Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.
COURSE SYLLABUS
COMS 680
COMMUNICATION RESEARCH DESIGN

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The study and practice of the research design, interpretation, and evaluation of audiences, strategies, and issues.

RATIONALE

This core MA level research seminar will involve careful consideration of the approaches to research commonly employed in the field of communication studies. Traditionally, these approaches have included: (1) historical-critical (or rhetorical-critical) research, (2) qualitative research, and (3) quantitative research. The essential assumptions of this course are that the field of communication is an amalgam of the humanities, arts, and social sciences and that potentially all communication research approaches are valuable in the quest for understanding how communication works, has worked, fails, and has failed. The course is intended to open the door for the student to the major approaches employed in this multi-faceted field so that the student can better decide which direction(s) to take for future research and writing ventures.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the Academic Course Catalog.

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
C. Microsoft Word
   (Microsoft Office is available at a special discount to Liberty University students.)

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Compare the historical roots of the field of communication and the development of its research methodologies.
2. Evaluate selected communication theories that have guided, or continue to guide, the field of communication study.
3. Differentiate methodological approaches to communication research.
4. Utilize a scholarly writing style appropriate to the research methodology.
5. Create a complete research proposal on a suitable topic within the field of communication.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS
A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
B. Course Requirements Checklist
   After reading the Course Syllabus and Student Expectations, the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.
C. Discussion Board Forums (2)
   Discussion Boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 200 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates’ threads. Each reply must be at least 50 words.
D. Critical Reflection Papers (4)
   The student will write a 1–2-page summary and critical analysis of each chapter in the assigned readings. The purpose of this assignment is to apply content from the textbook in order to enhance his/her understanding of the research process and the writing of the thesis proposal. Each paper must be in current APA or MLA format.
E. Literature Review
   The student will write a 15–20-page Literature Review in current APA or MLA format that focuses on a topic of his/her choosing in preparation for the Thesis or Project Proposal. The paper must include at least 25–30 references in addition to the course textbook and the Bible.
F. Methodology
   The student will write a 6–8-page Methodology in current APA or MLA format for his/her Thesis or Project Proposal. The Methodology must include at least 15 references in addition to the course textbook and the Bible.
G. Works Cited/Bibliography
   The student will write a 5–6-page Works Cited/Bibliography in current APA or MLA format for his/her Thesis or Project Proposal. The Works Cited/Bibliography must include at least 45–50 references in addition to the course textbook and the Bible.
H. Introduction
The student will write a 2–3-page Introduction in current APA or MLA format for his/her Thesis or Project Proposal. The Introduction must include at least 5 references in addition to the course textbook and the Bible.

I. Thesis or Project Proposal
The student will prepare a 25–30 page Thesis Proposal or a Project Proposal in current APA or MLA format that focuses on an instructor-approved topic. The assignment is intended to be an appropriate culminating experience for the course and must display the student’s abilities to think and write critically as a communication scholar. The paper must include at least 30 scholarly references in addition to the course textbook and the Bible.

J. Thesis or Project Presentation
The student will present his/her Thesis Proposal or Project Proposal via YouTube. The presentation must be 8–10 minutes and must be presented as it would at a professional communication conference or a professional workshop/training seminar. The presentation will be graded on delivery, professionalism, organization, content, creativity, visual aids, and preparation.

VI. Course Grading and Policies
A. Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Requirements Checklist</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Forums (2 at 25 pts ea)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection Papers (4 at 75 pts ea)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited/Bibliography</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis or Project Proposal</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis or Project Presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1010</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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B. Scale

- A = 940–1010
- A- = 920–939
- B+ = 900–919
- B = 860–899
- B- = 840–859
- C+ = 820–839
- C = 780–819
- C- = 760–779
- D+ = 740–759
- D = 700–739
- D- = 680–699
- F = 0–679

C. Late Assignment Policy
If the student is unable to complete an assignment on time, then he or she must contact the instructor immediately by email.

Assignments that are submitted after the due date without prior approval from the instructor will receive the following deductions:
1. Late assignments submitted within one week of the due date will receive a 10% deduction.
2. Assignments submitted more than one week late will receive a 20% deduction.
3. Assignments submitted two weeks late or after the final date of the course will not be accepted.
4. Late Discussion Board threads or replies will not be accepted.

Special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, personal health issues) will be reviewed by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.

D. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online’s Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.
# COURSE SCHEDULE

**COMS 680**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE/ WEEK</th>
<th>READING &amp; STUDY</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1            | Creswell: chs. 1–2 1 presentation | Course Requirements Checklist  
Class Introductions  
DB Forum 1  
Critical Reflection Paper 1 | 10  
0  
25  
75 |
| 2            | Creswell: ch. 3 1 presentation | DB Forum 2  
Critical Reflection Paper 2 | 25  
75 |
| 3            | Creswell: ch. 6 1 presentation | Literature Review | 100 |
| 4            | Creswell: ch. 7 1 presentation | Critical Reflection Paper 3  
Methodology | 75  
100 |
| 5            | Creswell: ch. 9 1 presentation | Critical Reflection Paper 4  
Works Cited/Bibliography | 75  
100 |
| 6            | Creswell: chs. 4–5 1 presentation | Introduction | 50 |
| 7            | Creswell: ch. 8 1 presentation | Thesis or Project Proposal | 200 |
| 8            | Creswell: ch. 10 1 presentation | Thesis or Project Presentation | 100 |

**TOTAL** 1010

DB = Discussion Board

**NOTE:** Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.