

**COMM Graduate Courses
Spring 2020**

(all class meeting times are tentative)

COMM 611: Advanced Quantitative Methods

Dr. Kirby Goidel

Wednesday, 6-9:00

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of quantitative research methods and design used in the study of mass communication and public affairs. It is based on a simple assumption. Our understanding of communication processes and effects is intractably linked to our understanding of research methodology. With this in mind, we will explore the philosophical underpinnings of quantitative research, how research design considerations structure the questions we ask (and answer), and statistical analysis of quantitative data. Students in the course will learn, first, how to critically evaluate quantitative research and, second, how to produce and present theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous quantitative analyses. The course will specifically guide students through regression-based modeling and its extensions, including ordinary least squares (OLS), analysis of categorical dependent variables, interactive effects, statistical mediation, and structural equation modeling.

COMM 625: International Communication & Public Diplomacy

Dr. Sandra Braman

Monday, 4:10-6:40

The semester will provide an overview of the history and theories of international communication and of public diplomacy relative to that larger field. Transformations of the nature of public diplomacy in the digital environment, particularly its relationship to "hard" forms of diplomacy and international relations as well as those that are "soft," will receive focal attention as the lines between public diplomacy and cyber- and information warfare of various kinds are blurring. The semester will open with a guest lecture by the head of the US government's Agency for Global Media and with a for-course-credit research methods workshop by the person who has been designing public diplomacy research for embassies around the world for several years. (Both of these individuals have doctorates in communication from the Annenberg School, University of Southern California.) Each student will have the opportunity to engage in in-depth research on a topic of interest for the final paper. This is the required core course for those earning the graduate International Communication and Public Diplomacy certificate, co-offered by the Department of Communication and the International Affairs Department of the Bush School.

COMM 637: Seminar in Organizational Communication (Leadership, Communication, & Discourse)

Dr. J. Kevin Barge

Tuesday/Thursday, 11:10-12:25

The study of leadership has historically been the domain of leadership psychologists and has been dominated by a perspective that diminishes the importance of context, focuses on individual leaders, and uses a variety of personality traits and cognitive abilities to create accounts of leadership activity. Leadership psychology has recently been challenged by an approach called discursive leadership which encompasses a wide variety of perspectives including relational, social constructionist, interpretive, and critical. A discursive approach emphasizes the importance of communication and discourse in the communicative constitution of leadership.

This seminar will explore a variety of theories and ideas associated with both leadership psychology and discursive leadership. We will explore a number of issues such as the connection between followership and leadership, the role of materiality in the construction of leadership, the generative power of dialogical and appreciative discourses to create effective and appropriate forms of leadership practice.

COMM 645: Rhetorical & Textual Methods

Dr. Tasha Dubriwny

Tuesday/Thursday, 2:20-3:35

The critic, Kirt Wilson explains, “is someone who builds cultural knowledge by locating, explicating, and holding out for judgment the artifacts of a civilization.” In this course, together we will become rhetorical critics and critical rhetoricians—both assessing and participating in rhetorical engagement. COMM 645 will introduce you to the art of rhetorical criticism, broadening your scholarly, historical, political, and cultural knowledge and providing you with the opportunity to hone your critical capacities. What we learn here should not only help you produce academic work worthy of convention presentation and publication, it also should enrich your cultural perspective and deepen your political judgment. As critics, we will analyze a range of rhetorical texts/acts, from films, television shows, and websites to protests, political oratory, and material artifacts. Although offered in Communication, our course material and texts align with projects emerging from interdisciplinary fields such as Cultural Studies, American Studies, and Women’s and Gender Studies, and Critical Race Studies as we investigate the ideological and material consequences of rhetorical practices.

COMM 651: Presidential Communication**Dr. Jennifer Mercieca****Tuesday, 3:55-6:55**

There has been a distinct disruption in presidential communication over the past four years. This course will put those changes into their institutional and historical context. We will examine how American presidents have responded to changes in communication technologies in a predictable arc from the rhetorical presidency to the post-rhetorical presidency to the outrage presidency. We will examine both traditional topics related to communication and the American presidency and recent concerns about communication and the American presidency. We will focus on theories of the presidency and presidential rhetoric (e.g., rhetorical presidency and bully pulpit, imperial presidency), perceptions of the presidency (e.g., textbook presidency, expectations gap, symbolic presidency, heroic presidency, presidentiality), as well as the analysis of presidential campaigning, presidential discourse, and presidential speechwriting. We will also examine how President Donald Trump has harnessed the logics of outrage, engagement, and attention to dominate the American public sphere.

COMM 658: Communication & Culture (Representation & Self-Representation in Global Contexts)**Dr. Antonio LaPastina****Wednesday, 4:10-7:10**

This course examines the ways media construct representations of Others as well as how marginalized groups produce their own representations, often creating fissures in dominant narratives of Otherness. We will explore both historical and contemporary cases in global contexts and investigate how new media technologies have become instruments for self-production. In this course, representations will be studied as a cultural system where cultural identities, identification and belonging are produced as the result of power imbalances. A range of media and theoretical approaches will be part of our reading material. From selfies to film and video production by indigenous people to media representations of minorities as well as constructions of other nations in mainstream media, this course allows students to explore the ways media can both be empowering and limiting, keeping in mind that “representations become narrations” as Charles Ramirez-Berg said in his analysis of portrayals of Mexicans in U.S. film.

COMM 665: Communication & Technology**Dr. Cara Wallis****Thursday, 4-7:00**

This iteration of Communication and Technology will focus on feminist approaches to gender, technology, and communication. The course will introduce graduate students to key theories, concepts, and debates within studies of technology from a feminist perspective. In this class we will learn and use the tools of feminist theory to explore the multifaceted interactions between technology, ourselves, and local, national, and international contexts through themes including gender, race, difference, sexuality, the body, labor, place, art, activism, and surveillance. We will approach these topics from a historical perspective as well as a critical, cultural perspective. In the process, we will challenge some of the taken-for-granted assumptions about both gender and technology. This class was developed in connection with the Feminist Technology Network (FemTechNet) course called "Collaborations in Feminism and Technology," which has been taught since 2013 at more than 15 institutions in the US and abroad. FemTechNet is an activated network of scholars, students, artists, and activists that are located within a range of fields, including STS, media studies, visual culture, queer theory, and race and ethnicity studies. We will read a variety of texts, view video dialogues with preeminent thinkers on the relationship between feminism and technology, and (hopefully) collaborate on an innovative learning project with graduate students in a class at another institution. For more on FemTechNet see <http://femtechnet.org/>. There are no class prerequisites for this course. This class counts toward the WGST grad certificate.

COMM 670: Seminar in Health Communication (Communication & Change)**Dr. Richard Street****Monday, 4:10-6:40**

This course addresses issues related to communication, intervention, and change in the context of better health and well-being, broadly defined as actions one can take to promote a higher quality of personal, relational, social, and organizational health. Too much of communication study focuses on the identification of problems and does not give sufficient attention to designing interventions aimed at problem-solving. This course covers conceptual models of behavior change and intervention effectiveness, reviews studies of specific examples of interventions achieving change, and offers students an opportunity to design their own study as a research proposal. While topics related to health behavior, promotion, and outcomes will be covered, other material in the course will be tailored dependent on additional student interests (e.g., environment, bullying, organizational climate) as long as there is some connection to well-being. Course assignments will focus on helping students develop an understanding of different possibilities for intervention and to align the selection of a particular strategy for intervention with the social problem it is intended to address and the dynamics of the local context.