

COMM 3100: Communication Research Methods

Summer 2018 (Session 2)

ONLINE

Instructor: Dr. Christine Davis

Office: Colvard 5001 (I will not be in my office this summer, you can meet with me virtually)

Virtual Office Hours: Online, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 1:30 – 2:00 (group chat on Canvas), and by appointment

Email: csdavis2@uncc.edu or christine.s.davis@uncc.edu**Required Texts:**

Davis, C. S. & Lachlan, K. (2017). *Straight talk about communication research methods*. 3rd Edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing. [MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE 3rd EDITION—ORANGE COVER; USED OR E-BOOK IS FINE]

You can use the paperback or e-book. The university book store has the paperback or you can purchase it from Amazon. The e-book is slightly cheaper. You can purchase the e-book directly from the publisher at: <https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/straight-talk-about-communication-research-methods>

Davis, C. S., Stamper, B. J., & Brais, S. J. (2017). *Workbook to Accompany Straight Talk about Communication Research Methods*, 3rd edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing. You can use the paperback or e-book. The university book store has the paperback or you can purchase it from Amazon. You can purchase the e-book directly from the publisher at: <https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/workbook-accompany-straight-talk-about-communication-research-methods>

**These books were co-authored by your instructor Dr. Christine Davis. Their use in this class has been approved by the university Conflict of Interest Manager, Office of Research Compliance. All of the royalties from the use of these book for this class are donated to the Department of Communication Studies at UNCC for the use of student travel and awards. Dr. Davis makes no money on the use of these books for this class.

Other Requirements:

Technology Information Access to the Internet (World Wide Web) is required. This is a 100% online course. You are responsible for ensuring your access to this course. You are required to have a backup system with which to access class. Computer crashes and lack of access while traveling will not be accepted as an excuse for not submitting your assignments on time. These online classrooms are web-based and can be accessed from any Internet-enabled computer in the world. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have daily access and a backup system. Some suggestions include becoming familiar with the local library Internet services and community college resources. Many restaurants may offer free Internet services in your area (e.g., McDonald's, Taco Bell, Starbucks, etc). You could even seek out friends, family, and even coworkers who have Internet services in the event your computer crashes.

Other course material posted on Canvas and on website for textbook, as assigned.

Note: Information about this class, including the syllabus and course assignments, and descriptions of your book choices for the book report, can be found on this class link on Canvas. This plus your UNCC email account will be the method of official communication for this class, and you are required to check both regularly.

Purpose of Course:

This course is designed to introduce you to the scientific, interpretive, rhetorical, and critical research methods we use to study communication problems and processes. We will focus on the critical analysis, evaluation, and use of quantitative and qualitative communication research methods. The goals of the course are to assist you in acquiring the ability to understand communication research methods, critique and analyze the value of communication research studies you read, and to conduct basic research to answer communication questions and solve communication problems.

General Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Evaluate research
2. Evaluate different types of knowledge claims
3. Identify elements in a research report
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the differences between communication research methods
5. Use and apply difference research methods
6. Write an appropriate research question or study hypothesis
7. Select the research method that appropriately matches the study objectives, research question, or hypothesis
8. Correctly define research terminology
9. Write appropriate population and sampling criteria, data collection methods, and analysis methods for their own research project
10. Select the appropriate statistical tests to analyze data
11. Use primary sources of scholarship
12. Synthesize sources into a literature review
13. Use accurate APA formatting and citation styles in a paper

14. Use accurate and appropriate grammar, punctuation, spelling, and writing styles for an academic paper

Course Mission:

This is a writing intensive course as designated by the Department of Communication Studies. The assumption guiding the writing process is that writing is best accomplished over time during which a dialogue about the writing process happens between students and instructors. We learn to write through writing. You will have many writing assignments in this class. Plan on spending a significant amount of time writing this semester. Please utilize the university's Writing Center if necessary.

For Students with Disabilities:

Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the Office of Disability Services and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

Religious Observances:

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a major religious observance must provide notice to me *in writing by the second day of class*, explaining which class period(s) you expect to miss and why.

Preferred Gender Pronoun:

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Course Expectations:

I am completely inflexible in two areas: (1) late work, and (2) plagiarism. I make no exceptions in these two areas out of fairness and respect for the students who do make the effort to have their work in on time and who do complete their assignments with honesty and integrity. Please ensure that you fully understand my late policy as well as the University's plagiarism policy.

All projects must conform to professional standards – sloppy or substandard work is unacceptable. Written assignments must use correct grammar and spelling. All written assignments must be typed. Points will be subtracted for sloppy writing. Use APA style for all assignments. All assignments must be submitted as either a Word or a pdf file. No other formats will be accepted.

AN IMPORTANT THING TO KEEP IN MIND is that every class can be different and instructors have a great deal of discretion in how they choose to evaluate their individual classes.

The point is to always read your syllabus in detail. The syllabus is your contract with the instructor. By choosing to continue on in the course you have accepted the terms of this contract.

Please be aware that this course begins Thursday, July 5th, 2018 and will end on Friday, August 10th, 2018. All assignments are due on **11:59 p.m. EST** on their due dates. Assignments will not be accepted after this day/time.

Course Navigation

Our online classroom will be comprised of several active areas including:

- **HOME:** This link takes you to the landing page of the course with quick links for accessing the Start materials and Modules.
- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** This is where I will post announcement to keep you updated on the status of the class. I will also send many announcements to you via e-mail. You may wish to use this board to reference previous announcements.
- **COURSE CALENDAR:** This calendar will reflect due dates for assignments and milestones as the class progresses.
- **SYLLABUS:** This link contains our course schedule and other important information about the course.
- **GRADES:** Use this link to view grades for all graded items in the course.
- **COURSE MODULES:** This class will be module-based and each module contains important information that should not be overlooked. There will be one module per chapter. Each chapter module will include:
 - Introduction, objectives, and basic information about that chapter
 - Videotaped lecture
 - Power point slides
 - Submission link for workbook exercises for that chapter (the actual exercises are in your workbook)
- For each chapter module, you will:
 - Read the introduction, objectives, and basic information about the chapter
 - Read the chapter in the book and take notes on the reading
 - View the lecture and slides
 - Complete and turn in the workbook exercises

- The chapters/modules are grouped into four units. At the end of each unit, you will:
 - Take the test for that unit

Course Questions:

I encourage you to ask all the questions you need to. Remember, the only stupid question is the one that doesn't get asked.

Please post all course-related questions to the [Instructor Questions and Answers](#).

Do not send course-related questions to my email, because the rest of the students need to see the question so they can benefit from the answer. The only correspondence to my email should concern personal issues relating to you only and having nothing to do with the course or course material, or major issues that you wish to handle privately.

You are required to have a backup system with which to access class. Computer crashes or lack of access while traveling will not be accepted as an excuse for not participating in class discussions or submitting your assignments on time. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have daily access and a backup system.

In any postings, **HERE ARE THE RULES:** blatant discourtesy, profanity, racism, sexism, ageism, ethnocentrism, any-other-ism, will not be tolerated. A one-time documented warning will be issued to the offender and then I will initiate administrative procedures against the student upon the second offense.

A Note about this Online Course:

Taking a course via distance learning is likely to be a bit different from your typical experience, particularly if you have been accustomed to the traditional classroom or are a novice in using your computer for such an experience. However, I think you will find this class to be very exciting, enlightening, and incredibly useful. You will also find it to be incredibly convenient to take the class online and that is both the good news and the bad news: You will find that having the convenience of working in your own comfortable surroundings and at your own pace are both a convenience and an easy way of putting off until tomorrow what you should be doing today. You will also find that success is contingent upon the ability to master course content while simultaneously mastering all of life's other challenges, especially during the compact summer session which is already too packed as it is.

It is important to find a balance between your course work and all the other challenges and demands that life offers. You will be doing the same amount of work in 5 weeks that students complete in a regular semester. You must plan your time so that you keep up with the class. **YOU DO NOT WANT TO GET BEHIND!**

Each module/chapter builds on the previous one so if you miss a module, you will miss information you need to know later. **DO NOT GET BEHIND! You should expect to spend between 4-6 hours on every module. You will cover between 3 and 5 modules per week.**

Feel free to ask if you should have any further questions regarding anything related to this course. I am looking forward to having each of you in the class. Online learning is a fun and exciting experience.

Please let me know if I can be of assistance in any way.

Attendance and Participation Policy:

Participation in this class is just as important as it is for a face-to-face class. You are required to view every posted lecture and video, listen to all posted recordings, read all posted materials, do all workbook activities, and turn in all assignments. Learning course material requires full participation in the course. **You should expect to spend between 4-6 hours on every module. You will cover between 3 and 5 modules per week.**

You will not be able to pass the class without viewing and reading the posted materials and doing all activities and assignments. Exam questions will be taken from the assigned readings, lectures, discussions, exercises, and video materials.

Missing an assignment, activity, or exam will result in a grade of "0." Since this is an online class in a very compacted timeframe, there is no opportunity to create make-up exams or to accept late assignments. You must take all exams and turn in all assignments and activities by the due date. All assignments are due at the time and date indicated. Late assignments will NOT be accepted. No exceptions will be made.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

ALL WORK FOR THIS CLASS MUST BE DONE ON YOUR OWN. This includes all workbook exercises, quizzes, and papers.

You are responsible for understanding and following the UNCC Code of Student Academic Integrity (see UNCC catalog). This code forbids cheating, fabrication, falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Any special requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor, and are binding on the students. Academic evaluations in this course include a judgment that the student's work is free from academic dishonesty. Students who violate the code can be expelled from UNCC. The normal penalty for a first offense is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to "F." Copies of the code can be obtained from the Dean of Students Office. Standards of academic integrity will

be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty to the course instructor.

It is imperative that students understand what constitutes plagiarism: If you use a source in a paper without properly citing it, that is plagiarism. If you use a direct quote, you must include the source of the information, page numbers and quotation marks. If you do not, that is plagiarism. Improper or inappropriate paraphrasing is plagiarism. If you are caught, you will be reported and sanctions will be given.

As a condition of taking this course, ALL papers will be subject to submission for review to VeriCite for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the VeriCite reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Required reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking:

UNC Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. UNC Charlotte has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that many UNC Charlotte employees, including all faculty members, are considered Responsible Employees who are required to relay any information or reports of sexual misconduct they receive to the Title IX Coordinator. **This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must report the information to the Title IX Coordinator.** Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator: (1) University Counseling Center (counselingcenter.uncc.edu, 7-0311); (2) Student Health Center (studenthealth.uncc.edu, 7-7400); or (3) Center for Wellness Promotion (wellness.uncc.edu, 7-7407). Additional information about your options is also available at titleix.uncc.edu under the “Students” tab.

University policy on withdrawals:

Students are expected to complete all courses for which they are registered at the close of the add/drop period. If you are concerned about your ability to succeed in this course, it is important to make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible. The University policy on withdrawal allows students only a limited number of opportunities available to withdraw from

courses. It is important for you to understand the financial and academic consequences that may result from course withdrawal.

Prohibition of recording in the classroom:

Electronic video and/or audio recording is not permitted during class unless the student obtains permission from the instructor. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited. Students with specific electronic recording accommodations authorized by the Office of Disability Services do not require instructor permission; however, the instructor must be notified of any such accommodation prior to recording. Any distribution of such recordings is prohibited.

Grading:

| Assignment | Total Number of Points |
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| Tests (4, 10 points each) | 40 |
| Workbook exercises (30 out of 31.5 points, each exercise is worth varying points between ½ and 1 point each**) | 30 |
| Literature Review paper | 10 |
| Literature Review revision | 20 |

90-100 points = A

70-79 points = C

0-59 points = F

80-89 points = B

60-69 points = D

**There are a total of 46 assigned workbook exercises, each worth either ½ or 1 point, for a total of 31.5 points. Your grade is based on your completing 30 of those points. If you turn in the extra assignments, those points will count as extra credit.

Note: while the workbook exercises represent a large amount of effort in a short amount of time, remember that you are receiving the same 3 credits to take this course as a student who takes it in a 'regular' semester. In a 'regular' semester, students complete all of the same workbook exercises, plus the two-part literature review (and, frequently, an additional paper or proposal), plus the tests.

In addition, completing the workbook exercises is essential to pass the tests. Also, several of the exercises build on previous exercises.

Students should understand my grading philosophy. I do not GIVE grades, I merely report the grades you earn. If earning a particular grade is important to you, I suggest you take extra efforts in studying, attending class, and working on class assignments. Do NOT expect to ask me to "round up" your points or "give you" additional points. It is your responsibility and within your control to earn the number of points you want. You have the ability to complete the extra workbook activities and earn up to 1 1/2 extra credit points. No other extra credit assignments will be given.

Class Schedule

| Date Due | Concepts | Readings Due | Workbook Assignments Due |
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| WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO BASIC CONCEPTS | | | |
| Thursday, 7/5 | Introduction to Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, “Introduction and Welcome” and Chapter 1: What is Communication Research? | Exercise 2 (pg. 11-13): Ways of Knowing (1 point) Exercise 3 (pg. 14-15): Writing a Study Objective (1/2 point) |
| Friday 7/6 | Research Paradigms | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 2: Metatheoretical Considerations, Research Perspectives, and Research Paradigms | Exercise 4: Metatheoretical Assumptions (pg 19-22) (1 point) Exercise 5 (pg. 23), Paradigms, 0.5 points Exercise 6, (pg. 24-25), Applying paradigms, 1 points |
| WEEK 2: LIBRARY RESEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEWS | | | |
| Monday 7/9 | Reading & Using Research; Using the Library in Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 3: Discovering What’s Already Known: Library Research | Exercise 7, (pg. 29), Library Search Strategy, 0.5 points Exercise 8, (pg. 30-34), Keywords and databases, 1 points Exercise 9, (pg. 35), Research topic, 1 points |
| Tuesday 7/10 | Literature Reviews; Writing; APA | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 4: Writing a Literature Review | Exercise 10, (pg. 39-40), APA, 0.5 points Exercise 11, (pg. 41-42), Locating the parts of an article, 1 points Exercise 12, (pg. 43-44), Reading a journal article, 1 points Exercise 13, (pg. 45-48), Mini lit review, 1 points |
| Wednesday 7/11 | Test 1 on Chapters 1-4 | | |

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| Thursday 7/12 – Friday 7/13 | Work on literature reviews. Your first literature review is due by Friday 7/13 (I will return feedback to you by 7/20). | | |
| WEEK 3: PREPARING TO CONDUCT RESEARCH | | | |
| Monday 7/16 | Research Questions and Hypotheses | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 5: Research Questions and Hypotheses | Exercise 14, (pg. 52), RQ writing, 0.5 points Exercise 15, (pg. 53-54), Writing a RQ, 0.5 points Exercise 16, (pg. 55), Hypothesis writing, 0.5 points Exercise 17, (pg. 56-57), Writing a hypothesis, 0.5 points |
| Tuesday 7/17 | Research Ethics | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 6: Understanding Research Ethics | Exercise 18, (pg. 60-63), Ethics case studies, 0.5 points Exercise 19, (pg. 64-68), Informed consent, 0.5 points |
| Wednesday 7/18 | Understanding Variables | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 7: Understanding Variables | Exercise 20, (pg. 71-72), Level of measurement, 0.5 points Exercise 21, (pg. 73-74), Independent or dependent variable, 0.5 points Exercise 22, (pg. 75-76), Defining your variables, 0.5 points |
| Thursday 7/19 | Sampling | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 8: Sampling | Exercise 23, (pg. 81-82), Sampling, 0.5 points Exercise 24, (pg. 83-86), Applying Sampling, 0.5 points Exercise 25, (pg. 87-88), Sampling in your study, 0.5 points |

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| Friday 7/20 | Validity, Reliability, and Credibility | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 9: Ensuring Validity, Reliability, and Credibility | <p>Exercise 26, (pg. 92-93), Assessing internal validity, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 27, (pg. 94-98), Assessing reliability and validity, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 28, (pg. 99), Reliability, validity, credibility, 0.5 points</p> |
| Monday 7/23 | Test 2 on Chapters 5 - 9 | | |
| WEEK 4: REVISED LITERATURE REVIEWS | | | |
| Tuesday 7/24 – Friday 7/27 | Work on Revised Literature Reviews | Due Friday 7/27 | |
| WEEK 5: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH | | | |
| Monday 7/30 | Survey Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 10: Survey Research | <p>Exercise 29, (pg. 104), Writing survey items, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 30, (pg. 105), How to create a survey, 1 points</p> |
| Tuesday 7/31 | Quantitative Content Analysis | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 11: Quantitative Content and Interaction Analysis | <p>Exercise 31, (pg. 109), Unitizing data, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 32, (pg. 110-111), Content analysis in the news, 1 points</p> <p>Exercise 33, (pg. 112), Field experiment, 1 points</p> |
| Wednesday 8/1 | Experiments | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 12: Experiments | <p>Exercise 34, (pg. 116-117), Field Experiment, 1/2 points</p> <p>Exercise 35, (pg. 118-123), Creating an experiment, 1 points</p> |
| Thursday 8/2 | Writing, Analyzing, and Critiquing Quantitative Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 13: Writing, Analyzing, and Critiquing Quantitative Research | <p>Exercise 36, (pg. 128), Measures of central tendency and dispersion, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 37, (pg. 129-133), Designs and statistical analysis, 1 points</p> |

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| Friday 8/3 | Test 3 on Chapters 10-13 | | |
| WEEK 6: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH | | | |
| Monday 8/6 | Overview of Qualitative Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 14: Introduction to Qualitative Communication Research | <p>Exercise 38, (pg. 139), The role of a researcher, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 39, (pg. 140), Observing the field, 1 points</p> <p>Exercise 40, (pg. 141-143), Coding qualitative data, 1 points</p> |
| Tuesday 8/7 | Social Science Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 15: Social Science Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research | <p>Exercise 41, (pg. 148-150), Design a focus group, 1 points</p> <p>Exercise 42, (pg. 151-153), Ethnography, 0.5 points</p> |
| Wednesday 8/8 | Social Constructionist and Arts-Based Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 16: Social Constructionist and Arts-Based Qualitative Approaches to Communication Research | <p>Exercise 43, (pg. 158-159), Reading an Autoethnography, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 44, (pg. 160-162), Feminist ethnography observation, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 45, (pg. 163-164), Analyzing poetic ethnography, 0.5 points</p> |
| Thursday 8/9 | Rhetorical Approaches to Communication Research | Read Davis & Lachlan, Chapter 17: Rhetorical Approaches to Communication Research | <p>Exercise 46, (pg. 169-170), Burkean analysis, 0.5 points</p> <p>Exercise 47, (pg. 171-172), Non-Aristotelian analysis, 0.5 points</p> |
| Friday 8/10 | Test 4 on Chapters 14-17 | | |
| Monday 8/13 | Grades Posted | | |

NOTE: This schedule is tentative and may be altered based upon class needs.

Course Assignments:

Note on all assignments. University rules and regulations about academic integrity apply to all tests, papers, exercises, assignments, and anything else you turn in. You must do all work independently—the answers that you turn in **MUST** be your own and **MUST** not have been completed with anyone else.

Tests: You will have 4 tests in this class, one for each unit. Each test will be based on all assigned readings, workbook exercises, and posted video, audio, and other materials related to all chapters in that unit. (Note the workbook includes study guides for the tests). Each test will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. Each will be worth (up to) 10 points. Each test will be up for 24 hours, from 12:00 am until 11:59 pm on the day assigned to that module. You must complete each test by 11:59 pm. Once you begin a test, you will be given 60 minutes maximum to complete it. You cannot begin a test more than once, and each test grade is final. I suggest you study for the test prior to taking it; the timeframe does not allow you to use your book or notes to look up the answers to the questions as you take the test.

Workbook Exercises

Each workbook exercise is worth either $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 point, depending of the degree of effort and difficulty required. Be sure to complete the entire exercise (all pages); you will not get credit if the exercise is not completed. The exercises will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. You will either get all of the points or none of the points. If you filled out relevant responses for all the parts of the exercise, you will receive the points if your responses are at least 60% correct.

All exercises must be uploaded to the Canvas assignment space. You can write in the responses in the workbook and scan or photograph and upload them (upload as a pdf or jpeg file, please); or you can type the responses in a word document and upload the document. If you type in the responses, please be sure to submit either a Word or a pdf file. No other formats will be accepted. Whatever you submit, I must be able to read it (and your handwriting) or you will not get credit for the answer whether or not it is correct.