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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

I. CONTACT

Contact Person B. Gail Wilson Phone X3210

Department Communications Media

II. PROPOSAL TYPE (Check All Appropriate Lines)

__X__ **COURSE** Research in CM
Suggested 20 character title

__X__ New Course* CM 302 Research in Communications Media
Course Number and Full Title

____ Course Revision _____
Course Number and Full Title

__X__ Liberal Studies Approval + for new or existing course CM 302 Research in Communications Media
Course Number and Full Title

____ Course Deletion _____
Course Number and Full Title

____ Number and/or Title Change _____
Old Number and/or Full Old Title

_____
New Number and/or Full New Title

____ Course or Catalog Description Change _____
Course Number and Full Title

_____ **PROGRAM:** _____ Major _____ Minor _____ Track

____ New Program* _____
Program Name

____ Program Revision* _____
Program Name

____ Program Deletion* _____
Program Name

____ Title Change _____
Old Program Name

_____
New Program Name

III. Approvals (signatures and date)

B Gail Wilson 12/15/97
Department Curriculum Committee

Department Chair 12/17/97

College Curriculum Committee 2/18/98

College Dean 2/18/98

+Director of Liberal Studies (where applicable)

*Provost (where applicable) 2/18/98

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.

Course Analysis Questionnaire

Section A: Details of the Course

A1 This course will be one of four writing intensive options for students majoring in Communications Media. The course will be open to non-majors and minors who have completed the necessary pre-requisites. Additionally, students in Communications Media may enroll in this course as an advanced elective.

A2 This course does not require changes in the content of existing courses or requirements in other programs.

A3 Elements of this course have been offered in the B.S. in Communications Media as CM 103 - Basic Communications Research. This one credit course was deleted several years ago. The course was deleted because the one credit course did not serve the intended purpose of providing sufficient background in communications research. When the course was deleted it was acknowledged by the department curriculum committee that a new three credit course should be developed in this subject area.

A4 This course is not intended to be dual level.

A5 This course will not be offered for variable credit.

A6 Similar courses are offered as follows:

Clarion University - Communications Research Methods
Duquesne University - Communication Research Methods
Ithaca College - Corporate Communication Research and Evaluation
Penn State University - Research and Writing for the Mass Media

A7 The content of this course is not required by any accrediting agency. As noted in the rationale for the program revision for the B.S. in Communications Media, professionals and alumni surveyed for the department's recent self-study indicated a need for increased instruction in this area.

Section B: Interdisciplinary Implications

B1 This course will be taught by one instructor, a member of the Department of Communications Media.

B2 The Department of Journalism offers a similar course for its majors, JN 446 Research Methods in Journalism. CM 302 is designed to be specific to the communications field. Research topics will focus on communications issues and

outcomes will focus on the use of research in the communications profession, its products and processes.

B3 Seats for continuing Education students will be available as needed, provided those students have completed the necessary pre-requisites for the course.

Section C: Implementation

C1 Faculty resources are adequate. This course will be offered once a year to replace other courses being deleted in the overall program revision and is being accommodated in the faculty rotation plan provided.

C2 Current resources are adequate to teach this course. No new resources are required.

C3 No resources for this course are being funded by a grant.

C4 It is expected this course will be offered once each academic year. There are no seasonal restrictions on this course.

C5 One section of the course will be offered per semester.

C6 As this is being proposed as a writing intensive course, 25 students will be accommodated in each section of the course.

C7 No professional societies indicate enrollment limitations for a course of this type.

Section D: Miscellaneous

Not applicable