

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**ALABAMA**<sup>®</sup>

*College of*  
Communication & Information Sciences  
Office for Graduate Studies

# Fall 2021 Doctoral Courses

March 22 - Registration Opens  
August 18 - Classes Begin

# Fall 2021 Courses:

## **CIS 603: Quantitative Research Methods**

**Instructor: Dr. Josh Pederson**

The goals of this course involve providing students with knowledge about the history, practice, and methods of quantitative social science within the field of communication. This course will provide students with opportunities to conduct research and analysis processes through in-class practice assignments and a student led independent research study. This course covers several different ways of gathering data - surveys, experiments, and content analyses - as well as several ways of analyzing it - between-group comparisons, regression analyses, and analysis of variance.

## **CIS 604: Mass Communication Theory**

**Instructor: Dr. Jameson Hayes**

In this course, we will develop an understanding of what good theory is and how it is applied in mass communication research. The objectives will be: (1) to familiarize advanced students with some of the more well-accepted literature and social science research traditions in mass communications; (2) to illustrate the nature of theory, research and social science and their application to the study of mass and other mediated communications; (3) to provide a framework whereby students develop the ability to analyze and construct critical viewpoints relating to mass communication theory and research traditions; (4) to have students be able to locate various theories into an overall conceptual base; and (5) to understand and challenge some of the basic assumptions of mass communication theories and conclude what literature holds and what literature needs to be re-invigorated

## **CIS 605: Cultural and Critical Theory**

**Instructor: Dr. Meredith Bagley**

## **CIS 608: Qualitative Research Methods**

**Instructor: Dr. Laura Lemon**

## **CIS 609: Humanistic Research Methods**

**Instructor: Dr. Kristen Warner**

## **CIS 610: Foundations of Doctoral Study**

**Instructor: Dr. Miriam Sweeney**

## **CIS 650: Ethics in Mass Communication**

**Instructor: Dr. Chris Roberts**

This introduction to the general field of media ethics

understands that students come to this class from a variety of backgrounds. The continued convergence of media means contemporary ethicists must reconsider the path of media ethics, and its scholarship, in the context of seemingly timeless principles. This course will help students:

- Identify the moral dimensions of communications-related issues.
- Develop moral reasoning tools to deal with those issues, which will both help in decision making and in critiquing the conventions of media systems and practices.
- Ground themselves in many moral philosophies, ancient and emerging.
- Foster a deeper understanding of media, and the many competing forces that shape what we see and do not see in media.
- Offer insights, when appropriate, into teaching an ethics class.
- Create a paper suitable for academic presentation and/or publication.
- Build a foundation into theory and techniques of inquiry that can inform research questions in theses and dissertations, regardless of your topic.

## **CIS 650: News, Media, and Politics**

**Instructor: Dr. Kaitlin Miller**

This course will examine central controversies, theories, and research questions about the role of the media in elections and politics. Some key questions we will consider are: What are the appropriate functions of mass media in a democracy? What economic imperatives and media routines affect the quality of the elections news citizens get? What is "media bias" and how does it matter? And how has all of this been transformed by the rise of today's fluid media system?

## **CIS 650: Sports Media**

**Instructor: Dr. Andrew Billings**

The seminar in sports media is designed to introduce students to the key past and present works in the field as well as to allow opportunities to apply research skills to the development of both a full group project and individual project proposal. Weekly themed topics will include issues such as gender, race/ethnicity, social media, and the internationalization of sport. A variety of epistemologies will be introduced in weekly readings, with all epistemological approaches to the study of sports media welcomed within the seminar.

# Fall 2021 Courses:

## **CIS 660: Interpersonal Communication Theory**

**Instructor: Dr. Leah LeFebvre**

This seminar is designed to provide an overview of the fundamental and contemporary theories relevant to verbal and nonverbal communication in interpersonal relationships. The course should familiarize you with opportunities to engage with breadth, scope, and range of theory and research problems that are the foci of interpersonal communication scholarship. The course is structured to expand your knowledge of prominent theories of interpersonal communication and familiarize you with research that supports and challenges those theories. By the end of the course, you should be better able to critique theory and research, and better understand how programs of research in interpersonal communication develop and evolve. Beyond learning the principles of major frameworks, you will think critically about the perspectives that have guided research programs in our field, understand the strengths and limitations of those perspectives, become better able to contribute novel knowledge of interpersonal communication through your own theoretically driven empirical research, and delineate gaps within theory and research worthy and necessary of investigation. This course will help to develop stronger skills in theory development, formulation of research questions and hypotheses, and model building. This course offers you the ability to apply interpersonal communication theories to ANY context. You will build, extend, or critique theory in your area of inquiry while developing a journal-ready manuscript.

## **CIS 664: Health Communication Campaigns**

**Instructor: Dr. Heather Carmack**

Health campaigns have the power to inform, change, and inspire people to engage in positive health practices. Successful health campaigns stay in public discourse long after the campaign ends; for example, children of the 70s and 80s will associate eggs and frying pans with the dangers of drug use, The Singing Cowboy from the Truth Initiative reminded viewers that you don't always die from tobacco use, and comedian Tom Green taught the male MTV generation how to check for testicular cancer. Poorly designed or implemented campaigns serve as cautionary tales, and in some cases, can have the opposite effect on campaign consumers. This course systematically explores and elaborates on key concepts, principles, and underlying theories important to the design of public health communication campaigns. Students will learn all facets of campaign conceptualization, design, delivery, evaluation, and critique. Students will also complete a study related to health

campaign and message design (quantitative, qualitative, and rhetorical methods welcome).

## **CIS 668: Social Justice and Inclusion Advocacy**

**Instructor: Dr. Bharat Mehra**

Social justice and inclusion advocacy through a communication and information lens of analysis and practice can strongly promote fairness, justice, and equality/equity for all people, including those on the margins of society. This seminar critically investigates the role of communication and information agencies (e.g., libraries, archives, museums, businesses, industry, schools, universities, government organizations, non-profits, activist groups, etc.) in advancing social justice scholarship (research, engagement, and inclusion advocacy) and practice via communication, information, and emerging technologies. It examines the development of information infrastructures, contexts, technologies, institutions, and policies as sites of power that shape inequalities. Students will draw on a broad array of scholarly and popular sources to explore what socially-just outcomes and interventions might look like for communities, organizations, and individuals in their chosen communication and information context of study.

We will study prominent philosophical and pedagogical concepts related to social justice and inclusion advocacy from interdisciplinary approaches (e.g., critical race theory; feminist and cross-cultural studies; queer theory; postcolonial literature; intersectionality; power, privilege, and positionality; action research; etc.). We will also revisit the conceptual and praxis foundations of the communication and information professions to scrutinize current practice in order to identify how we can better develop equitable, democratic, and meaningful information services for traditionally underserved populations.

Students will gain experiential learning in the "doing" and advancing of social justice scholarship within a context of a self-selected communication or information environment and community setting. They will develop web resources and/or publishable quality manuscript proposals about their context of work that integrate theories and methods of social justice and inclusion advocacy to address historically imbalanced social, cultural, political, and economic inequities in our global networked information society. This seminar is developed for doctoral and master's students and professionals both on campus and at a distance to apply the philosophy and practice of social justice and inclusion advocacy in their context-embedded projects and gain experience and expertise of collaborating with external constituencies.

# Fall 2021 Courses:

## **CIS 671: Public Opinion**

**Instructor: Dr. Jameson Hayes**

In the communication fields, we are constantly surrounded by messages intended to influence how people think, feel, and behave. To better understand how the process of influence operates, this course provides a broad overview of the main scholarly perspectives in persuasion. The course is designed to introduce you to the principal theories and empirical research programs exploring how communication impacts public opinion through persuasion. While the primary focus is conceptual, we will also examine swaying of public opinion in applied settings, including political campaigns, health communication, social media, and public information/social action campaigns.

## **CIS 681: Content Analysis Methods**

**Instructor: Dr. Cory Armstrong**

This is a doctoral course in advanced research methods that focuses specifically on learning content analyses methodology. This course will teach you how to understand, evaluate, and conduct research, using human-based and computer-based content analyses tools. This course will provide you with an understanding of the relationship between theory, data collection, analysis, and the communication of these results. The semester will include working through a full study employing content analyses, including intercoder reliability training and testing. We will also review different statistical approaches for data analysis.

## **CIS 683: Media and Technology**

**Instructor: Dr. Shaheen Kanthawala**

This doctoral seminar examines formative and evolving research in the media and technology field. The role of mediated communication is ever expanding and has led to new and different ways humans interact with each other on a regular basis. To better understand these mechanisms, in this course we will explore the theoretical frameworks concerning media and communication processes, and their interaction with technology. By the end of the course you should have a deeper and broader understanding of the theoretical issues related to the field, be able to identify and pursue meaningful research on related topics, and apply appropriate theory and methodologies to the study of new forms of mediated communication.

# Fall 2021 Courses:

## Disciplinary graduate courses in C&IS

The PhD program in Communication and Information Sciences is a multidisciplinary program with opportunities for interdisciplinary study. The four academic units that comprise the college—Advertising & Public Relations, Communication Studies, Journalism and Creative Media, and Library and Information Studies—offer disciplinary-focused graduate courses that may be appropriate for doctoral students with advisor approval.

Among the courses on the Summer and Fall 2021 schedule that are appropriate for doctoral students with advisor approval are:

**APR 522: Media Strategy and Analytics (summer only)**

**APR 524: Reputation Communication Strategy (summer & fall)**

**APR 525: Brand Communication Strategy (summer & fall)**

**APR 550: Analysis and Insights (fall only)**

**APR 551: Foundations of Integrated Communication (fall only)**

**APR 570: Ethics and Professional Development (summer & fall)**

**APR 584: Computational Research Methods (fall only)**

**JCM 522 Science & Environment in Media (fall only)**

**MC 550 Research Methods (summer & fall)**

**MC 551 Seminar in Communication Theory (summer & fall)**

Students are encouraged to consult with their advisors to determine which if any of the many graduate courses on the Summer and Fall 2021 schedule across the college are appropriate for the student's program of study.