



CURRICULUM GUIDE: OFFICIAL COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code	CMNS 201	Course Title	Empirical Communication Research Methods			
Credit Value	3	Department	Social Sciences			
No. of weeks	14	Hrs. per week	<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Tutorial</i>	<i>Laboratory</i>	<i>Total</i>
			3	0	1	4
Course Description	<p>This course is an introduction to ways of conducting empirical research. Empirical research uses techniques of direct and indirect observation to test hypotheses and develop new ideas. The course will introduce students to basic principles and tools in research design and data analysis, including research ethics, research instrument design such as surveys, sampling techniques, data visualization and presentation using statistical analysis software, and report writing. The goal of this course is to help students develop the skills necessary to read and critically evaluate research reports and scholarly articles.</p>					
Prerequisite(s)	ENGL 100, CMNS 110, CMNS 130, 3-credits of first-year arts.					
Initial Articulation Targets	<i>UBC</i>	<i>SFU</i>	<i>UVic</i>	<i>UNBC</i>	<i>TRU</i>	
	ARTS 2XX (3)	CMNS 201 (4)	ARTS 2XX (3) or ENSH 220 (3)	WMST 307 (3)	CMNS 3000 (3)	
	For updated information on the transferability of this course, please consult the BC Transfer Guide, www.bctransferguide.ca					
Learning Outcomes	<p>Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and apply working knowledge of social sciences quantitative research methods, including research design and research ethics • Develop research questions, logic, and framework for quantitative analysis • Compare and contrast quantitative methods and choose the most appropriate statistical method that best fits particular research questions and data • Identify the logic of and analyze data from small-scale surveys and social experiments • Visualize data in ways that are easily understandable and accurate (representative of the data) • Apply various communications theories, logical arguments, and critical thinking specific to the communication research process • Create quantitative research reports/papers 					



Content	<p>Core topics – all of the following will be covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media research paradigms and theory • Ethical dilemmas involved in communications research and appropriate responses • Using library resources to research a topic and conduct a literature review • Research design and the logic of causation, conceptualization, operationalisation, and measurement • Quantitative and/or qualitative research methods, such as content analysis, discourse analysis, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and field research for communication-related research problems • Techniques related to media research, including market research, public opinion, program testing, experiments, and non-reactive research • Data collection, analysis, management, and presentation/visualization • Using the internet and selective computer programs to write effective survey and interview questions and collect responses • Effective sampling strategies; recruitment of research participants • Decolonizing communications research <p>Additional topics may also be covered, at the discretion of the instructor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous research strategies • JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) perspectives in research design and methods 	
Methods of Instruction	<p>Lectures, class debate and discussions, audiovisual presentations, small groups working in online platforms, regular reflective submissions, individual work on academic assignments.</p> <p>Labs In addition to the scheduled classes (discussing readings and lectures), there will be weekly lab sessions where students can practice the various methods discussed in class</p>	
Required Textbook(s)	<p>The following textbook(s) is/are required, or approved equivalent(s).</p> <p>Babbie, Earl R., and Lance W. Roberts (2018 or most recent year), Fundamentals of Social Research. Nelson Education, Toronto. (4th or most recent edition)</p>	
Required Equipment and Technology	<p>Students are required to have a computer with internet access.</p> <p>The following resources are provided by the College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office 365 • Student email 	
Homework Hours	<p>At minimum, students can expect one hour of homework for every hour of instructional time.</p>	
Evaluation	<i>Component</i>	<i>% Value</i>
	In-class activities and debates	5-15%
	Weekly lab entries	10-20%
	Quizzes (2-3)	10-20%
	Literature review and research design	15-25%
	Survey and interview questions design	15-25%
	Final research paper	15-25%



Completion Requirements	The minimum grade to pass this course is D (50%). Unless otherwise stated, a minimum grade of C- (55%) is required for this course to fulfil a prerequisite.		
Course Designer(s)	Daniel Ahadi, Ph.D., School of Communication, Simon Fraser University	Consultant(s), if applicable	Samantha May, Ph.D., Department Head (Social Sciences), Alexander College
Dean's Approval	Steven Roe, Ph.D., Dean of Arts and Sciences, Alexander College	Dean's Approval Date	June 1, 2023
Curriculum Committee Approval Date	June 1, 2023	First Term Offered	Fall 2023
Last Review Date	June 1, 2023	Next Review Date	June 1, 2028
Revision History	September 1, 2024 - English prerequisite increased to ENGL 100, effective Fall 2024		