Who’s Running This?
Professor: Bailey Thompson, Ph.D.
Email: thompsonba@sfasu.edu
Office: Boynton 201
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00am-10:30am

Where Do We Meet?
Class Location: Online
Class Times: Online
*This course is 100% online and will have no Zoom components

What Books Do We Need?
Understanding Research Methods: An Overview of the Essentials
Mildred L. Patten & Michelle Newhart
10th Edition (yes- this matters)

What’s This Class About?
MCOM 5310 Media Research Methods: Explores methods used in mass communication research, including quantitative and qualitative research methods.

What are some of SFA policies?

Withdrawal Policy
The last day to drop the course without a “WP or WF” varies by semester. Please consult the SFA Academic Calendar should you anticipate needing to drop the course.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

Grade Withheld Policy (Semester Grades A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Professor’s Academic Freedom Policy
Graduate school often covers topics like involve sex, drugs, violence, corruption, and any number of things that we as a society frown upon. Some of the material dealt with in this class may be perceived as controversial or offensive to some students. Graduate school is all about
learning new things and being exposed to different topics and viewpoints. I urge you all to both listen and speak your mind during class.

Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Using other’s speeches or preexisting PowerPoint presentations is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated accordingly.

Basically- don’t cheat, I’ll catch you, and then I’ll have to report you- and that’s not fun for anyone. At the graduate level, academic dishonesty is taken even more seriously than at the undergraduate level, please do not throw away your degree by plagiarizing or cheating. I have very little patience for plagiarism at the graduate level- you are expected to cite your sources (in APA style) and synthesize information appropriately.

Bailey’s Policies

I adhere to 10 general policies in all of my courses:

1. **No late work accepted**: I do not accept late work or late exams, quizzes, assignments, etc.
2. **No extra credit**: I do not provide extra credit on an individual basis. Any extra credit provided will be at my discretion and will be extended to the entire class.
3. **24/7 rule**: Your grades are just that- your grades. Not mine. If you have questions about a grade you earned on an assignment, I urge you to contact me about it (via email) to set up an appointment to come in and talk about it. I want you to know what you did wrong, and what you did right. However, please observe the 24/7 policy- take 24 hours after receiving a grade to cool off, try to understand your mistakes, and then shoot me an email. You will also have 7 days after a grade is posted to contact me to discuss or dispute it. After those 7 days, all grades will stand as is.
4. **No D2L emails**: Contact me via SFA email, not D2L email. My email address is thompsonba@sfasu.edu
5. **No doctor’s notes please**: I do not accept, want or need doctor’s notes for missed classes or assignments- your medical information is yours and is private. If you have an extended absence for hospitalization, etc. please go through the proper channels at the rights and responsibilities office.
6. **There are some emails I will not respond to**: I will not respond to any emails asking the following questions or making the following requests: 1) emails asking for grade changes 2) emails asking for final grades to be rounded up 3) emails asking for
extensions on assignments with no hospitalization or extreme circumstance 4) emails asking for extra credit- any extra credit given by me will be given to all students and advertised in class or on D2L, not on an individual basis via email. – Essentially, emails asking me to show favor grade-wise to one student in a course over other students will not be returned. This is the primary way I will be working to ensure that all students have the same opportunities in my courses.

7. **Final grade rounding policy:** I will round final grades with a .5 or higher. I will not raise final grades with a .4 or lower for any reason. I will also not round “9” grades. Therefore, if you make an 89 in the class, do not email me asking if I will bump in to a 90. Unless you make an 89.5 or higher, I will not round.

8. **Grading Turnaround Time:** my turnaround time for grading assignments varies by the assignment type. For multiple choice quizzes or exams the turnaround time is approximately 48 hours. For substantial written assignments it is 2 weeks.

9. **Email Turnaround Time:** I do not answer emails after 5pm or before 8am Monday-Friday. If you email after those hours expect a reply within 48 hours. I also do not respond to emails on the weekends. I encourage each of you to set healthy boundaries when it comes to your own work-life balance.

10. **A is for Awesome:** Every student should not expect an A in my course. A is for exceptional work. B is for good work. C is for average work. A work goes above and beyond the requirements and shows true mastery of the content. A work impresses.

How Will We Be Graded?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Breakdown</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (11 @ 2% each)</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Reviews (11 @ 4% each)</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Notes about this Course**

**This course is a graduate level course.** I expect graduate level work and effort. Research methods is a foundational, and often difficult course for many- as most students have typically not been exposed to doing a ton of academic research prior to grad school. It will often require significant time in terms of studying and working through concepts. I will provide additional readings (not required) at different times throughout the semester to show you how these various concepts are actually applied in mass media research; this is to aid you in your proposal for this course. It is up to you to take advantage of these additional resources.
Assignments

In this course there will be 4 types of assignments: quizzes, topic reviews, a final exam and a research methods paper proposal.

Quizzes
You will have 11 section quizzes throughout the course of the semester. Each quiz is worth 2% of your overall final grade. The purpose of the quizzes is to check that you’ve read and understood the assigned content. The quizzes will be multiple choice and/or T/F in nature.

Topic Reviews
Topic reviews appear in your textbook at the end of each topic - they consist of questions to test your comprehension of each topic by asking you to define, explain or provide examples of different concepts. You will complete the topic review questions and submit them via a word document to the appropriate D2L Dropbox folder. You will submit 11 topic reviews during the course of the semester, and each is worth 4% of your final grade.

Final Exam
You will complete a cumulative final exam for this course, worth 10% of your final grade. Your final exam will be a combination of T/F, matching, and multiple choice questions. It will open on Monday, Dec. 7 at noon and close on Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 11:59pm.

Proposal
You will prepare a research methods paper proposal consisting of: 1) a title page 2) an abstract 3) an introduction 4) a literature review 5) a proposed method section - this will consist of several required elements which will be discussed in greater detail later 6) a conclusion 7) an APA style reference page.

You will have the option to choose from several types of methods for your proposal (both qualitative and quantitative) including: 1) survey 2) experiment 3) content analysis 4) interview 5) focus group 6) textual analysis
# Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading(s)</th>
<th>Quiz &amp; Topic Review Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 23- August 29</td>
<td>Course Introduction &amp; Syllabus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>August 30- September 5</td>
<td>Introduction to Research Methods</td>
<td>Part I (#1-#11)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 6- September 12</td>
<td>Reviewing &amp; Citing Literature</td>
<td>Part 2 (#12-#19)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 13- September 19</td>
<td>Basic Concepts in Quantitative Research</td>
<td>Part 3 (#20-#24)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 20- September 26</td>
<td>Quantitative Research: Sampling</td>
<td>Part 4 (#25-#34)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>September 27-October 3</td>
<td>Quantitative Research: Measurement</td>
<td>Part 5 (#35-#45)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 4- October 10</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>*TBD</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>October 11- October 17</td>
<td>Qualitative Research: Interviews &amp; Focus Groups</td>
<td>*TBD</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 18- October 24</td>
<td>Content Analyses &amp; Textual Analyses</td>
<td>*TBD</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 25- October 31</td>
<td>Designing Experimental Research</td>
<td>Part 7 (#52-#57)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 1- November 7</td>
<td>Analyzing Data: Understanding Statistics</td>
<td>Part 8 (#58-#74) *This is a long reading-plan ahead!</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 8- November 14</td>
<td>Preparing Research Reports</td>
<td>Part 10 (#81-#88)</td>
<td>Sunday by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 15- November 21</td>
<td>Proposal Due by Sunday @ 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 22- November 28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>November 29- December 5</td>
<td>Study for Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>December 6- December 12</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
<td></td>
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</table>