

BECA 300: Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts Research
Fall 2008

Thursday 9:10 – 11:55am Creative Arts 106

Instructor: Elaine Chan, PhD
Office: Creative Arts Building 42B
Office Hours: W. 4-6 pm, Th. 1-3 pm
Email: -----

Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent with a grade of C or better, or passing score on Junior English Proficiency Essay Test (JEPET). Communication research. Acquiring and evaluating information and organizing the results into written form. Investigation of sources, methods, cataloging, philosophies of media research, and questions of reliability and validity.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to the basic set of knowledge and skills needed to design and conduct research. We will cover the entire research process—developing research questions, locating and evaluating existing research, building proper measurements, sampling, designing a study, analyzing data, and reporting your results. During the semester you will complete a research project that allows you to apply the concepts learned in class. Hopefully, by the end of the class you will no longer be a passive recipient of research claims but a discriminating consumer and competent practitioner.

In addition, this course focuses on writing. Soon BECA 300 will become the course designated by the department to fulfill SFSU's requirement of a junior level writing-intensive course within the major. However, the ability to write well will help you not only with the rest of your time as a student. Good writing skills will improve your chances in most professional opportunities after you graduate.

Course Materials

Wimmer, R. D. & Dominick, J.R. (2006). *Mass media research: An introduction* (8th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth. (W&D)

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. (APA)

Strunk, W. (2007). *The elements of style*. Claremont, CA: Coyote Canyon.

Additional required readings will be available online through the course website at <http://ilearn.sfsu.edu>

Evaluation

Not including extra credit opportunities, there are a total of 550 possible points in the course.

Exam 1 – 120 points (20%)
Exam 2 – 180 points (30%)
Response Papers – 90 points (15%)
Research Project – 150 points (25%)
Participation – 60 points (10%)

Extra Credit – No more than 6 points (<= 1%)

Total – 600 points

Course Grading Scale

A+	585 – 600 points	C+	465 – 479
A	555 – 584	C	435 – 464
A-	540 – 554	C-	420 – 434
B+	525 – 539	D+	405 – 419
B	495 – 524	D	375 – 404
B-	480 – 494	D-	360 – 374
		F	less than 360

Exams

Exams will include a mix of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. They are cumulative and may include any concepts covered from the beginning of the course until to the date of the exam.

Response Papers

Nearly every class will include a ten-minute writing exercise on a topic related to this class. The writing prompts may ask you to draw on your personal experiences, or your knowledge of the readings and lectures. These exercises will give you the opportunity to practice brainstorming and organizing your ideas before you write, and to become accustomed to writing on a variety of subjects with little preparation.

Research Project

The research project will give you the experience of conducting research in an achievable and meaningful way. The final deliverable for this project is a paper (about 12 pages long). You will have some time in class to focus on project work, but you will also need to work on the project outside of class time.

You will be working in teams of up to three people. A handout with more details about the research project will be available on iLearn by the third week of class.

Attendance and participation

Your participation includes both your physical presence in the classroom as well as your participation in class discussions. Since we have few class meetings and only meet once a week, your attendance is crucial for your participation in the class. In addition, because some sessions allow time for group work on your project, your group's ability to meet project deadlines depends on your presence as well.

Extra Credit

You may also have the opportunity to participate in activities or research studies conducted by BECA students and faculty. Participation is voluntary. More details will be given as the course progresses.

Finally, this course is **not graded on a curve**. Each student has the opportunity to achieve the highest standards and grades.

Policies

In order to create an atmosphere that fosters intellectual development, we are all expected to treat each other with mutual respect. All students are encouraged to use the classroom as a space in which to speak and to voice their opinions. My expectation is that you will respect not only the instructors but also your fellow classmates when they are participating in discussion and presenting their ideas.

Each exam is to be taken on the designated exam date. No make-ups are permitted except in cases of extreme emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, the student is responsible for 1) informing the professor prior to the exam time, and 2) providing written documentation of the emergency (such as a medical note from a physician). Similarly, response papers will not be excused without written documentation from a certified physician of the medical emergency. Job interviews and family vacations do not constitute family emergencies.

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible. The Disability Programs and Resource Center is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC, located in SSB 110, can be reached by telephone at 338-2472 (voice/TTY) or by e-mail at dprc@sfsu.edu.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is a form of cheating or fraud; it occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an "F" grade. All instances of plagiarism in the College of Humanities will be reported to the Dean of the College of Creative Arts, and may be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer for further action.

Course Schedule

Readings should be done prior to the lecture for which they are assigned. Readings marked with an asterisk * will be available via iLearn.

8/28	Introduction to BECA Research Science and Ways of Knowing	
9/4	Using Library Resources Developing Researchable Questions Elements of Research – Concepts, Constructs, Independent and Dependent Variables, Quantitative vs Qualitative Research Meet in Leonard Library 426A	W&D, Ch 1 p. 2-26 W&D, Ch 2 p. 44-50
9/11	Reading and Writing Research APA Style and Citing Sources Due: Question and Hypotheses	Complete SFSU Basic Information Competence Requirement *The Science of Scientific Writing *APA Handout
9/18	Building Good Measures Surveys Introduction to Statistical Tests Due: Working Bibliography	W&D, Ch 2 p. 50-58 Measurement, Levels, Scales W&D, Ch 7 p. 178-210 Surveys
9/25	Experimental Research Research Ethics Due: Article Summaries	Complete NIH module & completion certificate W&D, Ch 9 p. 230-254 Experiments W&D, Ch 3 p. 66-85 Ethics
10/2	Content Analysis Design Exam Review	W&D, Ch 6 p. 150-175 Content Analysis
10/9	Exam 1 Work on project	
10/16	Reliability and Validity Relationships and Causation Rival Hypotheses and Threats to Validity Due: Literature Review	W&D, Ch 1 p. 27-33 Internal Validity, External Validity W&D, Ch 2 p. 58-63 Reliability and Validity
10/23	Sampling Descriptive Statistics	W&D, Ch 4 p. 87-111 Sampling W&D, Ch 10 Introduction to Statistics
10/30	Hypothesis Testing T-Test, Correlation, Chi-square Due: Instrument and Method	W&D, Ch 11 p. 278-291 Hypothesis Testing W&D Ch 12 p. 292-318 Basic

		Statistical Procedures
11/6	Qualitative Methods	W&D, Ch 5 p. 112-148 Qualitative Research Methods
11/13	Commercial and Audience Research Exam Review	W&D, Ch. 14 p. 339-368 Research in the Electronic Media
11/20	Exam 2 Work on project	
11/27	Thanksgiving Holiday. No class!	
12/4	Location to be announced Data Collection Set up data sets Beginning Data Analysis	*Data Analysis Handouts
12/11	Meet in Burk Hall 210 Data Analysis Continued	*Data Analysis Handouts
12/16	Group Presentations Tuesday , December 16, 8:00 – 10:30am (yes, bright and early!) Research project paper due by midnight via email	