07-51
App- 3/18/08
Info. - 4/22/08

Undergraduate Distance Education Review Form

(Required for all courses taught by distance education for more than one-third of teaching contact hours.)

Existing and Special Topics Course

Received
FEB 27 2008
Liberal Studies

Course: COMM 302 Research in Communications Media

Instructor(s) of Record: Dr. James Lenze

Phone: (724) 357-3779

Email: james.lenze@iup.edu

Step One: Proposer

A. Provide a brief narrative rationale for each of the items, A1- A5.

1. How is/are the instructor(s) qualified in the distance education delivery method as well as the discipline?

Distance Education Delivery Method
Dr. Lenze has a PhD from Penn State in Instructional Systems Design, as well as degrees in Communications Media and Curriculum & Instruction. He has been offering distance learning courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels since 1998. He has experience in designing web sites, chats, discussion boards, electronic assessments, and multimedia. Dr. Lenze has been conducting research in Second Life since the summer of 2007. He has organized and run multiple Second Life seminars on IUP's campus in which the participants were shown how to use the program for distance education purposes. Also, he is regularly showing students in his classes how to use the program.

Discipline
Dr. Lenze is certified to teach English in Pennsylvania private schools. He has completed over sixteen hours of instruction in the field of research primarily at the graduate level. He has an undergraduate emphasis in Journalism. He co-created the Bachelors of Science in Technical Communication at Lawrence Technological University. He has taught COMM 302 for 8 years at IUP. He has published over 20 peer reviewed research articles within the field of communications media and instructional technology.

2. How will each objective in the course be met using distance education technologies?

Objective	Content Delivery	Assessment
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to explain the basic purposes and strategies of research used in the field of communications media.	Students will be instructed on the purposes and strategies of research used in the field of communications media via presentations and discussions in Second Life. Second Life allows for voice chat as well as textual chat to occur. In addition, Second Life allows the instructor to show presentations like those made with Microsoft PowerPoint in the 3-Dimensional world. Thus, the Second Life classroom will function similarly to a traditional classroom environment.	The final exam, which will be on campus or proctored by an authenticated proctor, will include items that address this content.

Objective	Content Delivery	Assessment
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to list and define the basic types of communication research.	This will be accomplished using the same approach as described above.	Evaluation of this objective will take place during class discussions in Second Life. The final exam, which will be on campus or proctored by an authenticated proctor, will include items that address this content.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to design basic data-gathering instruments, such as audience surveys and interviews, and use those instruments to gather data for use in written reports.	The students will be instructed on designing basic data gathering instruments in Second Life. They will learn how to conduct surveys and interviews in person and using programs like Second Life. The students will learn how to use the collected data in their written reports via Second Life lecture and discussion.	Students will work in small groups (3-4) on developing an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol which will propose a small survey to be delivered to a convenient sample of students in another course.* The IRB Proposal will only be submitted to the instructor and not the IRB board at IUP. The students will be informed that they may not publish their survey findings. * Dr. Lenze has access, through his own sections of COMM 103, to convenient samples of students who complete surveys for extra credit. COMM 103 is offered every semester of the academic year. The surveys are completely voluntary and anonymous.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to acquire a working knowledge of library resources and utilize those resources in writing assignments.	Students will be instructed through Second Life on how to best utilize the services the IUP library has to offer. This includes using online databases to search for literature as well as using the on-campus resources.	The student will be evaluated on this objective through the development of a research report including a problem statement, summary of literature, critical evaluation, and list of primary sources.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to demonstrate and list the primary ways in which research results are communicated to audiences and communication professionals.	Students will learn through Second Life how to communicate research results to audiences and communication professionals. Voice-chat, group chat, and group interaction will all be used to teach the students in both Second Life and WebCT.	Students will work in small groups (3-4); via chat, email, and Second Life; on writing a research report based on a survey developed in class and using data collected, most likely, from a convenient sample of students in Dr. Lenze's other course, COMM 103. The COMM 302 students will be informed that they may not publish their research report and that the data and findings are for class use

		only. The students will create surveys that will be given to a convenient sample of students, most likely from COMM 103. The students will download a free 14 day copy of SPSS and enter the data using a web based tutorial created by Dr. Lenze and delivered via WebCT. The students will then send Dr. Lenze the SPSS files as attachments which he will then forward to the IUP Applied Research Lab. Their consultants will analyze the data and generate an electronic Word file with the results. Dr. Lenze will send the results to the students in his class. Dr. Lenze will create two Second Life avatars for use by two Applied Research Lab consultants. The two consultants, via their Second Life avatars, will meet with the students in Second Life to discuss their results and assist them in interpreting the findings.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to use the Internet and other electronic databases to gather information.	Students will be instructed through Second Life how to best utilize the Internet and other electronic databases to conduct research. Voice-chat will be utilized to teach the students proper Internet search techniques and group chat will be used to give the student specific URL's that can be used when researching.	The student will be evaluated on this objective through the development of a research report including a problem statement, summary of literature, critical evaluation, and list of primary sources.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to revise documents to improve writing as appropriate to the stated research question and desired outcome	The course includes homework assignments which require the students to submit each section of each paper to the instructor as a draft. These drafts are reviewed by the instructor who then passes feedback on to the student. Students will send Dr. Lenze their homework as attachments via email. He will meet the students in Second Life and provide them with feedback, via chat.	The instructor will retain draft copies of student homework and will be able to compare the drafts with the final papers in order to determine if students effectively utilized the revision process to improve their writing. Each assignment has a checklist for grading the assignment. The checklist will include an item related to effective revisions. See Appendix D.
By the end of this course a successful student will be able to	Any of the three major papers developed in this course would	Students will, of course, receive feedback and grades on each of

design, research and write documents of a professional quality for inclusion in a senior portfolio	be suitable for inclusion in a senior portfolio.	their papers and would be able to include them in their senior portfolios.

3. How will instructor-student and student-student, if applicable, interaction take place?

Interaction with the instructor and other students in the course will be strongly encouraged. The instructor will provide students with his cell phone number and instructions to feel free to use it Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm. Dr. Lenze has used this technique in the past and it has been successful in providing students with quick feedback to questions. Additionally, students will be able to email questions to the professor. A daily chat will take place in Second Life to conduct lectures and workshops. The benefit to chat in Second Life over chat in WebCT is that students tend to find it more engaging and the instructor has more control over how PowerPoint presentations are delivered. Presenting lectures in Second Life allows the instructor to interact with students during the lecture better than traditional chat because both parties are looking at the same visualization (PowerPoint slide). Additionally, the instructor will maintain one hour a day of office hours (5 hours a week) in Second Life. Students will be able to place documents on the P drive and then discuss revisions with the professor while looking at the same document.

4. How will student achievement be evaluated?

Students will complete three major papers and take one final exam in addition to homework assignments. The papers will be turned in through the handin folder on the P drive. The instructor will provide the students with lessons on how to use VPN and FTP to transfer files onto the IUP network from home. The instructor will grade papers using checklists (see Appendix D for a sample) and provide feedback by using the Markup feature in Microsoft Word. The homework assignments are essentially drafts of each part of each paper. The instructor will see their writing as it is revised and finally submitted. These three papers address course objectives 3 through 8.

A final exam will be given. This final is proctored, either by the instructor on the IUP main campus or by a willing professor from an accredited university or senior military officer in the case of military personnel. Students are told early in the semester that they must take this proctored final exam and that if coming to IUP is a hardship they will have to locate a willing proctor who must then contact Dr. Lenze to make arrangements. Proctors must send letters, on university or military letterhead, to Dr. Lenze at least one week before the final exam, expressing their willingness to proctor the exam under specified conditions.

The first part of the exam is closed book and addresses course objectives 1 and 2. In the second part of the exam students will complete a writing sample that is a short summary of literature.

5. How will academic honesty for tests and assignments be addressed?

The instructor will utilize TurnItIn, a web-based plagiarism detection service currently being utilized at IUP.

As discussed above, students will be required to complete a proctored final exam. The instructor will proctor the exam on IUP's main campus. Students may locate a willing professor from an accredited university or senior military officer in the case of military personnel. Students are told early in the semester that they must take this proctored final exam and that if coming to IUP is a hardship they will have to locate a willing proctor who must then contact Dr. Lenze to make arrangements. Proctors must send letters, on university or military letterhead, to Dr. Lenze at least one week before the final exam, expressing their willingness to proctor the exam under specified conditions.

Step Two: Departmental/Dean Approval

Recommendation: ☑ Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

☐ Negative

2-21-08

Signature of Department Designee   Date

Endorsed: Mary Ann Rafoth   2/21/08

Signature of College Dean   Date

Forward form and supporting materials to Liberal Studies Office for consideration by the University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Dual-level courses also require review by the University-wide Graduate Committee for graduate-level section.

Step Three: University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Approval

Recommendation: ☑ Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

☐ Negative

Gail Sechrist   3-18-08

Signature of Committee Co-Chair   Date

Forward form and supporting materials to the Provost within 30 calendar days after received by committee.

Step Four: Provost Approval

☑ Approved as distance education course   ☐ Rejected as distance education course

3/21/08

Signature of Provost   Date

Forward form and supporting materials to Associate Provost.

Appendix A
Sample Lesson

Sample Lesson

Second Life allows for educators to build learning areas that are similar to brick and mortar classrooms. However, Second Life allows the teacher to do things that are not possible in a traditional environment. For example, IUP's home in Second Life has a customizable learning building. The building has 14 classrooms that can be customized however the teacher wants it to be. Setups can include, but are not limited to, traditional classrooms, casual classrooms, conference rooms, laboratory environments, and much more. With the touch of a button, the classroom transforms into the layout of the teacher's choosing (see Figure 1.1)

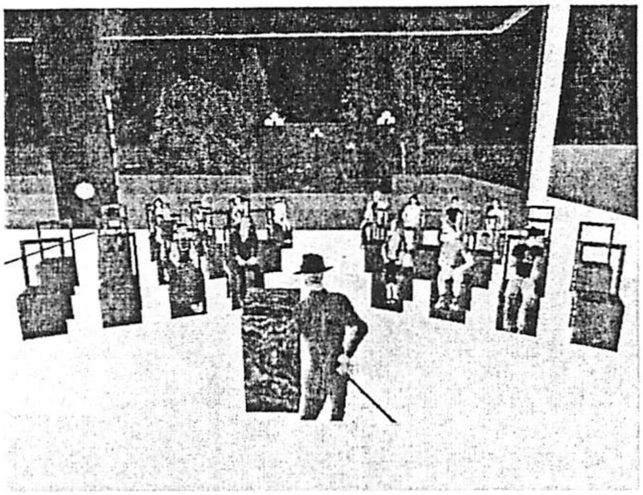


Figure 1.1

The example lesson (shown in the provided images) teaches students how to write good survey questions. The lesson discusses reliability, validity, overall rules for survey questions, open-ended versus close-ended questions, the advantages/disadvantages of each type of question, word choice, creating an objective list, question consistency, the respondent's ability to answer questions, survey organization, and problem identification.

These lessons are taught in a traditional classroom through lectures, PowerPoint presentations, and group discussion/interaction. The lessons will be taught in the same manner with Second Life. Lectures are handled in a similar fashion in comparison to traditional learning methods. The students will be required to login to Second Life and navigate to the IUP customizable classroom on IUP's Second Life property. From there, students will enter a specific classroom which has been reserved for their class period. The classroom in this situation would have chairs for the students, a podium for the instructor, and a PowerPoint display screen.

The instructor will be able to teach the class using voice-chat or textual chat. Students will hear/read the material instantly. The students can ask a question by raising their hand in Second Life. Once called on, the student can either relay their question or comment through voice-chat or textual chat.

The PowerPoint presentation is displayed on the virtual wall in the (see Figure 1.2). It can be designed so anyone can maneuver through its slides or so only the instructor can control it. When the slide is changed by the instructor, it will change for all students as well.

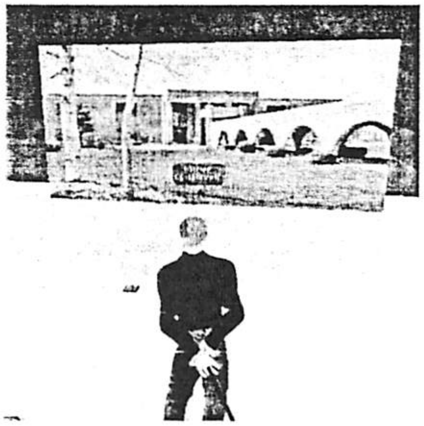
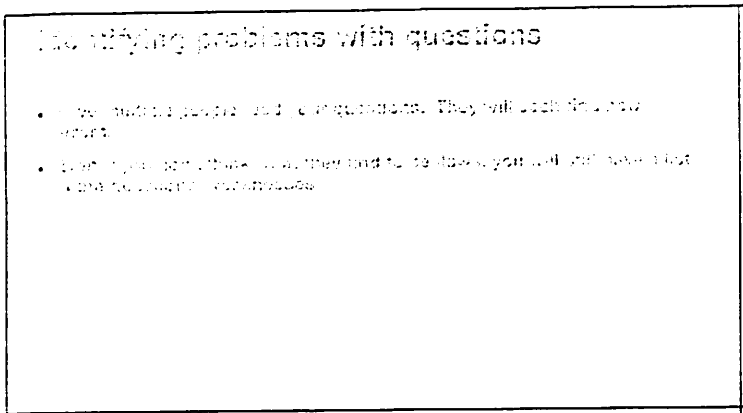


Figure 1.2

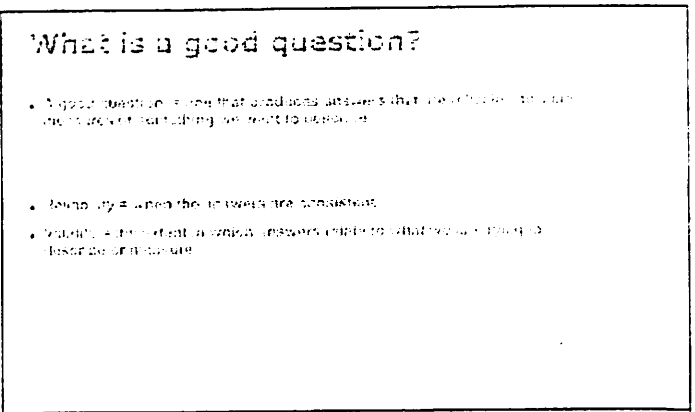
Group discussion is powered by Second Life's chat feature. The program has a text-box at the bottom of the screen which allows users to type and submit text. Submitted text will display in the lower-left corner of the screen for anyone who is within a certain distance from the speaker. The speaker's name appears to the left of their text for identification purposes. Messages can also be sent directly to a specific user. With this method, only the sender and receiver can read the text.

The following are slides from the sample lesson.



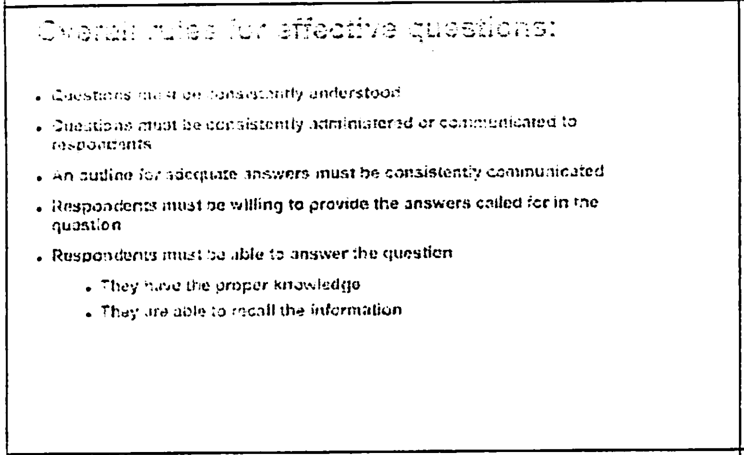
Identifying problems with questions

- [illegible]
- [illegible]



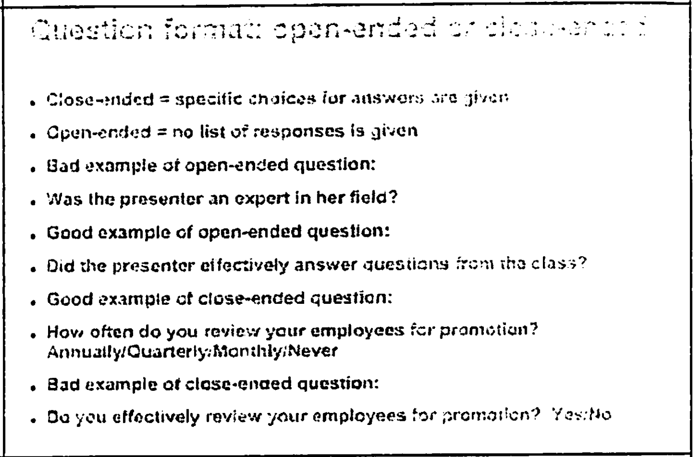
What is a good question?

- A good question is one that produces answers that [illegible] measures of something we want to describe
- Reliability = when the answers are consistent
- Validity = the extent to which answers relate to what we are trying to describe or measure



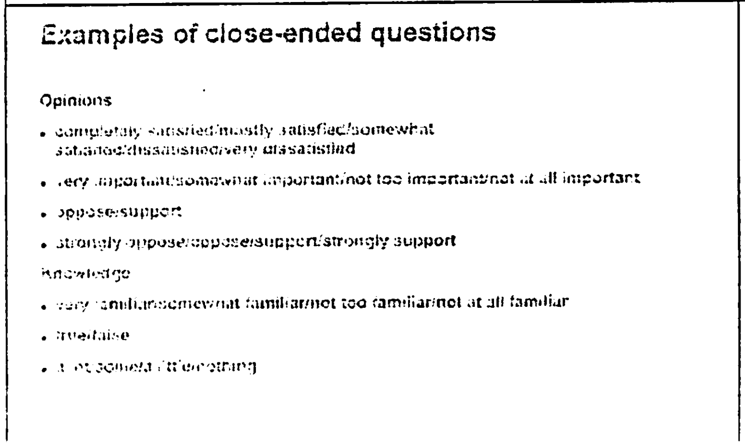
Overall rules for affective questions:

- Questions must be consistently understood
- Questions must be consistently administered or communicated to respondents
- An outline for adequate answers must be consistently communicated
- Respondents must be willing to provide the answers called for in the question
- Respondents must be able to answer the question
  - They have the proper knowledge
  - They are able to recall the information



Question format: open-ended or close-ended

- Close-ended = specific choices for answers are given
- Open-ended = no list of responses is given
- Bad example of open-ended question:
- Was the presenter an expert in her field?
- Good example of open-ended question:
- Did the presenter effectively answer questions from the class?
- Good example of close-ended question:
- How often do you review your employees for promotion? Annually/Quarterly/Monthly/Never
- Bad example of close-ended question:
- Do you effectively review your employees for promotion? Yes/No



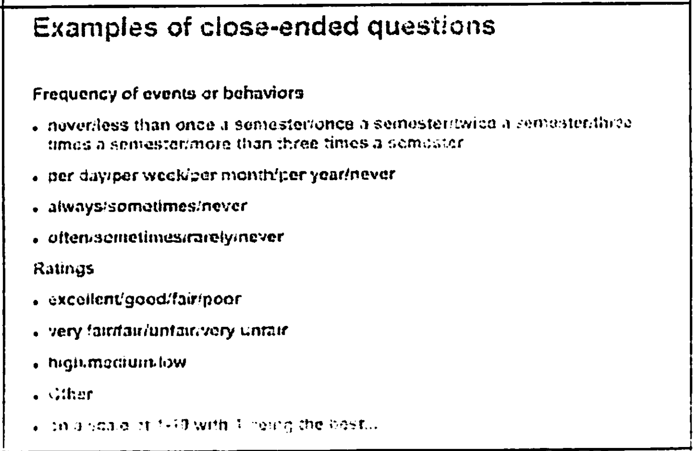
Examples of close-ended questions

Opinions

- completely satisfied/mostly satisfied/somewhat satisfied/dissatisfied/very dissatisfied
- very important/somewhat important/not too important/not at all important
- oppose/support
- strongly oppose/oppose/support/strongly support

Knowledge

- very familiar/somewhat familiar/not too familiar/not at all familiar
- true/false
- a lot/some/a little/nothing



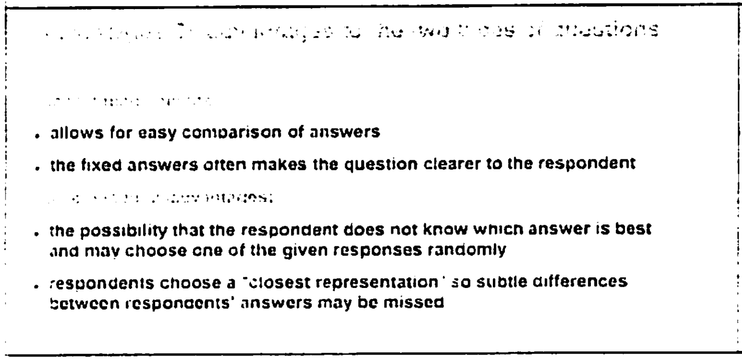
Examples of close-ended questions

Frequency of events or behaviors

- never/less than once a semester/once a semester/twice a semester/three times a semester/more than three times a semester
- per day/per week/per month/per year/never
- always/sometimes/never
- often/sometimes/rarely/never

Ratings

- excellent/good/fair/poor
- very fair/fair/unfair/very unfair
- high/medium/low
- Other
- On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the best...



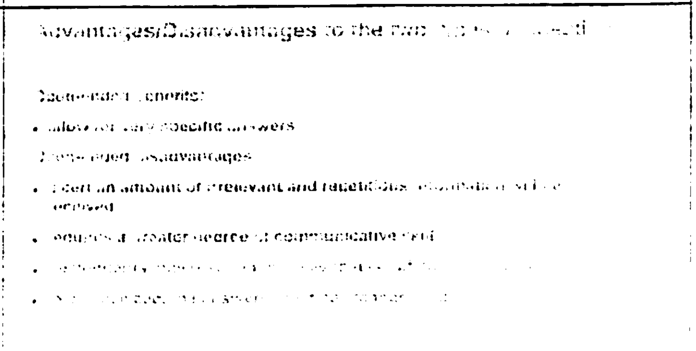
Advantages/Disadvantages to the two types of questions

Close-ended benefits:

- allows for easy comparison of answers
- the fixed answers often makes the question clearer to the respondent

Close-ended disadvantages:

- the possibility that the respondent does not know which answer is best and may choose one of the given responses randomly
- respondents choose a "closest representation" so subtle differences between respondents' answers may be missed



Advantages/Disadvantages to the two types of questions

Open-ended benefits:

- allows for very specific answers

Open-ended disadvantages

- a certain amount of irrelevant and repetitious information will be received
- requires a greater degree of communicative skill
- [illegible]
- [illegible]

Choosing your words carefully

Be aware of your audience!

- Wording should generally be simple, straightforward, and to the point.
- Avoid highly technical words or phrases
- Bad example: "Have you engaged in *substance abuse* during the past year?"
- Good example: "Have you *used illegal drugs* during the past year?"
- Avoid ambiguous words and phrases
- Ambiguity results from the use of vague words or phrases
- Bad example: How many people live in your household?
- The respondent will often forget to include themselves
- Good example: Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

Creating an objective list

- An objective defines the kind of information that is needed
- Before writing your questions, create a list of objectives that you want to complete by conducting the survey
- Decide what it is that you are looking to find (example: the respondents income, age, educational status, etc)

Creating an objective list

Avoid creating objectives that are vague

- Example: Your objective is to learn the respondents income. You could ask
- *"How much money do you make per month at your job?"* or
- *"What was the total income for your family from jobs and other sources during the last calendar year"*
- Both questions will obtain their income. The first question, however, will be a measure of the quality/status of their job. The second question will be better measure of the resources they have available.
- Instead of having an objective such as 'income', it is better to have a specific objective such as 'the total amount of available resources of the respondent'
- To generate specific objectives, you must have a clear grasp of your goals. You must know what information you need to gather before you can create a method of getting it.

Writing a question that is consistently understood

- Be sure that the question makes sense to the respondents
- Use concrete language to avoid confusion
- Do not allow your questions to have multiple interpretations
- Use time periods that are relevant to the importance of the question
- Be sure the questions are of an appropriate length
- Keep your survey short and user-friendly
- This improves response. Long surveys with difficult questions have a lower response rate.

Writing a question that is consistently understood

- Use common language that is easily understood
- Use large words cautiously
- Avoid using biased language
- Avoid negative phrasing
- Bad example: Do you agree that smoking should be banned in public buildings?
- Good example: Smoking should be banned in public buildings. Strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree
- Avoid two-edged questions (example: *Do you think we should stop using tax money to fund the Art Dept and Music Dept?* This should be divided into two questions--one specifically for the Art Dept and one for the Music Dept.
- Limit the word '*and*' in your questions to avoid this!

Respondents ability to answer the question

- **Common problems:**
  1. **The respondent does not have the information needed to answer the question**
- **Example: many surveys ask one household member to report about the entire household. The information needed may not be known by that specific household member.**
  2. **The respondent may have known the answer once but cannot recall it**

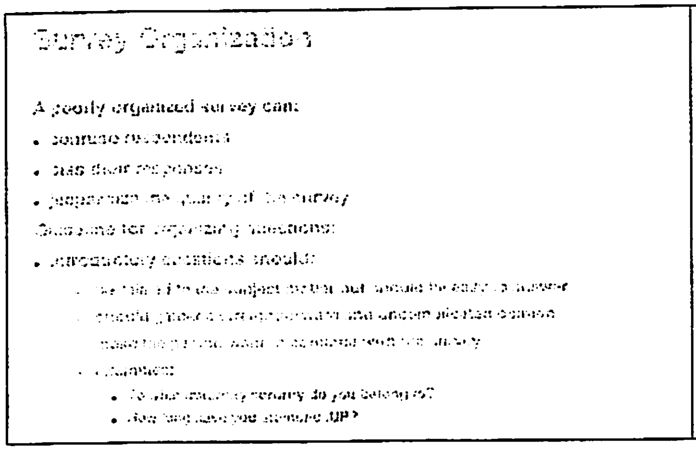
Respondents ability to answer the question

[illegible]

- [illegible] the event, the more likely it is to be recalled
  - [illegible] many times [illegible]
  - [illegible] In a regular week, estimate how often [illegible] with food? Never/Once/Twice/Three times/More than three times
- [illegible] the impact of the event, the more likely it is to be recalled
- [illegible]

Respondents ability to answer the question

- Do not expect respondents to be able to [illegible] concerning a minimal or exact event that happened [illegible] days ago
  - Example: a survey about nutrition should avoid asking what a person ate more than 24 hours ago
  - Example: when people are asked to report about their activities over the past two weeks, they will give an estimate of their average/typical behavior rather than list specific events
- [illegible] questions [illegible]
- [illegible] answer [illegible]



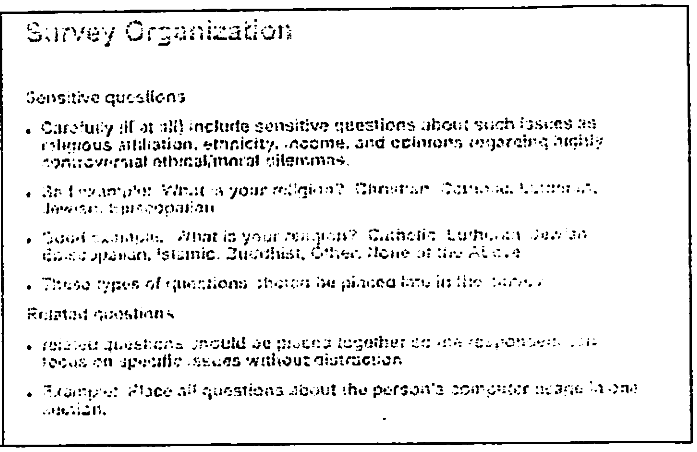
Survey Organization

A poorly organized survey can:

- confuse respondents
- bias their responses
- jeopardize the quality of the survey

Guidelines for organizing questions:

- Introductory questions should:
  - be related to the subject of the survey but should be easy to answer
  - should [illegible]
  - make the person want to continue with the survey
  - Examples:
    - To what [illegible] do you belong to?
    - How long have you [illegible]?



Survey Organization

Sensitive questions

- Carefully (if at all) include sensitive questions about such issues as religious affiliation, ethnicity, income, and opinions regarding highly controversial ethical/moral dilemmas.
- Bad example: What is your religion? Christian, Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, Episcopalian
- Good example: What is your religion? Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, Episcopalian, Islamic, Buddhist, Other, None of the Above
- These types of questions should be placed late in the survey.

Related questions

- Related questions should be placed together so the respondent can focus on specific issues without distraction.
- Example: Place all questions about the person's computer usage in one section.

Appendix B
Online Course Syllabus

Instructor:

James S. Lenze, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Communications Media

Office Hours:

TBA

Contact Information:

Stouffer Hall, Room 129
1175 Maple Street
Indiana, PA 15705-1080
Office Phone: 724-357-3779
Fax: 724-357-5503
e-mail: james.lenze@iup.edu
Second Life Avatar: Eight Shepherd

Course Description:

Prerequisites: COMM 150, English 101, and English 202 (C or Better)

Designed to provide knowledge of the resource materials and research strategies used in the communications media field. Students will design basic data gathering instruments, collect data, and assimilate information from various sources and data into communication products, services, or documents.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course a successful student will be able to:

1. Explain the basic purposes and strategies of research used in the field of communications media;
2. List and define the basic types of communication research;
3. Design basic data gathering instruments, such as audience surveys and interviews, and use those instruments to gather data for use in written reports;
4. Acquire a working knowledge of library resources and utilize those resources in writing assignments;
5. Demonstrate and list the primary ways in which research results are communicated to audiences and communication professionals;
6. Use the Internet and other electronic data bases to gather information:
7. Revise documents to improve writing as appropriate to the stated research question and desired outcome: and
8. Design. research and write documents of a professional quality for inclusion in a senior portfolio.

Student Outcomes Assessment Matrix:

COE-ET Conceptual Framework	**Program Goals**	**Course Objectives**	**Assessment Techniques**
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	1	Final Exam
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	2	Final Exam
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	3	Proposal
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	4	Summary of Literature
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	5	Research Report
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	6	Summary of Literature Proposal Research Report Final Exam
Practice / Reflection	2 3	7	Summary of Literature Proposal Research Report
Scholarship / Practice	2 3	8	Summary of Literature Proposal Research Report

Required Textbook:

No text book is required for this course. You will have to print articles which may incur costs to you depending on how they are printed.

Evaluation Methods:

Graded Assignments:

Individual Assignments

- Literature Review (25% of Grade)
- Final Exam (20% of Grade)

Group Assignments

- Human Subjects Protocol (20% of Grade) *
- Research Paper (20% of Grade) *

*Human Subject's Protocol and Research Paper grades will be multiplied by their respective peer evaluation grades to determine how many, if any, points should be removed from the grade to reflect the level of involvement of the person being evaluated.

Peer Evaluations

Peer evaluation forms are required and graded. You must complete one peer evaluation for each member of your group and yourself each time they are submitted. If you fail to submit your peer evaluations, your group members' grades will be calculated as receiving 100% each from you and your grade will be calculated as receiving 0% from you. Your instructor will not accept late peer evaluations or peer evaluations that are hand written. Peer evaluations are due at the beginning of class on their respective due dates. Peer evaluations are advisory only and the instructor retains the right to adjust grades if it appears that the evaluations are unfair.

Homework

- Ten Homework Assignments *some individual and some group* (15% of Grade)

Bonus Points

- Writing Center Paper Review of Literature Review (5 bonus points on paper grade)
- Writing Center Paper Review of Human Subjects Protocol (5 bonus points on paper grade)
- Writing Center Paper Review of Research Report (5 bonus points on paper grade)
- Paper Selected by Group for Summary of Literature for Group Project (2 bonus points on course grade)

Grading Scale

90% to 100%...................... = A

80% to 89%....................... = B

70% to 79%....................... = C

60% to 69%....................... = D

0% to 59%........................ = F

Due Date Policy:

All assignments are due on the day they are scheduled in the course calendar below. These due dates will be strictly enforced. Any graded assignment turned in after the due date will automatically be lowered 41 out of 100 points. If a graded assignment is turned in more than a week late it will receive 0 points.

If you know an assignment is going to be late, it is strongly recommended that you contact your instructor through e-mail or voice mail before the due date. The instructor may renegotiate the due date to accommodate whatever problems you are having. The instructor will be very flexible if problems with due dates are identified prior to the date. The instructor will be much less flexible about renegotiating due dates when notified about problems after the date has passed.

Schedule:

Date	**This column indicates what you should be doing on a given date.**	**This column indicates what is due on a given date during the course.**
6-02-08	Review Syllabus Overview of WebCT	
6-03-08	Review Literature Review Rubric Looking for Topics	
6-04-08	Research Strategies Narrowing the Topic	
6-05-08	Review Concept Maps and Articles Intro to APA Format	Concept Map is Due
6-06-08	Intro to Basic Grammar Intro to Elements of Effective Writing	
6-09-08	Into to Bibliography Intro to Thesis	
6-10-08	Review of Bibliography Review Thesis	Bibliography Homework Due Thesis Homework Due
6-11-08	Intro to Problem Statement Intro to Summary of Literature	
6-12-08	Review Problem Statement Summary of Literature Workshop	Problem Statement Homework Due
6-13-08	Summary of Literature Workshop	
6-16-08	Intro to Critical Evaluation Summary of Literature Review	Summary of Literature Homework Due
6-17-08	Critical Evaluation Review	Critical Evaluation Homework Due
6-18-08	Introduction to Proposal Assignment Introduction to Human Subjects Protocol	**Literature Review Due**
6-19-08	Intro to Survey Research Group Assignments Return of Literature Reviews	
6-20-08	Review of Surveys Intro to Applied Research Lab	Survey Homework Due
6-23-08	Human Subjects Protocol Review	Human Subjects Protocol Homework Due

6-24-08	Intro to Research Report Data Analysis Intro to SPSS	**Human Subjects Protocol Due** **1st Peer Evaluation Due**
6-25-08	Intro to Research Report Introduction Intro to Research Report Review of Literature	
6-26-08	Human Subjects Protocol Returned & Discussed	
6-27-08	Review of Literature Research Report Introduction	
6-30-08	Review of Revised Surveys	Research Report Introduction Homework Revised Surveys Homework Due
7-01-08	Intro to Research Report Methods Section	
7-02-08	Intro to Research Report Results Section	
7-03-08	Meet with Applied Research Lab Consultants	
7-07-08	Methods & Results Sections Workshop	
7-08-08	Review of Method and Results Sections.	Methods and Results Sections Homework Due
7-09-08	Group Workshops	
7-10-08	Research Papers Review	**Research Papers Due** **Second Peer Evaluation Due**
7-11-08	Final Exam	**Final Exam**

Appendix C
Syllabus of Record

Syllabus of Record

I. Catalog Description

CM 302 - Research in Communications Media

3 credits
3 lecture hours
0 lab hours
(3c-0l-3sh)

Prerequisites: CM 150, EN 101 and EN 202 (C or Better)
The course is designed to provide knowledge of the resource materials and research strategies used in the communications media field. Students will design basic data gathering instruments, collect data and assimilate information from various sources and data into communication products, services or documents.

II. Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, the students will be able to:

- explain the basic purposes and strategies of research used in the field of communications media;
- list and define the basic types of communications research;
- design basic data gathering instruments, such as audience surveys and interviews, and use those instruments to gather data for use in written reports;
- acquire a working knowledge of library resources and utilize those resources in writing assignments;
- demonstrate and list the primary ways in which research results are communicated to audiences and communication professionals;
- use the Internet and other electronic data bases to gather information;
- revise documents to improve writing as appropriate to the stated research question and desired outcome; and
- design, research and write documents of a professional quality for inclusion in a senior portfolio

III. Course Outline

Week #1	Introduction Basic Data Gathering Methods Survey, Focus Group and Case Study Research in Communications Media
Week #2	Determining a Research Topic and Research Strategy What do I want to know? What strategy will best meet my needs? What is the anticipated outcome of the research?
Week #3	Designing Survey and Interview Questions

Week #4	Discovering the Library (Overview) What's in the library How to find facts fast How to find books and articles The search
Week #5	General Sources- Handbooks, textbooks, encyclopedias, dictionaries, annual reviews, series, information compilations
Week #6	Finding Tools (2 lecture hours) Guides to literature, indexes, abstracts, selected sources
Week #6	Test #1
Week #7	Specialty Libraries Electronic Libraries Government Resources Business and Commerce Resources Communication Periodicals
Week #8	Narrative Resources Finding Experts Using Experts Interviewing (types, preparation, special problems)
Week #9	Writing: Visions and Revisions The search for a focus Thesis Outline Detail and context Filling in the holes Improving clarity and style
Week #10	Designing the Communication Research Project Writing Research Papers Preparing Research Projects Conducting a Research Study
Week #11	Special Topics Trust, Truth and Thoughtful Assumptions Collecting and evaluating evidence Searching for detail and context Conflict, bias and deception When information gathering falls short
Week #12	Outcomes Bibliography and Abstracts Uses of research in communications
Week #13	Reporting Results and Recommendations Individual Oral Reports
Week #14	Individual Oral Reports

Final Examination as scheduled

IV. Evaluation Methods

At the start of the semester students will select a research topic, specific to the field of communications media, and complete the following research and writing assignments:

1.) Data Gathering Instruments: Each student will be required to design a survey instrument to be used in gathering data for a statistical sample. Each student will be required to design a set of interview questions to be used for a case study or focus group study. (Two Instruments - 50 points each)
2.) Written Reports: Students will be required to use the data gathering instruments they have designed to collect data as appropriate to their research goals. Following the collection of data, each student will produce a written report, based on the analysis of the data gathered from each research tool. (Two Reports - 75 points each)
3.) Research Paper: Using the previous two reports and data gathered, students will use additional sources, such as the library and the Internet to produce a major research paper. Specific instructions and deadlines for the completion of appropriate components of the research paper will be distributed to the student. (100 points)
4.) Oral Report: Students will prepare and present a 5-10 minute oral report on their findings, with conclusions drawn and recommendations. (50 points)

Additionally, there will be two examinations given during the semester, based on lectures and class reading materials (Two tests - 50 points each)

Grading Scale: Grades are calculated by totaling the points received on all assignments and examinations and dividing that number by the total points possible. The resulting percentage determines the letter grade, based on the following scale;

90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
below 60% = F

V. Required textbooks, supplemental books and readings

Kessler, Lauren, & McDonald, D. (1992). The Search: Information Gathering for the Mass Media. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

VI. Special resource Requirements:

None

VII. Bibliography

Anderson, James (1992). Communication Research. McGraw-Hill.

Babbie, Earl (1992). The principles of social research. Wadsworth.

Berger, Arthur. (1991) Media research techniques. San Francisco State University.

Dominick, Joseph, R., & Wimmer, R. (1994). Mass media research: An introduction. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Fowler, Floyd. (1992). Survey research methods. Sage Publication.

Kessler, Lauren, & McDonald, D. (1992). The Search: Information gathering for the mass media. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Lindlof, Thomas R. (1995). Qualitative communication research methods. University of Kentucky.

Lowery, Shearon and DeFleur, Melvin (1988). Milestones in mass communication Research. Longman.

Merriam, Sharan (1996). Case study research in education. Jossey-Bass.

Priest, Susanna H. (1995). Doing media research. Texas A&M University.

Rubenstein, Sondra, M. (1995), Surveying public opinion. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Rubin, R. B. and Rubin, A.M. (1993). Communication research: Strategies and sources. Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Wimmer, Roger and Dominick, Joseph. (1994). Mass media research: an introduction. Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Appendix D
Literature Review Checklist

Research in Communications Media
Literature Review Checklist

COMM 302

Each item below is worth up to 10 points using the following scale.

Not submitted		Poor work		Inadequate Work		Acceptable Work		Good Work		Excellent Work
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

A check list may be included under an item to provide clarification. These checked categories do not necessarily represent an even breakdown of value for the entire item. You should be careful to make sure that each checked category is thoroughly addressed.

1. The literature review includes a cover page including the title of your literature review, your name, the date and the purpose of the submission (Final Draft)............______

2. The literature review includes a thesis statement..______
   - ☐ The thesis statement is in the form of position based on the relevant literature
   - ☐ The thesis statement is not in the form of an opinion or belief
   - ☐ The thesis statement is to the point and in the form of a single paragraph.
   - ☐ The thesis statement must explain the thesis completely.
   - ☐ All statements of fact are backed up with cited sources.

3. The Literature Review includes a problem statement..______
   - ☐ The problem statement includes at least one paragraph that clarifies what is meant by the topic (definitions).
   - ☐ The problem statement includes at least one paragraph that states why the topic is interesting (current).
   - ☐ The problem statement includes at least one paragraph that indicates why the topic is significant in the communication field.
   - ☐ The problem statement includes at least one paragraph that identifies any controversies that need to be resolved (if any).
   - ☐ The problem statement includes at least one paragraph that indicates if the topic is of special interest to a particular group of people.
   - ☐ The problem statement is short and to the point. The problem statement must explain the problem completely.
   - ☐ All statements of fact are backed up with cited sources.

4. The literature review includes a summary of literature...______
   - ☐ The summary of literature includes a paragraph that outlines the summary.
   - ☐ The summary of literature includes at least three major subsections (based on your concept map)
   - ☐ The summary of literature clearly relates each subsection and ties them together.

- ☐ All statements of fact are backed up with cited sources.
- ☐ The summary of literature connects and relates the cited literature.
- ☐ The literature is used to support arguments within the summary of literature.
- ☐ The summary of literature is balanced and objective.

5. The literature review includes a critical evaluation section.._____

- ☐ The critical evaluation section critiques the conduct and validity of the research on the topic.
- ☐ The critical evaluation section proposes research questions that are still unanswered in the literature.
- ☐ All statements of fact are backed up with cites sources.

6. The literature review includes a reference page with a minimum of 10 primary sources cited within the paper.._____

7. The literature review is formatted according to APA guidelines including but not limited to the following ...._____

- ☐ Headings and subheadings are formatted according to the APA Style Guide.
- ☐ A running head is formatted according to the APA Style Guide.
- ☐ Page numbers are formatted according to the APA Style Guide.
- ☐ All sources are cited within the text using parenthetical citation that is formatted according to the APA Style Guide (Name, Date).
- ☐ The Reference page is formatted according to the APA Style Guide.
- ☐ All margin, font, and spacing choices are formatted according to the APA Style Guide.

8. The literature review is free of grammatical, typographical and spelling errors beyond the banned errors list and is at least 10 pages in length (including cover page and bibliography) ...._____

9. The literature review is written using the basic elements of good writing.................._____

- ☐ The literature review is written using active voice.
- ☐ The literature review is written using transitions to establish an orderly progression, continuity and smoothness.
- ☐ Each paragraph focuses on one idea.
- ☐ Each paragraph is written using topic and supporting sentences.
- ☐ The literature review is written in third person.
- ☐ Adjectives and adverbs are used sparingly throughout the literature review.
- ☐ Jargon is avoided and when used is properly defined.
- ☐ Clichés are avoided.
- ☐ Hyperbole is avoided (e.g.: all, every, very, always, never)
- ☐ The same word is not used twice in the same paragraph

- ☐ No questions appear within the paper unless they are quoted directly from another source.
- ☐ Language within the literature review is gender neutral.
- ☐ The literature review gets to the point.

10. The literature review clearly demonstrates improvements in the writing based on the drafts submitted in earlier homework assignments..______

Note: The instructor reserves the right to remove 100 points from this assignment or assign an F for the course for plagiarism of any kind.

Subtotal Score..______

Writing Center Bonus.. +______

Total Score...______