Research Methods

Syllabus

CMS 3020
Research Methods
Spring, 2015 (3 credit hours)

Instructor: Mark May
Office Location: Music Education Building, 204
Phone: 678 466-4729 E-Mail: markmay@clayton.edu
Website: http://faculty.clayton.edu/mmay

Office Hours
M/W 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
T/R 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
and by appointment

Introduction and Making Contact
This is a hybrid course introducing the theories and techniques used to conduct primary research. This course focuses on research related to interpreting media, but it also covers methods for studying human interaction, including scientific methods. Come visit me during my office hours or set up an appointment to discuss your research interests. I do not frequently access the GeorgiaView e-mail system, so contact me using the CSU e-mail account.

Textbook

Class Meetings
This class meets on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 10:00 am to 10:50 am in Clayton Hall, T-217.

Taking Responsibility for your Learning
Students are responsible for attending class and being on time; reading the textbook; tracking assignments and due dates; taking pride in your work, turning everything in on time, and following directions. Ask for clarification or help before an assignment is due.
Course Catalog Description
This course provides CMS majors with the necessary skills to conduct independent, primary, interdisciplinary research in Media Studies and Cultural Studies. Students learn a variety of humanistic and social-scientific methodologies, which may include some or all of the following: in-depth interviewing, focus groups, archival research, content analysis, semiotics and textual analysis. Students choose an appropriate media topic to study through a variety of research modes and methods over the length of the semester. Open to students who have been admitted to the Communication and Media Studies (CMS) minor or BA program.

Course Prerequisites
ENGL 1102 (C), CMS 2010 (C), CMS 2100 (C), COMM 1110 (C), Passing score CMS Writing Assessment.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes
After completing this course successfully, students should be able to:
- identify appropriate objects of analysis;
- determine appropriate methods and procedures for investigating scholarly research questions;
- explain various theories, methods, and procedures used to study media products and human communication;
- distinguish quantitative from qualitative research methods;
- interpret descriptive statistics;
- explain the rhetorical functions of the component parts of journal articles;
- evaluate the arguments found in scholarly articles,
- describe, analyze and criticize media texts; and,
- write research papers.

Course Format
This is a hybrid course that meets for 50 minutes on Mondays and Wednesdays and has an online component found in GeorgiaView (D2L). There is a new module along with an assignment most weeks. You can log in using the SWAN, but you may want to log in directly to GeorgiaView (D2L) by using this link: https://clayton.view.usg.edu/ I recommend you perform the system check found on the log-in page before trying to use GeorgiaView. You may find that Firefox is the best browser for GeorgiaView. You can download Firefox from this site: https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/

Disabilities
Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center 255, (678) 466-5445, disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu.
Course Assignments/Assessment

Research Questions/Topics
Identify primary research topics.

Using Library Databases: Finding an Article
Find a scholarly article in a library database related to one of your research topics and provide a brief summary of the journal. Explain how the journal article relates to your topic.

Review/Application Papers (4)
The review/application papers have two parts. In the first part, summarize and evaluate the assigned journal article. Criticize the paper by finding weaknesses in one or more component parts of the articles: the introduction, literature review, hypothesis (research questions), method, discussion, or conclusion. You may extrapolate from the work sharing some interesting, informed observations about the ideas presented in the work. In the second part, share an idea about how the method(s) used in the scholarly paper could be applied to a different topic that you are interested in.

You Do It! (6)
In these exercises, you will conduct primary research using various research methods. Post your assignment to the discussion board.

Mini-Papers (3)
Conduct primary research using three methods: textual analysis, qualitative research (observation), and quantitative research (survey).

Mini-Paper Presentations (3)
Use PowerPoint to explain your research to the class. Be sure to provide examples of direct evidence of what you studied to support your claims. Leave time for questions and answers in your maximum allotment of time.

Peer Reviews
Students will provide feedback on research presentations. They must have internet capability in class when the presentations are given.

NIH Human Subjects Protection Training Certificate
Take the free training course provided by the National Institutes of Health. See http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/hs/index.htm Pass the quiz, print the certificate, and turn in a hard copy by the due date.

Final Exam
The final exam will be an objective exam on the textbook and class discussions. A study guide will be provided. The exam will be largely, if not entirely, objective questions (multiple choice, short answer, matching or T/F).

Grading

Final Grades are based upon the percentage of total points using the standard college scale:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment/Quiz</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding Research Topics</td>
<td>05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using Library Databases: Finding an Article</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review/Application Papers (RAPS) (4 @ 10 pts. ea.)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Do It! (6 @ 10 pts. ea.)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini-Papers (3 @ 20)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini-Paper Presentations (3 @ 10)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH Human Participant Certification</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Reviews</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation/Pop Quizzes/Other Assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>380</td>
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**Computer/Technology/Materials Requirements**

You are required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for your academic program. Computers are necessary in a number of classes. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm

**Required Skills**

Students enrolled in this course should possess the following technology skills:

- The ability to access information via the Internet
- The ability to use GeorgiaView/D2L and associated tools, including discussion boards, chat rooms, online tests and drop boxes
- The ability to use word processing software

**Software**

The following software is required in order to view course content and to participate in planned course activities. If you do not have this software currently loaded on your computer or are
unsure, you can download the software for free by clicking on the following links:

Adobe Reader
Flash Player

Technical Support
Contact the HUB: http://www.clayton.edu/hub

Participation Requirements
This is a hybrid course meeting face-to-face twice a week with online modules to be completed most of the weeks of the semester. The course week runs from Sunday morning 12:01 am until the subsequent Sunday at 11:59 pm EST. Most assignments will be due on Sunday at 11:59 pm, but some are due before a particular class meets. Please make sure that you have completed the module and submitted assignments on time.

Online Etiquette (Netiquette)
Discussion, chat, and e-mail in this course are for class purposes only, unless otherwise stated. Do not share other students’ comments or work with people outside the class. Be collegial and act professionally at all times. What you write in the online environment is permanent, so write things that you are proud of.

The following guidelines apply:
- Avoid using ALL CAPS, sarcasm, and language that could come across as strong or offensive.
- Use proper spelling, punctuation and grammar; edit your contribution before posting.
- Do not unnecessarily repeat information.
- Remember that unlike in face-to-face learning environments what you say in discussions and chats is more likely to be misunderstood, so think before you post and edit your work to reflect sensitivity to the perceptions of others. Choose your words carefully.

Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Text Chapter</th>
<th>Online Modules Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 12, 14</td>
<td>Syllabus; Overview of Research (Primary versus Secondary)</td>
<td>Introduction Chapter 1</td>
<td>MOD 1: Research Questions/Topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19 (No Class; MLK)</td>
<td>Library Research</td>
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<td>MOD 2: Using Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Assignment/Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
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<td>Databases; APA Style</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 26, 28</td>
<td>Textual Analysis, Genres, Character Analysis</td>
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<td>MOD 3: RAP #1 Journal Article Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 2, 4</td>
<td>Semiotics</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>MOD 4: You Do It #1 Commercial Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 9, 11</td>
<td>Rhetorical Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>MOD 5: You Do It #2 Commercial Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 16, 18</td>
<td>Ideological Criticism</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>MOD 6: You Do It #3 Commercial Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 23, 25</td>
<td>Psychoanalytic Criticism</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>MOD 7: You Do It #4 Commercial Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 2, 4</td>
<td>Writing A Mini Paper</td>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>MOD 8: RAP #2 Journal Article Assignment</td>
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<td>Mar 9-13 Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 16, 18</td>
<td>Textual Analysis Mini-Paper Presentations</td>
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<td>MOD 9: Post PowerPoint and mini-paper by presentation date Bring laptops to class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 23, 25</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Participant-Observation</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>MOD 10: You Do It! #5 Observation Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 30, Apr 1</td>
<td>Historical Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>National Archives at Atlanta Visit (date TBD) MOD 11: NIH Certification</td>
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<td>Apr 6, 8</td>
<td>Interview Ethnomethodology</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>MOD 12: RAP #3 Journal Article Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 13, 15</td>
<td>Qualitative Research Presentations</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>MOD 13 Post PowerPoint, and Mini-Paper by presentation date Bring laptops to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 20, 22</td>
<td>Quantitative Research Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>MOD 14: RAP #4 Journal Article Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 27, 29</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>MOD 15: Create survey in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Qualtrics pairs (part of mini-paper project)</td>
<td>Bring laptops to class</td>
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<td>MOD 16: You Do It! #6 Content Analysis Project</td>
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<td>Online Final Exam Opens</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Final Exam Period</td>
<td>Quantitative Research</td>
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<td>Presentations on survey results</td>
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<td>MOD 17: Post PowerPoint and mini-paper to GV</td>
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<td>before class begins</td>
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<td>Bring laptops to class</td>
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**Course Policies:**

**General Policy**
Students must abide by policies in the [Clayton State University Student Handbook](#), and the [Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities](#).

**University Attendance Policy**
Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

**Course Attendance Policy**
Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is required for examination periods and presentations. In the event that there is an unavoidable reason for an absence, contact the instructor ahead of time via e-mail. Students may be required to document reasons for absences. Students with excessive absences (excused or unexcused), i.e., more than ten classes/missing online assignments, may be administratively withdrawn from the course.

**Missed Work**
Without valid excuse submitted via e-mail prior to the due date, a grade of zero points will be assigned to work not submitted. This includes all examinations for which the student is not present.

**Late Work**
Students should submit all scheduled written assignments by the assigned deadline. Late work will be accepted for a short amount of time after the due date, but a penalty will be applied based upon the nature of the assignment and the number of days the assignment is late. Some course work, like presentations, feedback, and the final exam are far more difficult to make-up. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if serious illness or other unexpected emergencies prevent them from giving a presentation at the assigned time. Not being prepared is not an acceptable excuse.

**Academic Dishonesty**
Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved and may involve
more serious consequences. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs. Judicial procedures are described at the following website

http://adminservices.clayton.edu/judicial/.

Plagiarism Detection Software
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. You should submit your papers in such a way that no identifying information about you is included.

Disruption of the Learning Environment
Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

A more detailed description of examples of disruptive behavior and appeal procedures is provided at:

http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.pdf

Other Policies

- Cell phones must be turned off prior to the beginning of class.
- Students may only use laptops and electronic devices in class for instructional purposes (taking notes, giving a presentation, providing feedback, etc.).
- Students should be on time to class except due to unforeseen severe circumstances.
- Students are expected to remain in class for the entire class period. Do not leave early!
- Students arriving late, leaving early, engaging in electronic entertainment or communication during class or talking during class may be marked absent or, in more serious cases, when disrupting class, may be dismissed from the class meeting and/or referred to Judicial Affairs where permanent dismissal may occur.
- All assignments must be typewritten and submitted as per guidelines by the due date (to GeorgiaView). Use spell check and edit your work.

Writing Assistance
The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing consultants about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a consultant or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your consultant, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit.

Visit the website for more information: http://clayton.edu/writersstudio.

Last update: January 10, 2015