# Course Syllabus

| | **Department of Communication Studies** |
|---|---|
| | **COM4065 Communication Theories and Research** |
| | **3 Units** |
| Independent Study | |
| SP 2022 | |

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| **Instructor title and name:**  Dr. Jeff Birdsell, Associate Professor of Communication, Pre-Law Advisor |
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**PLNU Mission**

**To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Survey of contemporary approaches to human communication emphasizing theory development, epistemological perspectives, meaning negotiation, and research methodology. Participants complete an original research project that is publicly presented in a poster session.

## PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a required course for all majors in the Department of Communication and Theatre, please visit the **curriculum maps** **(http://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/department-of-communication-theatre/curriculum-maps/%20)** to identify which PLOs this class addresses for your major.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

**The following course learning outcomes will be met through the successful completion of this course:**

1. Develop your own definition of communication rooted in disciplinary scholarship
2. Analyze qualitative and quantitative data
3. Compare communication theories and show their utility in everyday life and research
4. Execute original communication research through the justification of its context, designing of methodology, interpretation of data, and comparison of results to communication theory

## REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Davis, C. S. & Lachlan, K. L. (2017). *Straight talk about communication research methods* (3rd ed.).
    Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
*available for purchase as an ebook directly from the publisher*
    *(https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/straight-talk-about-communication-research-methods)*
    *(https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/straight-talk-about-communication-research-methods)*

## COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request. (Based on 37.5 hours of student engagement per credit hour.)

### Distribution of Student Learning Hours

| Category | Time Expectation in Hours |
|---|---|
| Online Participation in Discussions | 15 |
| Reading Assignments | 30 |
| Written Assignments | 30 |
| Other Assignments & Learning Activities | 30 |
| Quizzes, Surveys | 7.5 |
| **Total Hours** | 112.5 |

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grades will be based on the following:

**Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages**

| A | B | C | D | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A  93-100 | B+ 87-89 | C+ 77-79 | D+ 67-69 | F  Less than 59 |
| A- 90-92 | B   83-86 | C   73-76 | D  63-66 | |
| | B- 80-82 | C- 70-72 | D- 60-62 | |

During the course of the semester, you will be responsible for the following written assignments.  See the descriptions below and the detailed instructions at the end of the syllabus for more details.

**Distribution of Points**

| Assignment | Points |
|---|---|
| Definition Paper | 25 |
| Theory Summary | 50 |
| Method Summary | 50 |
| Project Proposal | 100 |
| Concept Report | 100 |
| Lit Review, Methods, & Works Cited Draft | 125 |
| Lit Review, Methods, & Works Cited Revisions and Results and Discussion Draft | 150 |
| "4065 in 5" Presentation | 100 |
| Complete Research Paper | 200 |
| Online Activities (20 pts/unit-No partial credit.  All activities must be assessed as "complete.") | 100 |
| Total | 1000 |

Regardless of your prior experiences with grading, I am insistent that a "C" is considered "average" or acceptable work, grades of "B" and "A" are awarded for above average and exceptional work respectively.  Normally, those students receiving A's represent the top 10 - 25% of a class.

Feedback on assignments will be provided using the "Annotated Comments" feature in Canvas.  Please follow the instructions at **https://tinyurl.com/BirdsellGrades**   **(https://tinyurl.com/BirdsellGrades)** to access them.

There is a 24-7 rule in this class: you must wait at least 24 hours after receiving a grade to discuss it, and no later than 7 days. I will gladly talk about assignments (non-grade issues) past the 7-day period.

To avoid confusion, you must (a) document the error in <u>writing</u>, (b) state <u>why</u> you think it is an error (based on the syllabus (course expectations, grading policies, etc.) and specific assignment details.), and (c) suggest what you think should be done to rectify the error (in cases where this is not obvious). These matters will be dealt with promptly. (If an error had been made which benefits you, please accept it as a "gift" which does not need to be reported.)

## ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS

All assignments must be submitted in Canvas. Use the APA style guide where necessary (see **The OWL at Purdue** **(https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)** for formatting assistance).  The most likely time for your computer/internet connection to crash is minutes before an assignment is due.  Please plan ahead.

## ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS, RUBRICS, AND CALENDAR

Refer to the Modules for assignment instructions, rubrics, and the course calendar.  Any modifications to these expectations and dates will be announced via email and updated on Canvas.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

While technological resources have made it possible to exchange messages at a greater rate, particularly through email, please remember that just because you're available to send a message doesn't mean I'm available to respond to those messages.  I especially frown upon frantic emails sent hours before an exam or assignment.  I typically respond to email within one 24-hour school day (M – F). For example, if you email me at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon, I will typically respond by 1:00 p.m. on or before 1:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. If you email me at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, I will typically respond on or before 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning. It is your responsibility to plan ahead.

## STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students.  If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state.  It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location.  Refer to the map on **State Authorization** **(https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/office-institutional-effectiveness-research/disclosures)** to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

## INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas.  Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual

circumstances. Assignments turned in past due will be accepted but the grade will be reduced by 10% as soon as the assignment is tardy and another 10% for every 24-hour period after that.

Throughout the course, you will be asked to complete online activities.  Your submissions in response to these activities will contribute to your grade (see Assessment and Grading).  Submissions must be graded as "complete" in order to receive credit.  If a submission does not meet the requirements for an activity, you will receive feedback on how it can be improved and a date by which that improvement must occur via a resubmission.  If the re-submission does not substantially address the feedback provided, it will remain "incomplete."

## PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

## PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See **Academic Policies (http://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=18&navoid=1278)** for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary aids/services.  At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. (**DRC@pointloma.edu (mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu)** or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.  Section 504 (a) prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.  After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs.  The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.  The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course.  PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

## PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Students taking online courses are expected to attend each week of the course. Attendance is defined as participating in an academic activity within the online classroom which includes posting in a graded activity in the course. (Note: Logging into the course does not qualify as participation and will not be counted as meeting the attendance requirement.)

Students who do not attend at least once in any 3 consecutive days will be issued an attendance warning. Students who do not attend at least once in any 7 consecutive days will be dropped from the course retroactive to the last date of recorded attendance.

## SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.
 If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the **Office of Spiritual Development  (https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/spiritual-development)**

## USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the **Technology and System Requirements (https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349%20)** information.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

## ASSIGNMENTS AT-A-GLANCE

The **Modules page** lists our assignments and their due dates. Click on any assignment to review it.