

THE GREAT INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION SYLLABUS

COURSE: Communication 2343 Introduction To Mass Communication

INSTRUCTOR: Richard West Office: MB 2.248 PHONE: 458-5234

OFFICE HOURS: Mon, Fri. - 11-11:45; Wed. - 11:00 - 11:45 Tue., Thur. - 10 - 10:45

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TEXTBOOK: Media and Culture Campbell, Martin, Fabos 6th Edition, 2009 Update

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course encourages you to question and comprehend the mass media's influence on groups and individuals in contemporary U.S. society. You will be encouraged to enhance our media literacy through a critical evaluation of mass media products and processes. Media industries that produce and distribute advertising, information and entertainment are examined from a variety of analytical and disciplinary perspectives, and within the contemporary contexts of rapid technological change and globalization. By the end of the semester, you will be expected to demonstrate a firm understanding of mass communication as a social, political, cultural and economic force in U.S. society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To enhance your media literacy and critical thinking skills through an evaluation of mass communication processes and outcomes.
2. To offer factual knowledge of mass communication texts and research and industries, both past and present.
3. An understanding of the 1st Amendment and its impact upon the media.
4. Introduce and critically engage fundamental principles, assumptions, and theories concerning media industries, audiences, and effects on U. S. society.
5. Develop an understanding of media law and regulations, past and present, and the effect of both upon the media.
6. To understand how the news media affects us and its impact upon our lives.
7. An understanding of the history of the various media and their place in today's

world. It is only through an examination and understanding of the past that we can know and understand the present and effectively look to the future.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

ATTENDANCE: Your attendance is part of your grade, so you should plan on being in class every time it meets. A sign-in sheet will be passed around most days and if you fail to sign it, you weren't here. A total of three (3) unexcused absences will be permitted without their affecting your grade. Excused absences are at my discretion. Everyone starts with 100 points for attendance. After you have missed the three (3) classes allowed, fifteen (15) points will be deducted from your attendance point total for each additional absence. No points are deducted for excused absences. Your attendance points will count as 20% of your final grade.

QUIZZES: There will be four (4) in-class, unannounced quizzes during the course of the semester. Each quiz will be 25 questions in length. You will have approximately 35 minutes to do each one. If you show up more than 15 minutes late, you will not be allowed to take it. Quizzes will be on the book readings and lecture material to that point. **NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE A QUIZ AFTER IT HAS BEEN GIVEN. EITHER YOU'RE IN CLASS TO TAKE IT, OR YOU AREN'T. NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED UNLESS YOU'RE NOT IN CLASS DUE TO PARTICIPATION IN A UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED EVENT IN WHICH CASE YOU WILL NEED DOCUMENTATION.** The quizzes make up 20% of your final grade.

MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS: There will be one of each worth 100 points apiece. To make the exam experience as painless as possible, you will have a study guide for each exam. You **WILL NOT** need Scantrons for the exams. The mid-term is 20% of your final grade and the final is 20%.

PAPER: Once we begin discussing the news media, you will be given specifics on an analytical paper you will be expected to write in which you will be expected to thoroughly and comprehensively dissect and analyze either a local or national television newscast. Deadlines and penalties for late papers and those that are otherwise done incorrectly will be discussed when the criteria becomes available. 100 points possible. The paper makes up the final 20% of your grade.

GRADING: Everything is worth the points as indicated previously. At the end of the semester, all your points will be totaled and a grade assigned

according to the following chart:

450 - 500 A
400 - 449 B
350 - 399 C
300 - 349 D
1 - 299 Better luck next time

CLASSROOM POLICIES

CELL PHONES, OTHER ELECTRONIC NOISEMAKERS: Will no longer be tolerated in the classroom. You should **TURN THEM OFF UPON ENTERING THE CLASSROOM!!** Nothing can be so important you need to have them on, and if it is, you probably shouldn't be in class that day. You Have Been Warned - So **TURN THE STUPID THINGS OFF NOW!!!** Text messaging people during class will get you a one-way ticket out the door as well. You are here to **LEARN - NOT** text someone or listen to obnoxious ringtones.

IF you find it necessary to call me and want a return call and all you have is a cell phone, don't expect a return call unless you leave me a time to call you back. I don't want to call you while you're in another class or driving down the freeway. If you're driving, you have no business talking on the phone anyway. Your best bet is to contact me by e-mail or stop by during scheduled office hours.

COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM: As long as you're using them to take notes, I have no problem. Once you start hanging out on Facebook, eBay and other websites - **YOU** have a major problem. None of those sites has a thing to do with this course and if you get caught, you'll be escorted out the door.

HOMEWORK FOR OTHER CLASSES: Will be confiscated.

LEAVING CLASS: If you're one of those rude, ill-mannered people who finds it necessary to consistently leave class early interrupting others - don't bother coming back after the third time. If you find it necessary to go to the litter box, that's one thing, but coming in, signing the attendance sheet and leaving early is rude, disruptive and will not be tolerated. Should the occasion arise where you have to leave early, it should take you about 30 seconds to inform me of that fact before the start of class.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT GRADES: YOU SHOULD SAVE ALL PAPERS WITH GRADES UNTIL YOU KNOW YOUR FINAL GRADE!! I am not perfect and will occasionally make a mistake in final grade computation. If you

have a question about your grade, you will need to have papers in hand to discuss it. All I will have will be the Attendance sheets and the Final Exam. Everything else will have been handed back to you. If you've tossed something, the recorded grade is gospel and will stand throughout eternity. Once you have made an appointment with me to discuss your grade, you will have 10 minutes - that should be sufficient. DO NOT expect me to come in and meet with you over any breaks we may have. That won't happen. Similarly, DO NOT stop by unexpectedly during the first week of classes the next semester and expect me to drop everything to hear your complaint. That won't happen either. E-mail me first at the special e-mail address you'll be given the last day of class and maybe we can resolve everything quickly. If not, make an appointment, we'll get together and everything will be cool.

MISCELLANEOUS

OFFICE HOURS: You are encouraged to stop by during regular office hours if you have a question about some aspect of the course, or if you just happen to be in the neighborhood and want to stop by and say hello. If you need to discuss something and my office hours are inconvenient due to your class schedule, either e-mail me or see me after class and we'll try to set up a time. I promise you - I will not and do not, bite!

EXTRA CREDIT: Highly unlikely, but if something comes up I'll let you know.

AND NOW, A FEW WORDS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Support Services, including registration assistance and equipment are available to people with documented disabilities through the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS), MS 2.03.18. You may contact that office at 458-4157 to make arrangements. If you wish to take an exam through DSS, you will need documentation.

Everyone should make it a point to read the University statement on plagiarism/collusion which can be found in Section 203 of the Student Code of Conduct in the UTSA Information Bulletin or on-line at <http://www.utsa.edu/OSJA/Section203.cfm> and through the Student Judicial Affairs Office at 458-4720.

COURSE CALENDAR

NOTE: DATES ARE NOT ETCHED IN STONE AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Thur., Aug. 27	Go over syllabus.....A Little About The Course
Tue., Sept. 1	Ch. 16 Legal Controls and Freedom of Expression
Thur., Sept. 3	Finish Tuesday.....Ch. 11 Advertising and Commercial Culture
Tue. Sept. 8	Finish Thursday....Ch. 13 Media Economics
Thur., Sept. 10	Ch. 4 Popular Radio and the Origins of Broadcasting
Tue., Sept. 15	More on Radio...Ch. 3 Sound Recordings and Popular Music
Thur., Sept. 17	More on the Recording Industry...Ch. 3 Television and the Power of Visual Culture
Tue., Sept. 22	Finish Television
Thur., Sept. 24	Ch. 6 Cable and the Specialization of TV
Tue., Sept. 29	Ch. 7 Movies and the Impact Of Images
Thur., Oct. 1	More on the Movies....Cartoons
Tue., Oct. 6	Movies and Television
Thur., Oct. 8	Finish with TV/Movies/Electronic Media MID-TERM STUDY GUIDE AVAILABLE
Tue., Oct. 13	MID-TERM EXAM MID-TERM EXAM
Thur., Oct. 15	Ch. 14 The Culture of Journalism INFORMATION ABOUT NEWS MEDIA PAPER AVAILABLE
Tue., Oct. 20	More on the News Media
Thur., Oct. 22	The News Media, Shield Laws, Court Cases
Tue., Oct. 27	Ch. 8 Newspapers and the Rise of Modern Journalism
Thur., Oct. 29	Finish up News Media...Ch. 9 Magazines in The Age of Specialization
Tue., Nov. 3	Finish Magazines....News Media LAST DAY TO TURN IN YOUR PAPER ANALYZING NEWS MEDIA
Thur. Nov. 5	Ch. 19 Books and the Power of Print
Tue., Nov. 10	Finish Books...Ch. 12 Public Relations
Thur., Nov. 12	Finish Public Relations
Tue., Nov. 17	Ch. 15 Media Effects, Cultural Approaches To Research
Thur., Nov. 19	More on Research
Tue., Nov. 24	More on Research
Thur., Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING DAY NO CLASS
Tue., Dec. 1	Ch. 2 The Internet and New Technologies
Thur. Dec. 3	Ch. 13 Global Marketplace LAST DAY OF CLASS FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE AVAILABLE

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9 10:30 AM

NOTE:

The following page is courtesy of the Administration and consists of important dates of which you should be aware during the course of the semester.