COURSE DESCRIPTION -- This class is designed to introduce graduate students to some of the methods we use to generate knowledge about human communication processes. While we will survey multiple methods, the class will focus primarily on scientific methods involving empirical data subjected to quantitative and statistical analysis. The primary concerns of the class are the operationalization of concepts, the testing of theories, analysis of data, and interpretation of results. Class lectures will address experimental design, data collection, control and elimination of error, and data analysis.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES -- After successfully completing COMG602 graduate students should be able to differentiate and understand multiple epistemological approaches to the development of knowledge, understand and critique research design, interpret and assess statistical results of studies and experiments, and conduct statistical analysis tests in SPSS. The skills and knowledge acquired in COMG602 (along with the regular application of same) will serve graduates students as they design and execute their thesis project.

TEXT – none required. I would be happy to recommend some for your personal library.

You are required to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). (2010). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. This book provides the writing style for most of the social science journals you will consult as graduate students and professionals. You will need this book to write any papers in this department. Use it. All papers submitted in this class will be assessed in part on correct use of APA format.

SOFTWARE – Purchase the student version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) at the bookstore. The software will be your primary tool for data analysis for the next two years.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Midterm and final; multiple choice, short answer, and essay; 25% each.

2. Empirical research study or experiment. The smart thing to do would be to use this class as an opportunity to plan and test ideas for your thesis; 25% of final grade. The paper will be presented to the class at the end of the semester.

3. A number of data analysis/short papers will be assigned throughout the semester (approximately one every two weeks). To get credit for these assignments all of the assignments must be completed; 25% of final grade.

**NOTE** ALL papers will be prepared following APA format. Poorly and/or hastily prepared work will be graded accordingly. Prepare your papers as professionals.
**SCHEDULE** -- The following schedule is subject to change as need arises.

Week 1  Ways of knowing; ontological & epistemological concerns; qualitative and quantitative research.

Week 2  Principles of necessity; conceptualizing and operationalizing.

Week 3  Measurement; validity and reliability.

Week 4  Design.

Week 5  Sampling and data collecting.

Week 6  Review & catch-up.

Week 7  Descriptive statistics; measures of central tendency; measures of dispersion.

Week 8  Midterm

Week 9  Inferential statistics & hypothesis testing.

Week 10  Variance and control of variance.

Week 11  T-tests; single-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Week 12  Multiple-factor ANOVA.

Week 13  Correlation, covariance.

Week 14  Bivariate and multivariate regression.

Week 15  Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.

Week 16  Present papers; review.