

Course Syllabus

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Department of Communication Studies

COM 4065: Communication Theories and Research

3 units

Spring 2021

Meeting days: Tuesday/Thursday

Instructor title and name: Dr. Jeff Birdsell

Meeting times: 11:00am-12:15pm

Phone: 619-849-3370

Meeting location: Cabrillo 104

Email: jebirdse@pointloma.edu
(<mailto:jebirdse@pointloma.edu>)

Office hours (remote only):

Final Exam: June 8, 10:30am

Tuesday 12:30-2:30
Wednesday 1:30-2:30
Thursday 12:30-2:30

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

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.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Successful completion of the course should enable you to:

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

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

REQUIRED TEXTS

Davis, C. S., Powell, H., & Lachlan, K. L. (2017). *Straight Talk about Communication Research Methods* (3rd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Available from the publisher as an **E-book** (<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/straight-talk-about-communication-research-methods>)

(if you still have the 2nd edition from a previous course, that will be sufficient).

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 delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours (averaging 7 hours/week) meeting the course learning outcomes.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

During the course of the semester you will be responsible for the following written assignments. See the descriptions below and the detailed assignment instructions in the modules for more details.

Assignment Distribution:		Grade Scale				
		Percentage			Points	
Definition Paper	25 pts	A	93	-	100	930
Theory Summary	50 pts	A-	90	-	92.9	900
Method Summary	50 pts					

Project Proposal	100 pts	--	--	---	---
Concept Report	100 pts	B+	87	-	89.9 870
Lit Review, Methods, Works Cited		B	83	-	86.9 830
Draft	125 pts	B-	80	-	82.9 800
Lit Review, Methods, & Works		C+	77	-	79.9 770
Cited Revision + Results &		C	73	-	76.9 730
Discussion Draft	150 pts	C-	70	-	72.9 700
"4065 in 5" presentation	70 pts	D+	67	-	69.9 670
Complete Research Paper	200 pts	D	63	-	66.9 630
Online Activities	130 pts	D-	60	-	62.9 600
		F	0	-	59.9 0

ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS

All assignments must be typed (double-spaced, 8.5" x 11" paper, one-side, 225-250 wpp, 1" margins, 12pt font, Times New Roman or Courier typeface) unless otherwise instructed. Use the APA style guide where necessary (see <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.

GRADING

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> 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. Any discussion of grades must occur outside of class time. I will gladly talk about assignments (non-grade issues) past the 7-day period. To avoid confusion, you must (a) document the error in writing, (b) state why 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.)

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in on 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.

ONLINE ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

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 ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies \(https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=46&navoid=2650#Class_Attendance\)](https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=46&navoid=2650#Class_Attendance) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

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.

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

to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states (such as 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.

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](#) (https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=41&navoid=2435#Academic_Honesty) 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 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.

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) (<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) (<https://help.pointloma.edu/TDClient/1808/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=108349>) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu (<mailto:student-tech-request@pointloma.edu>).

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

***Note:** Given the hybrid and online modalities being used in the 2020-2021 academic year, the content of the course schedule and assignments will be posted in Canvas.*

