

## Course Outline

**Code: CMN315**

**Title: Communication Research**

<b>School:</b>	Communication & Creative Industries
<b>Teaching Session:</b>	Semester 1
<b>Year:</b>	2019
<b>Course Coordinator:</b>	Dr Umi Khattab, ukhattab@usc.edu.au
<b>Course Moderator:</b>	Dr Karen Sutherland, ksutherl@usc.edu.au

Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

### 1. What is this course about?

#### 1.1 Description

This course introduces various empirical methods and tools to investigate emerging forms of media and audience practices. It offers a detailed understanding of different ways in which questions of media impact and audience power have been theorised in communication studies. You will engage with contemporary digital media and audience research methodologies, write an innovative research proposal and develop ethical skills in relation to these. Approaches examined include quantitative and qualitative with emphasis on surveys, case studies, focus groups, ethnography, textual and virtual analysis.

#### 1.2 Field trips, WIL placements or activities required by professional accreditation

Activity	Details
Nil	Nil

### 2. What level is this course?

300 level Graduate - Independent application of graduate knowledge and skills. Meets AQF and professional requirements. May require pre-requisites and developing level knowledge/skills. Normally taken in the 3rd or 4th year of an undergraduate program.

### 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

### 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

Specific Learning Outcomes	Assessment tasks	Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:	You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:
Interrogate media and audience practices	1, 2 and 3	Creative and critical thinkers

<b>Specific Learning Outcomes</b> On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:	<b>Assessment tasks</b> You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:	<b>Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping</b> Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:
Recognise and evaluate concepts, methods, paradigms, and theories in communication literature	2	Knowledgeable
Develop and produce a scientific research plan.	3	Empowered
Demonstrate scholarly communication skills	1,2 and 3	Empowered

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [USC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

### 5.1 Enrolment restrictions

Nil

### 5.2 Pre-requisites

Nil

### 5.3 Co-requisites

Nil

### 5.4 Anti-requisites

Nil

### 5.5 Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Knowledge of media industry practices and communication concepts and theories.

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1 Grading scale

Standard – High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL)

### 6.2 Details of early feedback on progress

A draft copy of your research idea will be peer-reviewed and discussed in a participatory 2-hour workshop session to provide formative feedback early in the semester.

### 6.3 Assessment tasks

<b>Task No.</b>	<b>Assessment Product</b>	<b>Individual or Group</b>	<b>Weighting %</b>	<b>What is the duration / length?</b>	<b>When should I submit?</b>	<b>Where should I submit it?</b>
1	Activity Participation	Group	15%	20 minutes oral 12 ppt slides	Oral workshop; 12 ppt slides, week 4, Friday 5pm	Online Assignment Submission with Plagiarism check
2	Literature Review (or component)	Individual	35%	1500 words	Week 8	Online Assignment

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						Submission with Plagiarism check
3	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece	Individual	50%	3000 words	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission with Plagiarism check
			100%			

**Assessment 1:** Research Brief

<b>Goal:</b>	You will work in a team to identify, develop and pitch a significant research problem within a delimited research topic to a group of your peers.
<b>Product:</b>	Activity Participation
<b>Format:</b>	Academic format Team oral presentation: Create a clear, well researched, and theoretically supported presentation for a potential research topic. Should include several ways of interrogating the problem/issue One slide <b>dedicated to outlining how each team member participated</b> in the development of the project 12 slides total – use graphics and images rather than text heavy slides  Be convincing!
<b>Criteria:</b>	You will be assessed on your competency in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate selection of topic</li> <li>• Critical analysis of research problem</li> <li>• Scope and parameters outlined</li> <li>• Critical questions posed/Key concepts defined</li> <li>• Relevant literature/theory identified</li> <li>• Evidence of collaboration</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>

**Assessment Task 2:** Annotated Bibliography

<b>Goal:</b>	A literature review is an essential part of the research process. You will develop the ability to identify past studies relevant to your research problem, cite sources appropriately and summarise and critique literature..
<b>Product:</b>	Literature review (or component)
<b>Format:</b>	Academic format Essay format with Harvard referencing style (detailed on blackboard). 1500 words. You should use between 12 -15 peer reviewed academic journal articles (journal articles are not all the same depth or complexity)
<b>Criteria:</b>	You will be assessed on your competency in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying literature relevant to the research problem</li> <li>• Succinctly summarising literature related to the research problem</li> <li>• Applying Harvard referencing style correctly for citations</li> <li>• Evaluating selected literature in a sophisticated manner</li> <li>• Academic communication</li> </ul>

### Assessment Task 3: Research Proposal

<b>Goal:</b>	You will develop a research proposal outlining the step-by-step process of your research plan. Your proposal should be written in a convincing and methodologically competent manner.
<b>Product:</b>	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece
<b>Format:</b>	Academic format You will further develop the research problem identified and reviewed in assessment tasks 1 and 2. You will refine your research questions, revisit literature, identify an appropriate methodology and write a plan for the research in 3000 words. A more detailed outline of this task will be/is provided on Blackboard.
<b>Criteria:</b>	<p><b>Research Plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of research problem and rationale</li> <li>• Relevant and critical research questions</li> <li>• Research aim and objectives clearly outlined</li> <li>• Sophisticated analysis of literature and secondary sources</li> <li>• Appropriate selection of research method/s</li> <li>• Understanding of human research ethics</li> <li>• Structured data collection plan</li> <li>• Relevant field instruments identified</li> </ul> <p><b>Scholarly communication:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harvard referencing style</li> <li>• Communication -syntax-grammar</li> </ul>

## 7. Directed study hours

The directed study hours listed here are a portion of the workload for this course. A 12 unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

Location:	Directed study hours for location:
Sippy Downs	Lecture: 1 hour Workshop: 2 hours

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note that course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site. Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1 Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below as they are required:

Author	Year	Title	Publisher
Weerakkody, N.	2015	Research Methods for Media and Communication (2nd ed.)	South Melbourne, Oxford University Press.

### 8.2 Specific requirements

Nil

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low.

It is your responsibility as a student to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers, and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study. It is also your responsibility to

familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online Health Safety and Wellbeing training module for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1 Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

### 10.2 Assessment: Additional requirements

#### Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
- b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
- c) You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

### 10.3 Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks will be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day
- 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late.

To request an extension, you must contact your Course Coordinator and supply the required documentation to negotiate an outcome.

### 10.4 Study help

In the first instance, you should contact your tutor, then the Course Coordinator. Additional assistance is provided to all students through Academic Skills Advisers. To book an appointment or find a drop-in session go to [Student Hub](#).

Contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)

### 10.5 Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs

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- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website:

<http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

### 10.6 General Enquiries

**In person:**

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)