Communication 297: Research Methods in Communication Studies

Spring 2024

**Instructor**: Mary Beth Deline

 Fell 146

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*Class Fell 176*

 *Section 5, 12:35-1:50*

 *Section 6, 3:35-4:50*

*Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 2-3, in person or on Zoom*

## Overview

This course is a hands-on seminar where we will learn and practice research methods used in communication studies. The first part of the course presents a conceptual basis for designing research and assessing research quality. The second part of the course illustrates these concepts through in-depth reviews of research areas, specifically surveys and interview development.

Most modules are illustrated through class exercises based on research questions that might be encountered in communication research. Statistical examples will be drawn from various data sources and illustrated in class lectures through the use of EXCEL. Students will also learn basic data manipulation, analysis and presentation techniques using EXCEL.

Understanding what makes a good research project and how to undertake them are important skills that can be used in settings from the corporate boardroom to reading the newspaper. At the end of this course you will have developed the skills to design, undertake and analyze communication studies.

## Specific Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Have an appreciation for how we do research in the field of communication and why it is important to understand research methods,
2. Utilize a variety of communication databases to identify scholarly research related to a research topic of interest;
3. Understand key concepts and vocabulary used to describe various research paradigms and designs;
4. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of communication research designs that utilize in-depth interviews, content analysis, experiments and surveys;
5. Apply knowledge and skills learned about surveys to design and analyze an original questionnaire about media use and a sampling strategy;
6. Analyze numerical data using descriptive and inferential statistics in EXCEL;
7. Apply knowledge and skills learned about interviews to design an interview guide.

## Format and Procedures

The course will follow a seminar format with frequent group discussions and in-class exercises. You will be working as part of a group throughout the course.

**My Expectations of You**

***Please ask questions*.** If you have questions or need fuller explanations, I can be reached during office hours, by appointment, or e-mail. (Please note that it may take up to 48 hours for me to return your e-mail). Questions that the rest of the class will benefit from will be answered during class-time. If you have questions about the course that are covered after consulting the document posted on Reggienet about assignments in detail, evaluation procedures and course policies, I ask that you highlight the section of the document that’s unclear.

***Please be prepared***. This class relies on in-class discussion and exercises, so knowing the information from the readings is essential for classroom participation.

***Problems? Please let me know right away.*** If you get in touch with me towards the end of the semester, it will likely be too late to adjust or effect change. This is also why I’ll be holding several feedback sessions, one in the first month, to help identify any issues that can be adjusted.

**Getting in Touch With Me**
Office hours are **your** time; it’s time set aside for your comments and questions regarding assignments, course content, and your progress in the course. Questions and comments mean that you’re engaging with the course, so please don’t be shy to set up a time to chat. If you can’t make my office hours but have questions or comments, please be in touch via e-mail or my office telephone. If I don’t answer the phone, please leave a message with your name and a number that I can reach you at. Please note that I’ll respond to you within 48 hours at the latest, and only during ‘regular’ business hours – so please plan accordingly. (For instance, I won’t respond on the weekend, or at 5am in the morning).

### **Outside Preparation**

Plan on spending **between six (6) and nine (9) hours each week** outside of class on your work for this course. You will need this time to complete assigned readings and undertake research assignments.

## Course Requirements

***Required Textbook****:*

Baxter, L. A., & Babbie, E. (2004). *The basics of communication research*. Belmont, CA: Thompson and Wadsworth. Available secondhand on sellers like Amazon.

**PLEASE NOTE: you can now request digitization of chapters from this book at Milner as it’s on reserve. If you need help figuring out how to do that, please contact Course Reserves or a Milner Librarian.**

Other required readings, drawn from a variety of sources, are available on Reggienet.

***Supplemental Readings References:***

Babbie, E. (2001). *The practice of social research* (9th ed.) (pp. 68-87). Wadsworth.

Coe, K., Tewksbury, D., Bond, B. J., Drogos, K. L., Porter, R. W., Yahn, A., & Zhang, Y. (2008). Hostile news: Partisan use and perceptions of cable news programming. *Journal of Communication, 58*, 201-219. (Will be posted on Reggienet with the assignment).

***Required Items****:*

**EXCEL**. Assignment 3 will require students to use Microsoft Excel.
-Excel is standard with Microsoft Office packages, which can be found on the computers at Milner library as well as a variety of computer labs around campus.

***Course Readings****:* The course calendar in this syllabus lists readings to be completed in preparation for each class meeting. Required readings should be done in the order listed *in advance* of the day on which they are listed. Students should be prepared to participate in discussion of the topic and relevant research findings.

***Professionalism and Participation:*** You are expected to attend class regularly, to support your own learning and that of your fellow classmates. The vast majority of the material on the midterm and exam will be presented during lectures. *If you don’t attend the lectures consistently, you will not do well in this course.* The slides will not be sufficient study aids.

Class participation will be assessed two ways:

1. Before class (5 points): the day before class you must write three questions based on the reading. I will be reviewing these questions and will be answering the most-asked questions in class. Your two worst scores will be dropped.
2. In class (5 points): When these happen will be at my discretion. The check-ins will consist of a short, in-class reflection on what you have learned from the material and what you have learned from that day’s class. I will collect these each time. Some areas where in-class participation might be graded include: (1) showing knowledge of readings and have given thought to what you have read, (2) providing discussion points from each of the readings, (3) articulating your ideas clearly and argue effectively for your position, (4) contributing to a lively interchange of ideas, (5) synthesizing ideas across various readings, (6) responding thoughtfully to the comments of others. Failure to contribute to class discussion, in a meaningful way, will negatively affect your participation. Class participation cannot be made up – if you miss class, you forfeit your participation grade for that day (except for an emergency or excused absence – see below).

***Attendance: Attending class is necessary because the class assignments are reliant on your participation, unless you’re sick or have another type of excused absence****.* If you have to miss class one week or are late, you’re responsible for getting assignments, notes and other information and classmates are often helpful for that. I don't ‘reteach’ material but I'm happy to answer any specific questions.

Professionalism

In this course, we’ll be discussing, debating and disagreeing about research methods in a respectful manner. Please see ISU’s Student Code of Conduct for more information.

At the end of the semester, you’ll complete a professionalism self-assessment regarding your course engagement and participation.

If I think you aren’t meeting the course expectations (e.g., excessive absences, inadequate work, disrespect for others, etc.), I will let you know immediately, and a decision will be made concerning your need to drop the course.

**Group Project Peer Feedback Grade: 5 points.**

Throughout the semester, group members will evaluate each other’s performance and contributions to each part of their projects. At the end of the projects, group members will also provide feedback about each other’s contributions to the whole project. We will discuss this further in class.

**NOTE: *A note on group conflict versus social loafing:***
Groups always experience conflict, and this course gives you the opportunity to deal with differing viewpoints, perspectives and disagreements in a constructive manner. Succeeding as a group in your career means learning how to effectively manage conflict. You will be given a chance to evaluate your teammates at the end of the course.

However, sometimes certain group members don’t equally contribute. If the group experiences problems with social loafers that can’t be resolved within the group, please let me know ***asap***. Group members will complete peer evaluation forms evaluating group members’ reliability, productivity and communication. If the whole group identifies a member who fails to do their fair share, that member’s grade may be penalized, and/or they might be ‘fired’ from the group. Being ‘fired’ means that they would have to do the assignment themselves, without the benefit of their group’s assistance.

***Continued Enrollment***

Your enrollment in this class constitutes agreement with all aspects of this syllabus and any additions or alterations that may be made to it during the course of the semester. Additions and alterations include announcements I post for the class in Canvas or make in class, and additions and alternations include e-mail sent to class members. Such additions and alterations include information about the course, assignments, and so on. These announcements and e-mail are equally important when it comes to evaluating your work, because announcements may contain clarifications or other help that fit within assignments’ requirements. It is your job to keep track of what is going on.

***Assignments****:* Students will complete four major assignments designed to reinforce material presented in lecture and to apply course concepts to real-world communication problems. Late assignments will be docked 1 point *for each day* they are late, unless arrangements are made before the deadline (unless the criteria under ‘emergency/excused absence’ applies to you).

Because some of the assignments are more involved than others they are worth a different amount of points. Here is the breakdown of points related to each assignment:

*Assignment 1*: Finding Sources (8 points)

*Assignment 2*: Understanding the Language of Communication Research (8 points)

Assignment *3:* Applied Survey Design and introductory statistics (12 points)

*Assignment 4*: Interview Guide (12 points)

Assignment 1: Finding Sources (8 points)

By the end of this assignment, you will be able to:

• Identify a research topic and develop a research question or hypothesis in order to search for

supporting evidence;

• Investigate the scope, content, and organization of various information resources in communication in order to recognize the options available in the discipline and how it is

organized;

•Construct and implement effectively-designed search strategies in various resources in order

to find primary research articles published from 2018 onward.

Assignment 2: Understanding the Language of Social Science Research (8 points)

By the end of this assignment, you will be able to:

• Identify the main ideas, research questions or hypotheses presented in a research article

and analyze the structure and logic of supporting arguments and methods;

• Use your understanding of causality and alternative explanations to assess whether a

particular research study provides strong support of a cause and effect relationship

between two variables; and

• Demonstrate an understanding of policies related to use of human subjects.

Assignment 3: Applied Survey Design (12 points)

You will develop and administer a survey to students, and analyze some of your data using Excel.

Assignment 4: Interview Guide (12 points)

You will develop an interview guide.

*Exams*
The midterm exam may be a mix of true or false, multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The final exam isn’t cumulative – it will ONLY focus on material from the second half of the course. Midterm and final exam reviews will be held in class. The final exam can only be taken at the scheduled time (TBD by the university). *Exams are only given once.*

**Online Communication**

I use e-mail and Canvas course announcements to communicate directly to you as an individual and as a class. Clean out and check your ISU e-mail account frequently for notes or announcements from me, your fellow students, the department, and the college. *Not checking your e-mail or Canvas is not grounds for any excuse for not doing or not doing well on any assignment.* *It’s your responsibility to (1) keep your e-mail accounts open and up-to-date and (2) monitor your e-mail and Canvas class news frequently.*

**Online Course Material**

I use Canvas extensively to organize the material for this course and make announcements about our class. If you have problems with Canvas, let me know *and* call the Help Desk at 309-438-4357.

The Canvas site for this class contains additional, required reading material for this course. This material used in connection with the course may be subject to copyright protection. Your viewing of the material posted on Canvas does not imply any right to reproduce, to retransmit or to redisplay it other than for your own personal or educational use. Links to other sites are provided for the convenience of the site user (staff or student) or visitor and do not imply any affiliation or endorsement of the other site owner nor a guarantee of the quality or veracity of information contained on the linked site.

Many files are PDFs and should open easily with Adobe Acrobat Reader to view and print them. If you don't have this free software, go to <http://www.adobe.com> to download that software.

## Evaluation

***Grades****:* Grades are based on the number of points accumulated during the semester from:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In-class Participation (5 points) | Midterm (20 points) |
| Before-class Participation (5 points) | Final Exam (20 points)Professionalism Assessment (5 points) |
| Group Peer Assessment (5 points) | Extra Credit (4 points; optional) |
| Four Assignments (40 points total) |  |

***Tentative Nature of this Syllabus***: This syllabus represents a contract in the works. Events that transpire over the semester may require me to modify the administration of the course and therefore the syllabus. In the event I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification both in class and on Canvas. Ultimately it is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc.

## Tentative Course Schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Topic** | **Readings** | **Assignment** |
| **1****Jan 15** | WEATHER DELAY |  |  |
|  | INTRO |  |  |
| **2****Jan 22** | Basic concepts | Ch. 1 |  |
|  | Paradigms | Ct. 3 | Reading Response 1 due night before |
| **3****Jan 29** | The Process and Ethics of Communication Research  | Ch. 5 | Reading response 2 due night before |
|  | Sources, Journals and Literature Searches (*guest – Maria Tudela*) | Ch. 2 | Reading Response 3 due night before |
| **4****Feb 5** | Research Questions, Hypotheses and Variables |  |  |
|  | Research Questions, hypotheses and variables (CONT’D)  |  | *Assignment 1* *Due*  |
| **5****Feb 12** | The Role of Theory in Communication Research  | Ch. 4 | Reading Response 4 due night before |
|  | Research Design, Causality and Validity  | Babbie, 2001, pp. 68-87 | Reading Response 5 due night before |
| **6****Feb 19** | Research Design, Causality and Validity (Cont’d) | Part 2 Intro(pp. 102-105)Ch. 8 | *Assignment 2 Due* Reading Response 6 due night before |
|  | Midterm review |  |  |
| **7****Feb 26** | Measurement in Communication Research  | Ch. 6 | Reading response 7 due night before |
|  | **Midterm** |  |  |
| **8****March 4** | **Survey Design pt 1** | Coe et al., 2008 | Reading response 8 due night before |
|  | **Survey Design pt. 2** |  |  |
| **9****March Break NO CLASS** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **10** **March 18** | Group meetings, surveys |  |  |
|  | External Validity - Samples, Populations and Inference  | Ch. 7 | Reading Response 9 due night before |
| **11****March 25** | External Validity – Samples, Populations and Inference (Cont’d) |  | Reading Response 10 due night before |
|  | Intro to descriptive stats | Baxter & Babbie, ch. 11Vaughn, Ch. 4 | Reading response 11 due night before |
| **12****April 1** | Levels of measurement and inferential statistics | Vaughn, Ch. 1 and Ch. 3, pp. 20-25  | Reading Response 12 due night before |
|  | Descriptive statistics workshop |  | *Assignment 3* *due* |
| **13****April 8** | Introduction to interviews | Kvale, Ch. 1 & 2 | Reading Response 13 due night before |
|  | What’s an interview guide? | Kennedy: what’s an interview guide? andProbes | Reading response14 due night before |
| **14****April 15** | Doing interviews  | Kvale, ch. 5 | Reading Response 15 dueNight before |
|  | Assessing interviews  | Kvale, ch. 7 | Reading response 16 due night before |
| **15****April 22** | Interview workshop |  |  |
|  | Assessing research reports | Blum 2020Southwell et al., 2018 | *Assignment 4* *due* |
| **16****April 29** | Assessing news coverage of research reports | Sciline 2020 |  |
|  | Class wrap up and final exam review |  | *Group Peer Assessment Due**Self Professionalism Assessment Due* |
| **FINAL** | **Time: TBA****Location: TBA** |  |  |

You are expected to be familiar with [ISU’s Code of Student Conduct](http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conflict/conduct/code/).

Top of Form

**Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism (presenting someone else’s work as your own or without proper acknowledgment) or any other type of academic dishonesty will be considered justification for failure for that particular assignment or the entire course, depending on severity. You are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/code/) and any additional syllabus language. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else’s work, is plagiarism. **Content generated by an Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content)  without proper attribution or authorization would also be a form of plagiarism.** If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, please reach out to me to discuss it as soon as possible. Any allegation of a violation of this section may be referred to [Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/resolution/), a unit of the Dean of Students Office for possible sanctioning.  In addition, a grade penalty can also be applied.

In this spirit, I would like to acknowledge the following people whose work has inspired this syllabus and/or whose work I have adapted: Joshua Barbour, Anthony Dudo, Jeff Courtright, Becky Hayes, Lance Lippert, Katherine McComas, Aimee Miller-Ott, Jeff Neiderdeppe, Pete Smudde, Meghnaa Tallapragada, Lindsey Thomas.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

*I have a disability, and/or medical/mental health condition. What do I do?*

*What if I miss a class for a religious holiday, emergency or extended illness?*

*When are assignments due? What if my work’s late?*

*Will you review my written work before I submit it?*

*How do I know what my grade is?*

*What’s your grading philosophy?*

*What if I have a technology problem with an assignment?*

*Can I get an incomplete?*

*I want to discuss my grade. How do I do that?*

*I want my grade re-evaluated. What do I do?*

*I’d like to discuss my overall grade and/or figure out what my grade currently is. How do I do that?*

*Can I earn extra credit?*

*I’m feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious or depressed. What can I do?*

*I’m food or housing insecure – what do I do?*

*I’d like to learn how to take better notes or manage my time better. Where can I learn about ways to do that?*

*I’m a first-generation student. What can I do to help myself navigate university?*

*How do I use the library?*

*What if I don’t have technology access to succeed in coursework?*

*Do I need permission to record or share your course materials?*

**I have a disability, and/or medical/mental health condition. What do I do?**

Please let me know as soon as possible after contacting Student Access and Accommodation Services, so that I can discuss strategies to fit the course to your needs. Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at [StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu](https://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/).

**What if I miss a class for a religious holiday, emergency or extended illness?**

If you must miss class due to an extended illness such as COVID or another illness (3 or more consecutive class days) or bereavement, the Student Health Services and the Dean of Students Office can help. Please get in touch with them to help you communicate what’s happening to your professors, so you can focus on getting better or mourning.

Ultimately, you are responsible for attending class and completing all academic work. Make arrangements with me in advance if you will be missing class due to participation in a Sanctioned University Activity, fulfillment of a religious obligation, service in the military, jury duty, or another university-recognized excused absence (see University Policy and Procedures 2.1.27 Student Bereavement Policy).

These are the only circumstances I accept to reschedule an exam or have an assignment count as excused. If one of these situations occurs, I’ll need a letter signed by an authoritative person attesting to the issue (i.e.: a university official such as a coach regarding campus activities).

In the case of absence due to religious observance, please notify me five days in advance. Please note: you must receive written or verbal confirmation from me that you’re excused, simply leaving me a message does not mean that you’re excused.

**When are assignments due? What if my work’s late?**

All assignments are due no later than the time stated on the assignment. Anything received after the due time will be penalized 1 point for each 24 hours it is late, starting after submission (so 1 off for an hour late, 2 points off for 25 hours late). (If you have an emergency or excused absence, these late penalties don’t apply).

**Will you review my written work before I submit it?**

No, I don’t, in order to be fair to the grading needs of all students in the course. If you need one-on-one writing assistance for the other assignments, please contact the Julia N. Visor Academic Center, which offers one-on-one writing assistance by appointment. You can also find writing assistance sessions at the library. You can find more information about these services here: <http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/help/writing/>

**How do I know what my grade is?**

All grades will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. I’ll attempt to upload grades within a reasonable time after their submission. Assignment feedback will be delivered through Canvas or in class. Please note that due to University regulations, I’m not allowed to communicate your grades to you over e-mail or the phone without your prior permission.

**What’s your grading philosophy?**

I grade assignments and exams based on the quality of the work, and assume that you start with 0 points. You don’t start with 100 points and ‘lose’ them for mistakes. Your final score for an assignment or exam represents what you earned, not the number of points ‘deducted’. I don’t curve grades. Simply following directions and fulfilling the assignment requirements does not guarantee you an A on the work.

**What if I have a technology problem with an assignment?**

You’re expected to keep computer files and/or photocopies of all assignments that you submit. This is good practice for your future career. When working on a computer, please frequently save your files, and always backup your work to somewhere besides the computer. I don’t accept late work due to technological challenges.

**Can I get an incomplete?**

Incompletes are based on university policy, and are granted only *in extreme cases* when a documented emergency prevents you from completing the class, you have contacted the Dean of Students Office, and you have successfully completed approximately three quarters (75%) of the course. **For graduating seniors, please note:** You must have any previous incompletes taken care of at least *six weeks prior to the semester you plan to graduate*. If a student takes this course with an incomplete, and plans to graduate, you’ll need to finish the incomplete grade by midterm so that you meet the graduation/completed credit-hours deadline.

**I want to discuss my grade. How do I do that?**

Please see me during office hours, make an appointment or send me an e-mail.

**I want my grade re-evaluated. What do I do?**

You can appeal your grade if you feel it doesn’t adequately reflect your performance on an exam or assignment. To do so, please submit a one-page written statement (a formal e-mail is fine) within one week after the assignment or exam was first returned to the class. The statement should include documentation about why you feel the grade doesn’t reflect your performance. This policy means that your concerns are addressed quickly. I’ll review the document and decide to move ahead with a regrade or not. Documentation such as ‘I worked really hard’ or “I need a better grade for my GPA’ aren’t adequate because I’m grading your output, not your effort. If I decide to regrade, the whole assignment or exam is regraded. This means that it’s possible for your mark to go down rather than up if mistakes in your favor are found when the assignment or exam is regraded.

Please note that the timeframe to send in written documentation starts when the exam or assignment is returned to class, not when you actually obtain it. If you miss the timeframe to submit a written statement, you forfeit your right to appeal the grade.

**I’d like to discuss my overall grade and/or figure out what my grade currently is. How do I do that?**

If you’re having trouble figuring out your grade, please schedule a meeting.

**Extra Credit Opportunities**There may be extra credit opportunities throughout the semester; if there are, they will be announced on Canvas.

**Research Participation - Extra Credit**

There will be a few extra credit opportunities for research participation. The extra credit points will be added to your final grade, and **will not appear in the gradebook immediately upon your completion of the opportunity** – I don’t get the lists until after a study ends. There are no guarantees for extra credit, and it is each student’s responsibility to be aware of and take advantage of such opportunities. You may receive extra credit for participating in any of the studies posted to the School of Communication’s Research Announcement Board. The Research Announcement Board is updated as research studies are opened/closed, and it is your responsibility to access the Board and be aware of available opportunities. The Research Announcement Board can be accessed via:

[https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsites.google.com%2Fsite%2Filstusocstudies%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cmedelin%40ilstu.edu%7Ceba7703ac5e743ad29dd08da7979b6e3%7C085f983a0b694270b71d10695076bafe%7C1%7C0%7C637955860920338206%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=8PnJW9ZN85m%2BSyIqmuYreynh%2BNcp%2FzAx%2BPXup8qbTNk%3D&reserved=0)

In general, each 30 minutes of participation in an extra credit study will earn you .5 Research Credits, which translates into 1 point in this class. You may earn a total of 4 points participating in research (so, that means roughly four online surveys, or two bigger things like in-person focus groups or experiments). Please see the call for participants for the Research Credits associated with each study. Each project listed on the Research Announcement Board will indicate the specific number of Research Credits associated with the project. The course instructor will get evidence of participation and the time of participation from the researcher(s) who administer the research studies at the conclusion of the semester; however, it is your responsibility to make sure that the researchers have the necessary evidence of your participation at the time of the study. Before participating in a study, please be sure to have your name, ULID (i.e., the part of your email before @ilstu.edu), instructor name, and course and section number ready, as you will need to provide these to receive credit. Research Credit can only be applied to one course for each study, unless specified otherwise on the Research Announcement Board. A maximum of four points can be earned from extra credit opportunities via the Research Announcement Board. After the last day of class there will be no more opportunities for extra credit.

**Non-Research Extra Credit Opportunities (SoC Alternative)**

There may be some studies for which you are not eligible (e.g., recruiting based on gender or family structure) or in which you do not wish to take part. Reasonable alternatives are available for those not able or wanting to take part in specific studies, to ensure equitable non-research based opportunities.  For each available study in which you would like to complete an alternate assignment, please contact the researcher of the study. (https://sites.google.com/site/ilstusocstudies/school-of-communication-research-study-announcement-board/information-for-studentsparticipants/alternate-non-research-assignments). These non-research alternatives are conducted with the researcher, not the course instructor, so direct your initial and subsequent inquiries, as well as completed assignment, to the researcher identified for that particular study. Alternate opportunities will be scaled by the course instructor to ensure commensurate time commitment and course credit with the research-based opportunity.

**I’m feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious or depressed. What can I do?**

Life at college can get complicated. If you’re feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed or are struggling with personal issues, do not hesitate to call or visit [Student Counseling Services](https://counseling.illinoisstate.edu/) (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, (309) 438-3655.If you are worried about a friend and don't know how to help, you can call SCS and ask to speak to a counselor. The [Kognito simulation](https://counseling.illinoisstate.edu/outreach/kognito/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank%22%20%5Co%20%22Opens%20in%20new%20window), available through SCS's webpage, can also help you learn how to assist your friend in connecting to services.

**I’m food or housing insecure – what do I do?**It's hard to learn if you're hungry or couch surfing. If you are having difficulty affording groceries, accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or securing a safe and stable place to live, help may be available. I urge you to contact the [Dean of Students Office](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/contact/dean/) to learn more.

**I’d like to learn how to take better notes or manage my time better. Where can I learn about ways to do that?**

The University offers workshops in areas such as study skills, writing, reading and time management. For more information see: <http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/help/workshops/>

**I’m an under-represented student, like a first-generation student. What can I do to help myself navigate university?**TRiO/Student Support Services at ISU provides services to traditionally underrepresented students in post-secondary education. Services offered include advising, counselling and workshops. To see if you’re eligible and apply, please visit http://universitycollege.illinoisstate.edu/communities/trio/

**How do I use the library?**

Maria Tudela is the Communication subject librarian (that’s right, we have our very own subject librarian). You can contact Maria to investigate what library resources might help you with an assignment, and figure out a research strategy. More information on Maria and Communication Subject Resources are available here: <http://guides.library.illinoisstate.edu/COM>

**What if I don’t have technology for this course?**Students who do not have access to the technology they need to be successful in their coursework should contact the Technology Support Center at [Help.IllinoisState.edu/Technology](http://help.illinoisstate.edu/Technology) or (309) 438-HELP (4357) to discuss options.

**Notice of Recording**

The University wants to make students aware that a course may be recorded by the faculty member for later use. Please understand that each faculty member makes an individual decision on whether recording and/or sharing their class materials is warranted. Any recordings that a faculty member makes available are for use by students enrolled in the class and are for the purpose of individual or group study only. The recordings may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments. Please do not independently record the course without prior authorization from the faculty member or an approved accommodation from [Student Access and Accommodations Services](https://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/) office.

**Do I need permission to record or share your course materials?**

Students who wish to use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions must obtain written permission from the instructor. Such recordings are to be used solely for the purposes of individual or group study with other students enrolled in the class. They may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments. Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact the [Student Access and Accommodation Services](https://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/). Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University’s [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/conduct/code/).