

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts  
Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

## **Communication Research & Data Analytics - CCPA 2375 Jan Term 2020**

### **PROFESSOR: LASHONDA L. EADDY, PH.D., APR**

- Office: Umphrey Lee 218
- Office Hours: Email for appointments
- Email: [leaddy@smu.edu](mailto:leaddy@smu.edu)
- Phone: 214.768.0305
- Credit Hours: 3
- Class Dates: January 6-10, 14-16
- Class Time: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

### **RATIONALE/AIM**

CCPA 2375 introduces students to the concepts, methodologies, and statistical tools used to conduct professional research and apply findings to communication strategy. Students get hands-on experience in gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data by conducting research projects in individual and team settings. Knowledge gained in this course provides a fundamental grasp of applied research methods and a significant competitive advantage to CCPA and/or Public Relations majors transitioning to graduate school and/or the workplace.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The terms “research” and “statistics” strike fear in the hearts of many students. The primary goal of this course is to get you comfortable and confident with these topics. As such, you should be prepared to dedicate ample time outside of class time for completing assignments and expanding your understanding of new, and potentially challenging, concepts.

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

- Identify the qualities of credible research
- Identify research limitations and how they affect the ability to generalize findings
- Identify and use a variety of credible sources for secondary research
- Apply ethical principles in research involving human participants and reporting of findings
- Apply research findings to communication strategy
- Analyze and interpret descriptive and inferential statistics
- Design, conduct, interpret, and report qualitative and quantitative research

### **UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM “TAGS”**

Successful completion of CCPA 2375 will provide you with University Curriculum credit for Information Literacy and Quantitative Reasoning. Related Student Learning Outcomes are provided for your reference:

#### **Information Literacy**

- Students will be able to select and use the appropriate research methods and search tools for needed information
- Students will be able to evaluate sources for quality of information for a given information need

#### **Quantitative Reasoning**

- Students will be able to collect, organize and analyze data from a variety of sources
- Students will be able to test hypotheses and make recommendations or predictions based on results
- Students will be able to communicate and represent quantitative information or results numerically, symbolically, aurally, visually, verbally, or in writing

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts  
Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

## **REQUIRED TEXT**

- Jugenheimer, D. W., Bradley, S. D., Kelly, L. D., & Hudson, J. C. (2014). *Advertising and Public Relations Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Supplemental readings will be assigned during the semester. Readings will be available on Canvas.

## **RECOMMENDED READING AND ONGOING RESEARCH**

As you read and watch the news throughout the semester, keep an eye open for the concepts we'll cover. Feel free to bring and discuss a related article to class, and you could find yourself earning bonus points. Relating research concepts to the "real world" is key to understanding these ideas. From an academic standpoint, you'll need to gather scholarly journal articles on the topic you research as a team. It's never too soon to get started!

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All students must:

- Have access to Microsoft Excel. **Google Sheets or similar program won't suffice!**
- Complete CITI training (See Canvas for details)
- Canvas course management system
- Complete all readings
- Display a command of the material in exercises, discussions, and individual assignments

## **CLASS RULES AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

### **Attendance**

- I will take attendance at each class. Your ability to meet the learning outcomes of this course is highly dependent on your level of participation in class discussions. As such, you are expected to attend every class in this highly condensed format. Your final grade may be lowered up to one letter grade (e.g., B- to C-) for each unexcused absence. An excused absence is one supported by documentation (e.g., from SMU or a doctor's office). Please notify me as early as possible about University-sponsored events that require you to be absent from class. Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for all class work missed, and a missed class is *not* an excuse for missing a deadline.

### **Respect Others**

Students are expected to treat one another and the professor with respect. Respect is conveyed in many forms, not all of which will be discussed in the syllabus. Refrain from any form of electronic communication, phones and other wireless devices should be on silent/vibrate. Students who use laptops to take notes should refrain from activity unrelated to this course. Students should plan on staying the entire class session. If a student is disrespectful by these terms, the student may be asked to leave (and receive an absence). Whether online or in the classroom, our discussions will be guided by mutual respect for others and their opinions. Effective communication practice is dependent on gathering, understanding, and learning from diverse points of view. Agreement is not essential, but civility is.

### **Communicate Professionally**

The ability to communicate in a professional and courteous manner via e-mail is important. Students are expected to display their top-level professional communication skills each time they send an e-mail to the professor (and any other person)

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

### Technology Policy

Students are not permitted to use phones, laptops, tablets or electronics unless directed by Dr. Eaddy. Students requiring electronic accommodations must provide documentation from DASS.

### Grading Points

All assignments total 1,000 points. Assignments and point values are listed below. At the end of the semester, points will be totaled and the sums will be equivalent to grades as shown:

| Assignment   | Pts Earned | Possible Pts | Pts Lost |
|--|------------|--------------|----------|
| <u>Individual</u> Research Project #1  |            | 90           |          |
| <u>Individual</u> Research Project #2  |            | 45           |          |
| <u>Individual</u> Research Project #3  |            | 90           |          |
| Comm Source Chart  |            | 25           |          |
| <b>Team</b> Research Project<br>(Focus Group *25 pts., Survey *25 pts., Final Report *100 pts., Final presentation *50 pts.) |            | 200          |          |
| <b>Team</b> Homework #1  |            | 50           |          |
| <b>Team</b> Homework #2  |            | 50           |          |
| Exam #1  |            | 2000         |          |
| Exam #2/ Final Part I  |            | 200          |          |
| <b>Team</b> Exam 2/ Final Part II  |            | 50           |          |
| <b>Total</b>   |            | <b>1,000</b> |          |

**Grading Scale:** Final grades conform to SMU's +/- system. Numerical grades will translate to letter grades as follows:

A: 1000-940    A-: 939-900    B+: 899-870    B: 869-840    B-: 839-800    C+: 799-770    C: 769-740  
C-: 739-700    D+: 699-670    D: 669-640    D-: 639-600    F: 599 and below

**\*\*Please note: Semester grades are not rounded, i.e., a 739 is a C-. Nothing below a C will count toward major or minor progression in CCPA or the major in Public Relations and Strategic Communication. If you would like to discuss your grade or your coursework, you are welcome to make an appointment with the professor at any time during the semester. To protect your privacy, the professor does not discuss grades via phone or email.**

### ASSIGNMENTS

#### Individual Research Projects

This semester, you'll conduct three individual research projects worth 22% of your final grade. Note: In no way is a similar assignment you complete for another class acceptable for use in this class. All work in this class must be original and exclusive. Otherwise, your work will be treated as an act of academic dishonesty.

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**Individual Research Project I: Secondary Research**

For this project, select a publicly traded company you admire and/or would like to work for one day. No two students can research the same company, so post your choice to Canvas in the *Company Selection Discussion Post* as soon as you like. First come, first served.

Using only SMU library sources, locate credible resources for secondary research and upload to Canvas a brief back-grounder on the organization you choose that describes its operating environment, in however many pages required, as follows. A bullet-point outline format is preferred.

- Company information (name, physical address, and annual revenue) – cite your source(s), e.g., something like “Mergent” is a sufficient citation for the first four sections of this assignment
- A list of relevant NAICS Codes that are used to classify the business – cite your source(s)
- A list of the company’s major competitors (up to 10) – cite your source(s)
- A recent (provide the date) stock price for the company plus two of its competitors (from your list) – cite your source(s)
- A list of 10 recent (and numbered) articles, in APA reference style, about the company, which can come from any of the following categories: academic journals, trade publications, magazines, newspapers, industry profiles, market research reports, or product reviews. Provide the APA reference first, followed by a 4-5 sentence synopsis of each article. Do not create a separate References page for this assignment.
- A bullet-point summary of three major facts you learned about the company after completing this exercise. In other words, if your boss asked you research this company, what three things would be most important to tell him or her? Don’t just summarize – be insightful and forward-thinking about what you’ve learned could mean for this company’s future. Avoid meaningless words like “amazing,” “incredible,” etc. – be informative and succinct with a business tone.

**Individual Research Project II: Personal Observation**

In this project, you’ll select a public place (e.g., park, coffee shop, sporting event, meeting) where you can blend into the crowd to observe and record the world around you. You are not a participant in the scene – only an unbiased observer. Stay in your chosen setting for 30 minutes. Take copious notes. In a two-page essay, describe what you observed. Write as though you’re visiting this location for the first time.

- What, specifically, did you see, hear, smell, feel in that setting?
- What verbal and non-verbal behaviors did you witness? What social norms did people follow? What stood out to you?
- Take in all that surrounds you. Pay attention to the details you normally overlook. Write an interesting account of your experience and upload it as a pdf document to Canvas.

**Individual Research Project III: In-Depth Interview**

In this project, you’ll ask one person (who is NOT in this class) to take five pictures that illustrate how he/she defines a topic you assign. For example, you can ask someone to take pictures that show how he/she defines a concept like success or happiness (but do not use one of these J). Think creatively about a topic you’d like to explore. Schedule a one-hour in person interview for your respondent to explain his/her pictures to you. Listen closely, and take detailed notes. Ask permission to record the interview if you prefer. Be objective throughout the process. Really listen. Keep an eye on his/her nonverbal behaviors. Ask probing, not leading, questions. Keep your opinions to yourself. Practice being truly neutral, uninvolved, and objective. Really strive to understand how someone else views an issue. Upload to Canvas a two-page essay (with all five photos placed on a third page) describing your experience and what you learned about conducting this type of research. You’ll have some surprises!

**Team Research Project**

Teamwork is a reality in the workplace. The team project is a major undertaking, and you’re going to need each other to get the job done well. Early in the semester, I will form a number of teams. You, as a team, will decide on a leader, who will be held ultimately accountable for keeping the team on track, scheduling and directing meetings, resolving any disputes, and completing the project. Team leaders are expected to be the first point of contact for any team issues. If an

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

issue cannot be resolved within the team, you may ask me for help. You will remain with the same team throughout the semester. This will not under any circumstance be an individual assignment. The team project is worth 20% of your final grade. Please note: A low peer evaluation score can significantly reduce the overall grade for the team project.

As a team, you will decide on a topic for your study and turn in a research proposal and focus group materials. I will provide you with detailed feedback to help you do your best. Once your proposal is approved, you will conduct the focus group, which will help you design a survey instrument and a data management plan. The final research report is due at the end of the semester. Please note: I will give your team extensive guidance for the proposal, focus group, survey design, and data management plan steps in this project. For these items, you will not receive a grade per se because I will help you make these portions of the project the best they can be. I will be forming impressions of the quality of your team's work and effort, however, so be sure items closely adhere to the instructions provided before turning them in. The less "fixing" I have to do, the better, but please know that I am happy to answer your team's questions before you turn something in. **Note, too, that although you will not receive an absolute grade on these preliminary steps, a harsh penalty will be imparted if any steps of the process are turned in late.**

### **Excel Homework (and software access)**

You'll have two assignments (10% of your final grade) to give you hands-on experience analyzing data using Excel. The good news is that you will work with your team to complete these assignments. Each team will turn in one stapled assignment (all team members receive the same grade), and you are allowed to work on homework only with your team.

***A word of warning, however:*** Be sure you have a good grasp of the material, as learning statistics is a cumulative process. That is, you must understand each topic before moving on to the next. We'll review each homework assignment in class to help you understand these concepts. I'm always happy to answer any questions you have. A missed homework assignment earns a grade of 0 and forfeits your ability to re-do the assignment. Homework "re-dos" are available if your team earns less than an 85 on an assignment. See dates on class schedule that indicate when re-dos are due. No late re-dos will be accepted. A re-do is a new, one-page clean copy of only your corrected answers stapled to your original graded assignment. The maximum grade earned on a re-do is an 85, which in some cases, may be much higher than your original grade. Re-dos give you another opportunity to grasp the material once you see where you went wrong. It's all part of the learning process!

Note: Excel is available free of charge. Visit <https://www.smu.edu/OIT/Services/o365> for more information.

### **Exams**

Two closed-book exams will be given to test your mastery of the content we cover. The two exams will account for 47.5% of your grade. If you miss Exam 1, Exam 2 will count for 47.5% of your course grade. If, however, you miss Exam 1 because of a pre-approved University-excused absence, you may choose to take a different version of the exam or add the weight to Exam 2. Exams are "comprehensive" in that your understanding of basic concepts is the foundation for your ability to succeed with more advanced topics. Class time will be dedicated to a discussion of the format and topics covered for each exam. Other than a possible stand-alone calculator (I'll let you know for sure), no cell phones or any other electronic device may be used during the exams – only you, your sharp mind, and something to write with!

### **ASSIGNMENT POLICY**

Assignments **must** be **completed** (according to assignment description and due date) **and** submitted **on time**. NO LATE or EMAIL assignments accepted. Students are expected to stay current with textbook reading, in-class information and activities if absent from class. Evaluation will necessarily be subjective, but the instructor makes every effort to keep students apprised of expectations. In particular, you should pay close attention to the assignment sheets. Grades and feedback will be provided via Canvas.

**Assignments and group work must meet the following academic and professional standards:**

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**Timeliness:** As a professional you will be judged on your ability to keep deadlines. Late assignments will NOT be accepted.

**Quality of Work:** You are expected to maintain the highest standards for all assignments. Therefore, you will be graded on the following:

- Accurate punctuation, grammar and spelling
- Professional appearance and professional business writing style

**Make-Up Policy for Assignments**

No late work is accepted in this course. All assignments are due **on or before the posted due date**. Work turned in at any point after its due date is considered late and will **NOT** be accepted. Students who anticipate missing class should submit work BEFORE the due date to avoid any grade penalties.

**SMU COURSE POLICIES**

**Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/SASP/DASS> to begin the process. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal *DASS Link* and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

**Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence(<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/Chaplain/ReligiousHolidays>).

**Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See [2018-2019 University Undergraduate Catalogue](#))

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Please include in your syllabi all student learning outcomes, both those specific to your course, as well as those that satisfy major and general education requirements.

**Student Academic Success Programs:** Students needing assistance with writing assignments for SMU courses may schedule an appointment with the Writing Center through Canvas. Students wishing support with subject-specific tutoring or success strategies should contact SASP, Loyd All Sports Center, Suite 202; 214-768-3648; <https://www.smu.edu/sasp>.

**Final Exams:** Final course examinations shall be given in all courses where they are appropriate, and some form of final assessment is essential. Final exams or final assessments must be administered as specified in the official examination schedule, and shall not be administered during the last week of classes or during the Reading Period.

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**Caring Community Connections (CCC) program:** This is a resource for anyone in the SMU community to refer students of concern to the Office of the Dean of Students. Faculty play a critical role in identifying students who are experiencing challenges, as you may be the first to notice a change in behavior such as class attendance or performance. The online referral form can be found at [smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc](http://smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc). After a referral is submitted, students will be contacted to discuss the concern, strategize options, and be connected to appropriate resources. Additionally, should you have concerns about students and are unclear about what to do, please see the [CCC Reference Guide](#), or contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 214-768-4564.

**“Campus Carry” Law:** “In accordance with Texas Senate Bill 11, also known as the “campus carry” law, following consultation with entire University community SMU determined to remain a weapons-free campus. Specifically, SMU prohibits possession of weapons (either openly or in a concealed manner) on campus. For more information, please see: [http://www.smu.edu/Business-Finance/Police/Weapons\\_Policy](http://www.smu.edu/Business-Finance/Police/Weapons_Policy).

## **DISCLAIMER**

The course syllabus and schedule is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the professor may be necessary. The professor reserves the right to adjust the course syllabus and/or course schedule upon notification of the class by in-class or email. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of any adjustments announced by instructor through either communication method.

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts  
Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**Course Schedule**

**\*The course schedule is subject to change based on unforeseen circumstances and the discretion of the professor. Always use the updated version on Canvas.** Any revisions to the following outline will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas. Additional readings may be added.

**Note:** Readings should be read by the date listed.

**DAY 1: MONDAY**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE, THE RESEARCH PROCESS, ETHICS, AND CONTROL  
RESEARCH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT  
CHAPTERS 1-4, 34, 37**

**DUE** (see Canvas for details):

- ❖ Individual Research Project I
- ❖ CITI Completion Certificate
- ❖ APA Style Tutorial
- ❖ Company Research Tutorial
- ❖ The 1-1-1 Assignment

**Jan. 6**

Lecture deck on Canvas

Team assignments, leader selections, and research proposal work session

Team meeting sign-ups for Jan. 8

**DAY 2: TUESDAY**

**MEASUREMENT, SAMPLING, AND SURVEY DESIGN  
SECONDARY DATA AND QUALITATIVE DESIGNS  
CHAPTERS 16-19**

**DUE:**

- ❖ Individual Research Project II
- ❖ Company name for Individual Research Project III (Submit on Canvas)

**Jan. 7**

Lecture decks on Canvas

Exam 1 review

SMU library orientation/prep for IRP III (time TBD)

**DAY 3: WEDNESDAY**

**INTRO TO STATISTICS, DATA EXPLORATION, AND CORRELATION  
RESEARCH PROPOSAL REVIEWS  
CHAPTERS 32, 36**

**DUE:**

- ❖ Team Research Proposal
- ❖ Individual Research Project III
- ❖ By end of class: Correlation section of DMP

**Jan. 8**

Team meetings with Dr. Eaddy re: research proposals

Teams conduct focus groups after approval



**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts**  
**Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**DAY 4: THURSDAY**

**T-TEST AND SCALE RELIABILITY**

**EXAM 1**

CHAPTERS 18-19<sup>1</sup>

**DUE:**

- ❖ Excel HW #1
- ❖ By end of class: T-Test and Scale Reliability sections of DMP

**Jan. 9**

Lecture decks and SPSS HW #1 on Canvas  
HW and Data Management Plan work session

**DAY 5: FRIDAY**

**REGRESSION**

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS (SEE CANVAS)

**DUE:**

**Jan. 10**

Exam 1 results  
HW #1 review  
Lecture decks and Excel HW #2 on Canvas  
HW and Data Management Plan work session  
Team meeting sign-ups for Jan. 14

**DAY 6: TUESDAY**

**REPORT WRITING, SURVEY, AND DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN**

CHAPTERS 21, 30, 32

**DUE:**

- ❖ Excel HW #2
- ❖ By end of class: Regression section of DMP

**Jan. 14**

Lecture deck and SPSS HW #3 on Canvas  
HW and Data Management Plan work session

**DAY 7: WEDNESDAY**

**DATA ANALYSIS AND EXAM REVIEW**

**EXAM 2**

**DUE:**

- ❖ Focus Group Report, Draft Survey, and Data Management Plan

**Jan. 15**

HW #2 review  
Final report review  
Qualtrics review (time TBD)  
Team meetings with Dr. Eaddy to finalize survey and DMP  
Teams post surveys after approval

**Southern Methodist University Meadows School of the Arts  
Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs**

**DAY 8: THURSDAY**

**DATA ANALYSIS/PRESENTATION/FINAL PAPER WORKING SESSION  
FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

**DUE:**

- ❖ Full survey dataset in class
- ❖ Final paper
- ❖ Peer evaluations

**DUE:**

**Jan. 16**

Complete analysis, final paper, and presentation