

Sam Houston State University
Department of Mass Communication
COURSE SYALLBUS
Fall 2007

Course Number and Name: MCM 330 – Information Analysis **Meeting Place:** LDB 203
Instructor: Dr. Maurice Odine **Office Location:** CB 308
Office Phone: 4-1346; 5-1346 **Office Hours:** Mon & Wed: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Texts: Radford, Marie, Barnes, Suisan, and Barr, Linda. Web Research: Selecting, Evaluating, and Citing (2nd Edition). Boston: Pearson, 2006.

Wickman, Kathleen Woodruff. Math Tools for Journalists (2nd Edition). Oak Park, IL: 2003.

Course Description

The course provides a comparative survey of communication investigation, including practical training in ethical gathering, interpretation and presentation of data. Students will be introduced to the information-gathering methods, including direct interviewing, questioning techniques, electronic document retrieval and manipulation, database management and internet skills. Prerequisite: MCM 132. Credit: 3.

Purpose

This course introduces students to skills and processes necessary to successfully complete advanced communication courses. Students will become competent in discerning methods of research gathering, problem solving and critical thinking necessary for the successful manipulation in the media. The goal is to give students a solid foundation in analysis, problem solving and data gathering necessary for successful employment in the media.

Course Competencies

At the end of the course, students will have the skills to:

1. Compare and contrast primary and secondary collection methods
2. Design a variety of data collection instruments
3. Prepare and validate data for various distribution venues
4. Analyze a communication scenario to determine the most effective strategy to frame the problem, and
5. Understand the roles of law and ethics on data gathering

Grading

Grading will be as follows:

Quizzes	20%
Individual projects	30%
Exam 1 & Exam 2	30%
Individual Presentation	10%
Class/Attendance Participation	10%
Total	100%

The letter grade will be awarded according to the following:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

Q Drops

A Q drip is a drip made after the last date for tuition refunds, which is the 12th class day for fall/spring semesters (Sept. 9th for this semester), and the 4th class day for summer semesters, but before the date for which a drop would result in the grade of F as published in the Academic Calendar (Oct. 10th for this semester). Students will be allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count towards the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop a class, a student will be required to remain in the class. This limit will take effect with the start of the fall 2004 semester. Any drops accumulated prior to the fall 2004 semester will not be included in the Q-drop limit, nor will Q-drops from other universities.

Instructor Evaluations

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester. A new faculty evaluation system for SHSU, the IDEA that is somewhat different than the previously used FES forms, will be used starting this semester.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The university and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Classroom Rules of Conduct

According to Section 5 of the Student Handbook, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Cellular phones and pagers must be turned off before class starts. There will be a 2-point loss from the overall grade each time this happens. Disruptive behaviors in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Repeated disruptive behaviors may also be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Americans With Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act should go to the counseling Center and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in a timely manner to obtain the documentation required. Students are responsible for initiating the process of documenting the need for an accommodation under the ADA act.

Religious Observance

University policy allows for student to observe religious holy days without penalty. If you intend to miss class as a result of the observance of a religious holy day or as a result of the necessary traveling time required for religious observance, such as absence will not be penalized so long as you have notified the instructor in writing of the dates and times of class sessions that are missed. The deadline for notification is the 12th class day published in the Academic Calendar. Students absent from class as a result of religious observance are required to submit any due assignments immediately on their return to the classroom. Makeup tests and quizzes will also be provided on return to the class.

Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

