Capstone Project in ICTs and Policy (COM 479W)   Spring 2015

Monday and Wednesday 1:30pm-2:45pm, George 213

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 3-5pm

Course Description

From UHM catalog: **"**COM 479 Capstone Project in ICTs and Policy (3) Focus on specific ICT and policy problems related to Hawaiʻi and the Asia-Pacific region. COM majors only. Pre: 310 and 320 and 330; and 432 or 438; or consent."

The Capstone Project in ICTs and Policy is a course that challenges students to demonstrate mastery of the communication curriculum by creation of an original research project related to an area of interest. This course has been approved as writing-intensive (WI) and you will receive a WI credit upon successful completion of the course requirements. Class size is limited to 20 students to allow more personal interaction with the instructor.

Student Learning Outcomes

The following outcomes are what we expect our Communication majors to be capable of before graduation:

1. Design communication and media projects to make meaningful contributions to diverse social, professional or academic communities, communicating effectively orally, in writing, and through digital media.
2. Reflect critically on communication products such as media productions, research and policy reports and everyday texts.
3. Demonstrate preparedness for academic and professional careers in communication.
4. Demonstrate global awareness, including an awareness of cultures in the Hawaii-Pacific region and issues related to cross-cultural communication.
5. Engage in collaborative problem solving, both face-to-face and in online environments.
6. Analyze the ethical dimensions of communication.
7. Critically evaluate the use of technology in communication.

These outcomes will be assessed via the portfolio (including your original project this semester) developed in this class.

Activities

All classroom activities are intended to support your research and progress towards the final project. These will include:

- Short in-class assignments;
- Peer review of ideas and selected writings;
- One-on-one conferences with your instructor;
- Tutorials on specific research methods and topics;
- Class discussion and presentations; and
- Creation of an electronic portfolio showcasing your past work and major project

Course Readings

Most of readings for this course will be specific to your project. There are recommended methods books for a variety of projects, and we will discuss these in class. The instructor will also be handing out some key methodological chapters that all are expected to read. Please do so before they are discussed in class.

Attendance and Participation

In order to provide you as much time as possible to work on your individual research, there will be periods when there will be no required class meeting. During these times, you will have opportunity to take part in small group tutorials related to specific research techniques or engage in one-on-one discussion about your progress with the instructor. These periods are clearly marked on the schedule. Otherwise, student attendance is **required.** As this is a short class period, please arrive on time and prepared.

In order to support the many different research designs used in this class we will have a series of tutorials that focus on specific methodologies and methods of data collection and analysis. All required tutorials are scheduled during normal class time. You do not need to attend all of these; however, **you should attend those (one or two) sessions that are directly related to the methodology you plan to use**. You are welcome to attend other tutorials, but this is not a course requirement. The tutorial dates are marked on the schedule and the specific topics for each will be updated as soon as we have an idea of what needs to be covered based on student interest.

You are also required to attend a one-on-one conference with the instructor during the "Individual Conferences" period to discuss your progress. These meetings are scheduled during normal class time and you will be able to reserve a 30-minute slot. Additional meetings with the instructor are *strongly encouraged*, but not required. You can also stop by during posted office hours or email/call to arrange a different meeting time.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, please do not procrastinate or avoid class – come talk to me so I can help you stay on track. A substantial portion of the final grade is derived from participation in in-class exercises, so missing classes will seriously impact your grade and make keeping up with your project difficult.

Evaluation

Assignment	Points
In-class exercises (including attending relevant Tutorial and Individual Conference)	100
Electronic portfolio (covering the seven SLOs)	200
(Revise approximately 15 pages; 2-3 written pages)	
Peer feedback (your active participation in)	100
Assignment 1 – *Topic and research question development (2-3 pages)*	50
Assignment 2 – *Search strategy (2-3 pages)*	50
Assignment 3 – *Annotated bibliography (7-10 pages)*	100
Assignment 4 – *Research procedures (2-3 pages)*	50
Assignment 5 – *Original project (15-20 pages)*	300
Presentation of original project (10 minutes)	50

Assignments

All assignments and exercises (including peer feedback sessions) in this course are designed to directly impact your final project and portfolio. In addition to the grading component, doing high-quality work will move you towards completion of your final project (and reduce anxiety or uncertainty about approaching final deadlines!)

Each assignment will have clear instructions and be discussed in class. If you are uncertain what is expected of you, please contact me as soon as possible so we can clarify and resolve any uncertainties. Deadlines are posted in the accompanying schedule. **All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date (or at the time specified in class).** Late assignments will be assessed a penalty of 20% of assignment grade per day. We will not have time to reschedule presentations, so these will not be accepted late for credit.

Your portfolio and final research project should be of high quality and demonstrate that you have mastered the content and research methods of your chosen topic area. It should be carefully edited and worthy of submission to prospective employers or graduate/professional programs. For this reason, we will spend a fair amount of time getting and giving feedback and editing assignments.

Media-based projects are welcome, but you must have completed substantial coursework in a specific media technique and have a clear proposal. Media projects must also be also accompanied by substantial written documentation (please see instructor for specific guidelines).

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

Total Points	Final Grade
970 or more	A+
930-969	A
900-929	A-
870-899	B+
830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
630-669	D
600-629	D-
599 or less	F

You will receive feedback on your progress throughout the semester, but you are always welcome to inquire about your current point total. **Please note that you will need to pass this course with a 'C' or better in order to use it towards graduation.** This course uses a plus/minus grading system in which a grade of C- does not satisfy the "grade of C or better" requirement.

Office Hours and Communication

I strongly encourage the use of my office hours (posted above). Please come talk to me if you are having any difficulty with the course assignments, feel overwhelmed, or if instructions are unclear. And feel free to stop by during office hours just to chat about the course or the universe in general. We can also arrange meetings outside of posted office hours if needed.

I will also typically be in my office to discuss class-related issues throughout class time during those periods when we are not officially meeting.

I will be sending updates or other information to the class list via email, so please be sure to provide a current email address and check it regularly (especially during those periods when we are not meeting regularly in person).

Academic Honesty and Research Ethics

All students are expected to abide by the rules of conduct outlined in the UH Student Conduct Code (e.g., do not plagiarize). Violation of this Code will automatically result in a course grade of "F" and referral to the Chair of the School of Communications and the Dean of Social Sciences.

Plagiarism occurs when one submits the work of another person as his or her own or does not adequately attribute another's work (including when one paraphrases materials without

sufficiently acknowledging their source). Make sure that all of your assignments and final project are in your own words, and cite references where applicable.

Although you may have covered similar topics in other courses, it is generally not acceptable to turn in work that you have completed for credit in another course. There are instances where a similar topic can be adapted for different credit requirements, so be sure to ask me if you plan to use previously submitted work (e.g., a related COM 499 project or a major term paper from another class that you intended to modify and use as part of your literature review).

Falsification of data is also considered a violation of the Code. **Please inquire before submitting work if you are uncertain about whether something violates these standards.**

Lab Access

Our Crawford Labs 212 and 220 have computers, some including software such as Adobe Acrobat Professional (used for portfolios) and SPSS (if you choose to use statistical analysis). If your project will require use of SPSS, please be sure to attend our class tutorial on this subject. For additional information about lab access policies and availability, please consult the lab monitors on duty. You do not need to buy any software for this class.

If you plan to use Media Lab resources, be sure to inquire with the Lab Director as soon as possible to be sure that they will be available for your use, as COM 479 students do not have priority access to Media Lab facilities.

Additional Writing Support

The final portfolio is expected to be free from grammatical errors and something you can proudly show prospective employers or graduate programs. To help with this, we will have a great deal of peer and instructor feedback. However, you may also wish to schedule an appointment with the Manoa Writing Center, a program provided by the Department of English and the Department of Second Language Studies that provides one-on-one assistance with writing and grammar. This program is free of charge. See http://www.english.hawaii.edu/writingcenter/ for details.

Other Policies

- Check your email regularly and be sure to mark your personal calendars for due dates and days that require attendance!
- Attendance is typically determined at the start of class – if you are not present at that time, you will be considered "absent".
- Side discussions during presentations are not appropriate as they are very distracting and are not fair to those who are trying to listen.
- Your mobile devices are welcome! However, be sure you are using them to enrich your learning experience and not to distract you from what we are covering in class.