

- information;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
 - conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
 - write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
 - critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;

Important UNC policies and procedures:

The Honor Code. The Honor Code is, as always, in effect at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. You are expected to uphold all aspects of the [Honor Code](#). For more specifics, see the [Instrument of Student Judicial Governance](#).

Special Needs. If you have any disability or other special situation that may make it difficult to meet the requirements for this class, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you should also contact the Department of Accessibility Resources & Service (AR&S) at 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu.

Diversity. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The School of Media and Journalism adopted [diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements](#) in spring 2016 with accompanying goals.

Safe@UNC. The University's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Misconduct](#) states that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject by federal law to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other [protected categories](#). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources [here](#).

Textbooks. The following books are on reserve in the Park Library. I may put other books of interest on reserve as the semester progresses.

- **Pan, M.L.** (2008). *Preparing Literature Reviews: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (3rd Ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyczak Publishing.
This is a good step-by-step how to prepare a literature review regardless of methodological perspective. You might want to own a copy of this book.
- **Rosenberry, J., & Vicker, L.** (2008). *Applied Mass Communication Theory: A Guide for Media Practitioners*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (Note: I refer to this as R&V in the course schedule.)

- **Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R.** (2014). *Mass Media Research* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. This book may also be available online at: <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B8pig2KdTtaOBMVZPMEVYZGNzTDg/edit?pref=2&pli=1> (Note: I refer to this as W&D in the course schedule.)

This is an excellent and readable overview of the various methods available for studying research questions in journalism and mass communication primarily from a social scientific perspective. Part 1 is helpful for understanding how theory can guide research and how to get to a good research question and testable hypotheses. Part 4 may help stimulate your research ideas depending on your sequence home (e.g., reporting, electronic, advertising, public relations). It has an excellent chapter on how to conduct content analysis.

- **Brennen, B. S.** (2013) *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- **Creswell, J. W.** (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. (3rd ed). London: Sage.

These two books provide excellent coverage of qualitative methods, including historical research. You'll find general discussion about differences between qualitative and quantitative research as well as information about designing a qualitative study, analyzing data and interpreting your findings. In addition, there are chapters on specific qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews, ethnographies, focus groups, textual analysis and such.

Other Readings:

- Depending upon the interests of the class, I may put other books, chapters, or articles on reserve or on the course Sakai site.
- You will need to become familiar with an **academic style manual** that you will use throughout your Honors thesis. You need to pick a style and apply it to all the writing you do for this class. The specific reference style you choose will depend on the kind of research you are doing (history scholars typically use Chicago Style; behavioral scientists typically use the American Psychological Association's [APA] style manual). If you are doing legal research, you will need a copy of the *Blue Book* and will probably want to work with one of our law professors (Drs. Ekstrand, Hoefges or Packer) or a graduate student to learn it. Individual style guides are available in UNC libraries and in addition, the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) has basic guidelines for APA, Chicago, and MLA.

Grades. Your grade at the end of this fall semester will reflect your work throughout the semester. I will assign your grade after consultation with your adviser and reader. Your grade will be evaluated in relation to your attendance and participation in the class as well as the work and effort of all students in the course. Be sure to carefully read over the requirements for this fall semester's Honors class to understand my expectations of you during this course. An "A" will indicate that all parties believe that your participation, effort and completed work in the courses have been outstanding. A "B" indicates that your participation, effort and completed work in the courses have been good. A "C" indicates that your participation, effort and completed work in the courses have been average. You *must* receive a positive evaluation on your work from your adviser, reader and me before continuing into the second semester.

Students who complete the first semester of the program but do not continue in the spring will receive course credit for MEJO 691H.

In planning your spring semester, please keep in mind that honors projects take significant time to complete. For your own peace of mind and physical well-being, do not schedule other classes in the spring that require an extraordinary amount of out-of-class work.

Requirements:

Maintain a minimum overall grade point average of 3.3 and a minimum grade point average of 3.5 in your School major.

Decide on a research study or project

The project must be original research study or an original project (series of articles, marketing plan, website, a branding campaign, etc.) that results in a thesis of four to five chapters, or 50 to 80 pages total. It should be a topic in which you are interested and enthusiastic. Also important to consider is: resources, geography and finances. For a look at what your predecessors have studied see <http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?Ntt=STP-hon&Ntk=Call%20Number&Nty=1>. This is a searchable list of all the previous J-School honors theses that are available to see in the Park Library. They also are in the Wilson Library and you may be able to check them out there. For the past two years, honors theses have been collected electronically (only) by the university. You should find and familiarize yourself with a thesis/project from a previous year to better understand the work you'll be doing in 691H.

Consult with librarian

The resources of the UNC library system and the expertise of UNC librarians (most specifically, Park Library Director Stephanie Brown), will be indispensable as you develop your thesis. Ms. Brown will visit our class, but you are also *required to meet independently with her to advance your project*. Contact information is [here](#).

Attend a research-enrichment workshop (strongly recommended)

The University and the School offer enrichment opportunities related to research throughout the year, including workshops on using citation software and a range of analytical programs, such as SPSS and MaxQDA. These typically occur via (but are not limited to) the Park Library, [UNC libraries](#) programming, [Research Hub](#) or the [Odum Institute](#). You might also find it helpful to attend a research colloquium presentation that dovetails with your topic – many departments on campus host these. Your adviser can be helpful in recommending relevant campus events. I'll share information as it comes to me, but you should be alert to such opportunities, and make plans to *attend one for extra credit*. Come spring, you'll be glad you did this.

Conduct a review of previous research and writing

By mid-October, you will have located and summarized previous studies and writing on your topic. This review of the literature will comprise the bulk of Chapter 1 of your thesis. You also will map out exactly how you will conduct your study – what data/evidence will be gathered and how; this will be the bulk of Chapter 2 – the Methods/Procedures chapter. For students doing the

more professional-oriented project, your proposal should include a literature review of the conceptual area that will guide your project and an outline of the procedures (and availability of resources) for your project.

These two pieces and a short introduction and schedule for the rest of your work will form your thesis proposal. *Your committee members must approve the proposal* so you may proceed with gathering and analyzing data. The proposal is important, because it will serve as your guide in conducting the research and carrying out your project or study. These chapters may be rewritten later in light of additional research conducted during the second semester, but the initial version will define the scope of your study. Honors theses also often include appendices that include coding guides, questionnaires, or lists of interviewees or samples of evidence. Please keep track of such details as you go along. I encourage you to keep a research log starting day one that will help you keep track of your thought process and productivity.

Detailed guidelines for preparing the proposal are available on our Sakai site.

Check the website for the Office of Undergraduate Research

The [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) is an excellent source of encouragement and support as you work on your project. In addition to examples of undergraduate research across disciplines, a helpful blog and range of programming, OUR has sometimes offered funding for undergraduate research from this office. In addition, you will find information at the OUR website about the [Celebration of Undergraduate Research](#), an annual event (held in April) to showcase and award original research.

Complete ethics training (everyone) and, if needed, obtain IRB approval

Everyone in the class will need to complete the Institutional Review Board's certification process. This means you will do the [CITI Online Course](#) (CITI = Collaborative IRB Training Initiative) on the web. You will need to first Register/Create an Account, then indicate the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as your affiliation. The registration will take you through several screens. When you choose which one you want to complete, be sure to select the *Social and Behavioral Research: Basic Course*. Send me an email when you've completed the training. One caution: This certification may take some time, so I recommend you try to do this in stages.

If you will be doing scholarly research that involves observing, interviewing, or measuring human beings in any way, your research design and procedures may have to be approved by the J-School (first) and then the Behavioral Institutional Review Board. You must do this before you can obtain approval for conducting your research. Go to <http://research.unc.edu/ohre/> to see information about submitting your application online.

Stay in touch with your adviser and work with that person to choose a second committee member for your thesis

Your honors adviser will work with you for part of the fall semester and for all of the spring semester. The adviser will be your direct supervisor for the completion of the project. In addition, you will need one other member (and may have two additional members) on your committee. Your adviser will be the chair of the committee and "must have a permanent or

adjunct appointment in the unit in which their advisees' senior honors thesis coursework is scheduled" (excerpted from [Senior Honors Thesis Guidelines for Academic Units, Faculty Advisors, and Students](#)). Your other committee member, sometimes called a "reader," should also be a faculty member. Your reader can be from the School or from another department, or from outside the school, and preferably should be someone who has an interest in your research area and/or someone with whom you have had a class. If you decide to have a third member of your committee, that committee member may be a person from the profession who has expertise in your research area.

Schedule and meet with your committee members

Don't wait for your adviser or reader to come looking for you – take the initiative and keep that individual abreast of your progress. Presumably, you've chosen the adviser for topic and/or method expertise, so you should feel free to reach out to the adviser as needed (respectful of their schedules, of course).

Participate in the School's Research Participant Pool

Since some members of the class will be using the JOMC Research Pool, we will give back by having *every student participate for at least two hours in the Participant Pool this semester*. You will be able to sign up online to participate in research studies being conducted by faculty and students in the School. If you'd rather not be in a study, you can satisfy this requirement by writing 2 two-page summaries and critiques of academic research articles. Each review counts for one hour of research participation, so you can combine participation in the studies with article reviews to fulfill the requirement. You may summarize any article published in the past two years in the following journals: *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Advertising*, *Mass Communication & Society*, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Feminist Media Studies*, *Journalism History*, or *American Journalism*.

Participate in class

The class combines the dynamics of a seminar, in which we discuss as a group the reading in depth, and a workshop, in which we help each other develop student work in progress. The class works best when we all show interest in all the projects. We may pair up so you can benefit from more feedback. You are expected to arrive to class prepared, having read the assigned work. In addition, each of you will be assigned to serve as a discussion leader for the readings. In that case, you will detail the 5-10 most important points from the readings, prepare questions for the class and facilitate our discussion.

Communicate

Your classmates and/or your committee members and I cannot help you unless you let us know what is going on for you. If you find yourself up against the wall with writing block, a dead-end literature search or confronting another kind of obstacle, let me know so we can figure out what's going to help. Honors projects require ongoing effort – leaving your work (that includes assigned reading) for the last minute is a recipe for failure. So, let us know if you are having trouble staying on schedule. It is most important that your adviser is comfortable with your schedule. Many of the deadlines in the syllabus are negotiable *except* the final submission dates.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Dates	Topics and Readings	Due
Aug. 23	<i>The joy of research, or Introduction to the course and discussion of preliminary research ideas.</i>	Be prepared to discuss your research/project topic ideas
Aug. 30	<p><i>Introduction to the research process: How do I develop my topic, problem statement, purpose and research questions?</i></p> <p>Read: Entire syllabus; R&V Unit 1 (Chs. 1-4, or pgs. 1-67) Skim: Three honors theses (see list on web)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be prepared to lead class discussion on 5-10 important points from the chapters. 2. Be prepared to discuss one honors thesis most relevant to your topic. <p>DUE: 1-2 typed pages about your research/project ideas (via Sakai by 2 pm today)</p>
Sept. 6	<p><i>The indispensability of the library.</i></p> <p>Guest: Stephanie Brown, Park Library Director</p>	<p>BRING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stephanie's search scenarios exercise (completed) 2. Laptops
Sept. 13	<p><i>Research as scholarly conversation: The importance of the literature review.</i></p> <p>Read materials on Sakai re: literature review, and consult Pan (on reserve).</p>	<p>BRING TO CLASS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2-3 pages (outline): Issues to be explored; problem statements, and preliminary research questions 2. List of 2-3 faculty members who might serve as readers 3. Laptops
Sept. 20	<p><i>One-on-one meeting with instructor to discuss ideas (required)(use Sakai sign-up)</i></p>	<p>DUE: Introduction (by 5pm <u>9/21</u> to Sakai)</p> <p>BRING TO MEETING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preliminary (annotated) bibliography (5-10 key academic sources) 2. During meeting we will discuss your research/project ideas. Be prepared to talk about possible RQs or overall questions you hope to investigate.
Sept. 27	<i>Guiding your study with theory/conceptual foundations</i>	Be prepared to discuss:

	<p>Read: R&V Unit 2 (Chs. 5-11) Check out the material in the other books on reserve for related theories/conceptual issues</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What conceptual foundation or theory might guide your project? 2. What conceptual areas do you need to review? 3. What might be your RQs? Your procedure or method?
		<p><i>Applications for Honors Carolina funding are due September 29 at 4 p.m. Your application must be evaluated and signed by your adviser and Dr. Friedman.</i></p>
Oct. 4	<p><i>Writing the literature review (work independently, but I will have drop-in office hours during class time)</i></p> <p>Be sure to consult Pan (on reserve) and familiarize yourself with material re: lit reviews on Sakai.</p>	<p>DUE: 5-10 pages of literature review (by 5pm via Sakai).</p>
Oct. 11	<p><i>Using Qualitative Methods</i></p> <p>Read Brennen Chs. 1-2 AND choose one additional chapter from 3-8 regarding a specific method.</p> <p>Consult material in the other books on reserve that have information about qualitative methods, or ask me about a specific method and I will provide you with reading.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare an outline of the steps in your method (if you are using qualitative methods.) You may need to investigate other books and journal articles that discuss your method. Be prepared to discuss this. 2. Provide me with name, affiliation, contact details for your adviser and reader. <p>NOTE: Reach out now to schedule a meeting with your adviser and reader the week of Oct. 30.</p>
Oct. 18	<p><i>Optional one-on-one meetings</i></p> <p>Fall Break begins 5 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 18; Classes resume 8 a.m., Monday, Oct. 23</p>	<p>DUE by Thursday, 10/19, 5pm via Sakai:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your revised introduction and 5-10 pages of literature review to me. Also email a copy to your adviser.

Oct. 25	<p><i>Using Quantitative Methods</i> <i>Guest: Dr. Anne Johnston</i></p> <p>Read W&D Chs. 6, 7 & 9</p> <p>Check out the material in the other books on reserve that have information about quantitative methods</p>	<p>DUE (by 5pm via Sakai):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any revision to literature review <u>and</u> a draft of Chapter 2 (methods). Send the same material via email to your adviser and committee member(s) (<i>if</i> they wish to be included at this time)
Nov. 1	<p><i>Individual committee meetings: All students should arrange a meeting with committee members during this week.</i></p>	<p>DUE (by 5 pm Friday, Nov. 3 via Sakai):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief summary (1/2-2 pages) of your meeting including next steps on your thesis.
Nov. 8	<p><i>Workshop:</i> <i>Doing revisions</i> <i>Working on IRB submissions if working with human subjects</i></p>	<p>Be prepared to discuss how you'll revise your proposals</p>
Nov. 15	<p><i>Finalizing proposals</i></p>	<p>DUE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Revised thesis proposal to Sakai 11/15 by 5pm, and via email to adviser. Draft of the IRB proposal to Sakai 11/17 by 5 pm (and via email to adviser if requested).
Nov. 22 NO CLASS	<p><i>Thanksgiving Recess, Nov. 22-24</i></p>	
Nov. 29	<p><i>Individual meetings with me and/or your adviser (required that you meet with one of us)</i></p>	<p>Use Sakai sign-up to schedule a meeting with me.</p>
Dec. 6	<p><i>What's next? How to prepare for Spring semester</i></p>	<p>Discuss feedback about your proposal.</p>
Friday, Dec. 8	<p><i>FINAL EXAM PERIOD</i></p>	<p>DUE (by 2pm via Sakai):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final thesis proposal to Sakai, and via email to your adviser and committee.