, please make sure you are sending professional e-mails that have proper grammar and mechanics, a formal greeting and closing (Hello Ms. Bednarchik and Thank you, etc.), and a clear message. Finally, do NOT e-mail me with questions that can be answered by referencing the syllabus (e.g. “When is the final exam?”; “When is this assignment due?”) or Blackboard resources – be resourceful and try to answer your own questions before e-mailing me.

Classroom Civility and Cellular/Digital Phones, Laptops, or Other Electronic Devices

Please be considerate to your fellow classmates by observing the following guidelines for classroom conduct. First, when entering the classroom, please be sure that any cell phones or electronic devices you are carrying are turned **OFF (not set to silent)**. I especially ask you not to text message during class, as it is highly distracting.

Second, all course participants should display classroom leadership. Classroom leadership involves the overall attitude you express, accepting alternative points of view on controversial issues (you do not have to agree, but you have to respect another's right to her/his point of view), providing relevant examples, and participation in activities and discussion. Constant moaning and groaning, reading the paper or other materials in class, resistance to course activities, talking

to your friends while others are speaking, falling asleep, arriving late to class, text messaging, and continuously asking if we are going to get out early are examples of poor leadership.

Please also avoid racist, sexist, homophobic or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom. This is not an exhaustive list of behaviors; rather, it represents examples of the types of things that can have a dramatic impact on the class environment. Such behaviors are noticed both by myself and by other students and make it difficult for everyone to concentrate in class. If at any point I have to stop class to tell you to stop disrupting the group, I reserve the right to reduce your overall course grade.

Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual Chapter V – Campus and Student Affairs: Code of Conduct (http://www.abor.asu.edu/1_the_Regents/policymanual/chap5/index.html), and the ACD 125: Computer, Internet, and Electronics Communications (<http://asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd125.html>).

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from a course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process under USI 201-10 (<http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/usi/usi201-10.html>); As noted in this document, "An instructor may withdraw a student from a course with a mark of "W" or "E" when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process. Disruptive classroom behavior for this purpose is defined by the instructor."

Drafts

I will NOT review drafts of paper assignments via email, or less than 72 hours in advance of the due date. I do strongly suggest that you come in person to discuss any questions or concerns (or with some of your written work) during my office hours (or by appointment). I will review drafts focusing primarily on stylistic concerns, structuring of ideas, and major content flaws. You MUST review your own drafts for spelling, stylistic, and grammatical errors before I evaluate them. All work submitted for this course should show critical thinking, thoughtful writing, and careful editing.

Academic Integrity

The mission of a university can only be accomplished in an environment where academic integrity is valued. The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication and the College of Liberal arts and Sciences are strong proponents of academic integrity. Thus, I expect that all of your work will be original. Therefore, cheating on exams, quizzes or other assignments will not be tolerated. Similarly, plagiarizing other people's ideas, thoughts or works will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: Turning in all or part of your own or someone else's work previously turned in for another course, purchasing all or part of another's work (this includes purchasing papers online), ***lacking citations, and/or improper citations (e.g., direct quotes that are cited as paraphrases)***, cheating on exams or quizzes, or using another's words or ideas without properly acknowledging the original source of the information. **You may not re-use papers from other courses, including COM 207.** Academic dishonesty will be dealt with on a case by case basis and will result in one of the following: failing the assignment, failing the class, receiving an XE in the course (which goes on your transcript as failure due to cheating), or being removed from the program.

ASU defines “plagiarism [as] using another’s words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another’s work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.”

You can find this definition at: <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>. “I didn’t know” or “I didn’t mean to” will not be tolerated as excuses for engaging in any form of academic dishonesty.

If you have any questions about what may or may not constitute academic dishonesty, please ask BEFORE turning in your final paper (to avoid sanctions).

Special Circumstances

If you have any learning or physical challenges that could affect your performance in this class, it is your responsibility to provide the necessary paperwork by the end of the first week of class. I am happy to work with students who utilize DRC (Disability Resource Center). For more information, check out: <http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/>

Right to Privacy

Right to Privacy (FERPA): The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ensures that your student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. I will not release your grades to anyone other than you or school officials who are given permission to view your progress. Anyone other than you (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about you, your progress, or your status as a student in my class – this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see: <http://students.asu.edu/policies/ferpa>.

Examinations and Assignments

Examinations

Examinations will be a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer essay questions, statistical calculations; and interpretation of statistical results. Examinations will cover material from both lectures and the text. Lectures will *not* come directly from the text. Exams (including the final) will *not* be cumulative; however, the course content is cumulative, so understanding early concepts is important for fully capturing latter concepts. Each examination will cover approximately one-quarter of course material. There are four exams each worth 50 points.

Homework Assignments

Homework is an important tool for mastering course material. Normally what “makes sense” in lecture is more difficult to reproduce outside of the classroom. Also, “knowing about” is different than “knowing how” (both are important). Thus, homework problems are opportunities for practice. There will be 6 homework assignments consisting of calculation or conceptual problems from the course textbook or the instructor. These are posted on Blackboard and it is YOUR responsibility to download, complete, and turn in on time. There are 7 assignments each worth 25 points.

Labs

Labs provide a more formal means to solidify and apply your knowledge. Each of the labs will ask you to analyze some data using the methods discussed in the course, and write the results of the analysis in APA format. You turn in a copy of your SPSS output with each lab. This means that you need to export your completed output to a word file and upload it to SafeAssign. All papers to be turned in to me should be typed, double-spaced, stapled, have 1-inch margins, and follow APA guidelines regarding any source citations. The labs are posted on Blackboard and it is YOUR responsibility to download, complete, and turn in on time. There will be 4 labs each worth 5 points.

Data Collection Assignment / Group Project

The data analysis assignment will involve designing a quantitative data collection, collecting the data, analyzing those data using *SPSS for Windows*, and writing a report describing the rationale, methods, results, and discussion of the project.

COM 408 is the capstone course for the Bachelor of Science in Communication degree. Thus, your final project is intended as a demonstration of the critical thinking, problem solving, research, and writing skills that you have cultivated as a Communication major at ASU.

This is a group project, and ideally, will be based on one or more of your group members' 308 final paper (research proposal). As a group, you will select a topic, research questions/hypotheses, and variables. You will select survey questions (to be analyzed using at least 4 of the 5 major statistical procedures [correlation, regression, t-test and ANOVA, and chi-square]), collect and analyze your data, and then write-up your findings in a discussion.

Your group is required to cite at least **10 scholarly journal articles from approved communication journals**. You are supposed to use your citations in the following ways: 1. In your literature review to help set up and argue the warrant of your H/RQs; 2. Describe your methodology, especially to cite already validated scales and measures, and 3. To interpret your findings and relate them to past research in the discussion. The **approved communication journals are** (journals that are boldface are the most popular communication journals):

Asian Journal of Communication
Business Communication Quarterly
Central States Speech Journal
Columbia Journal of Communication
Communication and Aging
Communication and the Law
Communication Monographs
Communication Reports
Communication Review
Communication Theory
Conflict Resolution Quarterly
Group and Organizational Management
Health Communication
Human Communication Research
Information Communication and Society
International Journal of Cultural Studies

Australian Journal of Communication
Canadian Journal of Communication
Cognitive Processing
Communication
Communication and Cognition
Communication Education
Communication Quarterly
Communication Research Reports
Communication Studies
Journal of Communication
Cross-Cultural Research
Group and Organizational Studies
Howard Journal of Communications
Human Computer Interaction
International Journal of Conflict Management
International Journal of Human-Comp Interaction

<i>International Journal of Intercultural Rel.</i>	<i>International Journal of Listening</i>
<i>Journal of Applied Comm. Research</i>	<i>Journal of Broadcasting</i>
<i>Jrnl of Broadcasting and Elect. Media</i>	<i>Journal of Business and Technical Comm.</i>
<i>Journal of Business Communication</i>	<i>Journal of Communication and Religion</i>
<i>Journal of Developmental Comm.</i>	<i>Journal of Family Communication</i>
<i>Journal of Health Communication</i>	<i>Western Journal of Communication</i>
<i>Southern Communication Journal</i>	<i>Journal of Social and Personal Relationships</i>
<i>Personal Relationships</i>	<i>Journal of Intercultural Studies</i>
<i>Journal of International Communication</i>	<i>Journal of Language and Social Psychology</i>
<i>Journal of Mass Media Ethics</i>	<i>Journal of New Media: Tech., Society, Culture</i>
<i>Journal of Nonverbal Behavior</i>	<i>Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly</i>
<i>Journalism Quarterly</i>	<i>Language and Communication</i>
<i>Management Communication Quarterly</i>	<i>Mass Communication and Society</i>
<i>Mass Communication Review</i>	<i>Media and Methods</i>
<i>Media Studies Journal</i>	<i>Media, Culture and Society</i>
<i>New Media and Society</i>	<i>Political Communication</i>
<i>Political Communication and Persuasion</i>	<i>Small Group Behavior</i>
<i>Small Group Research</i>	<i>Women and Language</i>
<i>Women's Studies in Communication</i>	<i>World Communication</i>

Additionally, I will accept any journals that are regional communication journals (e.g., *Iowa Journal of Communication*, *Ohio Journal of Communication*, etc.). If you are unsure about whether or not a journal is acceptable, please check with me, and check with me early.

There are a few psychology journals I will consider as well:

<i>Journal of Social Psychology</i>	<i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>
<i>Journal of Social Cognition</i>	<i>Individual Differences</i>
<i>Media Psychology</i>	

The final paper for the group project will include (see resources on Blackboard for more detail):

Abbreviated Literature Review

What variables and concepts are you investigating? (provide conceptual definitions)

Why is this topic interesting and warranting empirical research? (rationale)

What do you expect to happen? (e.g., presentation of your RQs or Hs)

Abbreviated Method Section

Description of Sample

Variables

Operational definitions

How you will measure each variable (keep in mind that each statistical test requires a DV and IV measured at a specific level)

Data analysis (How will you test each of your RQs/Hs?)

Report of Results

What were the results of the statistical tests you performed?

Were your RQs/Hs supported?

Brief Discussion Section (Here you should make your results section interpretable to a non-stats person – what exactly did you find?)

What do your results tell you about the topic under investigation?

How do your results relate to past research – how does it inform what we already know?

What are the strengths/weaknesses of the study you performed?

What should future researchers do differently/next?

Note: Final projects will earn a group grade; however, group members will also complete a peer evaluation for each member. Thus, your individual grade is both a function of the group grade and your individual effort toward the project.

Grading Procedures

***Please note that although unlikely, there could be a change to the course point breakdown. You should always be checking for revisions or updates on the syllabus.*

Grade Breakdown

Examinations (200 points)

Exam One	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam Two	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam Three	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam Four	50 points	Your Points: _____

Homework Assignments (175 points)

Homework One	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Two	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Three	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Four	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Five	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Six	25 points	Your Points: _____
Homework Seven	25 points	Your Points: _____

Labs (20 points)

Lab One	5 points	Your Points: _____
Lab Two	5 points	Your Points: _____
Lab Three	5 points	Your Points: _____
Lab Four	5 points	Your Points: _____

Group Project (120 points)

Final Paper	100 points	Your Points: _____
Group Member Evaluation	20 points	Your Points: _____

Total Points Possible	515 points	Your Points: _____
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Grading Scale

509.85 - 515	A+	448.05 – 463.4	B+	396.55 – 411.9	C+
484.1 – 509.84	A	432.6 – 448.04	B	360.5 – 396.54	C
463.5 - 484	A-	412 – 432.5	B-	309 – 360.4	D
308.9 and below	E				

****Please note that grades are earned based on points, not percentages. Thus, 448.04 points earns a grade of “B” not a “B+”.**

****Please do not e-mail me near the end of the semester and say that you are worried about your grade. Be concerned about your grade throughout the entire semester, and keep track of your progress – this is essential for your successful completion of the course.**

****NOTE: STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE *ALL ASSIGNMENTS* TO RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE. That is, no one may receive a passing grade (C or above) without completing *all* assignments.**

Campus Resources

Your life as a university student is exciting and filled with opportunities. At times it can also be challenging, and many people are available to provide you with the right level of support for any issue you may encounter. Below is a list of the services and departments available to support you.

ASU Counseling Services - <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>

ASU Health Services - <https://eoss.asu.edu/health>

ASU Wellness - <https://eoss.asu.edu/wellness>

Career Center - <https://eoss.asu.edu/cs>

Disability Resource Center - <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc/>

International Student Office - <https://students.asu.edu/international>

Off Campus Student Services - <https://eoss.asu.edu/ocss/>

OUT@ASU - <https://eoss.asu.edu/out>

Pat Tillman Veterans Center - <https://veterans.asu.edu/>

Student Advocacy - <https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/StudentAdvocacyandAssistance>

Student Success – Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction - <https://tutoring.asu.edu/>

TRiO Student Support Services - <https://eoss.asu.edu/trio>