

Syllabus
MCOM 2307 Section 001
Spring 2022

Instructor: Dr. Terry L. Britt (Ph.D. 2018, University of Missouri School of Journalism)
Office: CAS 220 Phone: (903) 565-5713 Email: tbritt@uttyler.edu
(The best way to contact me is by email.)
Office Hours: M 2:30-3:30 p.m., Th 10 a.m.-Noon, and by appointment

Note: Syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be posted under “Announcements” on the class Canvas site and by email through Canvas.

Course Overview: Examines the relationship between mass communication processes and both the individual and society; their influence on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. In addition, this course explores interrelationship between social, economic, political, and cultural change and media outlets.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Competency: Critical thinking

- a) Develop an understanding of current and historical mass media structures and their various impacts upon society and culture.
- b) Identify characteristics of various media platforms.
- c) Demonstrate proficiency in writing, including basic grammar and style, from prompts distributed by the instructor and relevant to the content of the course.

2. Competency: Analysis and Systematic Inquiry

a) Research and Evaluation

- i. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism professions.
- ii. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history and roles of professionals and institutions in shaping the field of mass and mediated communication.

b) Legal and Ethical Principles

- i. Demonstrate an understanding of and be able to apply the First Amendment and other legal principles for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism
- ii. Recognize what constitutes libel, appropriation, intrusion, false light, and publicity about private facts.
- iii. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism.
- iv. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical behavior in mass media industries.

3. Competency: Mediated Presentation

- a) Apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
- b) Identify the different formats used in the various media covered.

Required Textbooks and Readings:

1. Lule, Jack. Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication (2018).
2. Postman, Neil. Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business (Anniversary edition, 2005).
3. Other reading assignments as distributed by the instructor.

Recommended Media:

UT Tyler students can register for free full access to the New York Times online.

Special Course Notes:

- 1) **Due to the rise in COVID-19 cases in Smith County and elsewhere in East Texas, we will meet online via Zoom for the class sessions from Jan. 10-21.** Unless otherwise notified, we will begin face-to-face class session on Monday, Jan. 24.
- 2) Final Exam: The final exam is scheduled to take place in person on **Friday, April 29, 12:30-2:30 p.m. in our regular classroom, CAS 104.**
- 3) I strongly recommend you back up electronic notes, assignment files, and other important content to (A) your device's onboard storage, (B) a removable storage device (portable hard drive, USB flash drive), and (C) a cloud-based storage account like Dropbox, iCloud, or Microsoft OneDrive.

Assignments and weights/point values

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Meet with instructor | 5% |
| 2. Explaining Theory Y | 25% |
| 3. Law and Policy Chart | 25% |
| 4. Future Forecast of Theory Y Impact | 30% |
| a. Research of possibilities (10%) | |
| b. Forecasting Product (20%) | |
| 5. Class Participation and Professionalism | 5% |
| 6. Final Exam | 10% |

Grading Scale:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| A | 90% or greater |
| B | 80-89% |
| C | 70-79% |
| D | 60-69% |
| F | below 60% |

Note: Department of Communication majors must pass all MCOM courses with a grade of “C” or higher in order to receive credit toward the degree.

Late Work and Make-Up Exams: Assignments will be accepted up to three days past the due date at a penalty of 10 points per day late. No late assignments will be accepted beyond three days past the due date and will be scored with a zero. If you have extenuating circumstances that make you unable to submit course assignments by the due date, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

No make-up dates will be offered on the final exam.

Attendance Policy: You are expected to attend every class session scheduled. I will excuse an absence for one of the following reasons: A documented illness that prevents the student from attending, a death (documented with an obituary or service program) in the immediate family or first line of relatives (aunts, uncles, first cousins), or a university-sponsored activity or academic conference.

Excused absences will be capped at five for the semester. Attendance is part of the “Attendance and Participation” assignment group. You can expect a 5-point deduction in your grade for this assignment group for each unexcused absence or total absences beyond five.

Graded Course Requirements Information:

Graded assignments for this course are as follows, with the weighted total for that group in parentheses:

Attendance and Participation (15%): This is to accurately measure your involvement and contribution to this course, as well as a way to help me determine whether you are keeping pace with assigned readings. Attendance is expected for each class session; class participation credit can be earned in one of two ways:

1. Actively contribute discussion, respectful debate, and/or illustrative experiences in class on the topic of the day;

OR

2. Post at least three (3) fully developed and relevant comments, discussion points, or responses on the course’s weekly Discussion Board sections on Canvas. These posts need to be far more than whether you agree or disagree with someone about something; explain why or offer a vivid description of your own experiences with the topic at hand. Off-topic posts will not be counted for participation credit. **Note: The discussion boards are for use by students enrolled in this course only and are not for any kind of off-topic debate or promotion of goods or services. Abuse or misuse of the discussion boards, or posting of content that violates university academic conduct standards is subject to disciplinary action.**

Discussion boards for each week will open at 8 a.m. each Saturday and close the following Friday night at 11:59 p.m. (Covers SLOs 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b)

Quizzes (15%): There will be 12 weekly online quizzes via Canvas starting Jan. 24 and ending April 22 (not including spring break week). Each of these quizzes will contain questions taken from the assigned readings and the major points and concepts from those readings. The quizzes are open-book, so you may use the textbook or notes you have made to answer each question. Late quiz submissions will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangement with me due to an emergency, illness, or unforeseen circumstance. (Covers SLOs 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, and 3b)

Course Activities (20%): About every two weeks, you'll be assigned a different course activity connected to the topic(s) we've covered in that time. These are simple assignments that are intended to help you connect with the material we're covering each week. Examples include constructing a "best-liked" list of a given type of media content, an online scavenger hunt of interesting facts, or a journal of media content you've consumed on a given day. Each of these course activities will be graded simply on completeness and timely submission; the only reason points would be deducted is for an incomplete submission (for instance, if I asked for five examples of a type of media content and the submission contains only three or four). Submission of each course activity will be via Canvas. (Covers SLOs 3a and 3b)

Response writings (25%): There will be four (4) short response writing assignments – essentially one per month - on a topic covered during that period. I will provide you with prompt options for your paper. Your submission should be between 500-750 words (approximately 1-2 double-spaced pages). I'll return each submission with a brief comment and grade. (Covers SLOs 1a, 1b, 1c, and 2a)

What I'm looking for in the response writings: Essentially, I want each of your response writings to be clearly connected to the prompt I will provide each week on the respective submission link. Each prompt will be connected to something from the assigned readings. You are welcome to draw from personal experience and memory in writing your response paper; comparison and contrast of examples or ideas is also a great way to knock out about 400 words of writing. Beyond that, I'd like your response writing to be well-organized along points, much like any type of essay or composition writing you would be assigned in other courses. Content and organization will account for 80% of your grade on the writing assignment, with writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar) accounting for the other 20%. I don't expect perfection each week in grammar and punctuation, but glaring mistakes like incorrect subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments or incomplete sentences, and misspelled words (hint: use your spellcheck function on your writing before submitting) will result in points lost from the overall grade.

Final Exam (25%): The questions on the final exam will be a mix of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. For short answer questions, I may ask you to list concepts or examples of something indicated in the question, or I may ask you to identify a person and briefly describe his/her importance or contributions within media. (Covers all SLOs)

Calendar of Topics, Readings, and Due Dates

Unit 1: Our Mediated World				
<i>Week #</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Class Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
Week 1	M 1/10	Introductions, your earliest media memories and mine	None	None
	W 1/12	More introductions and syllabus overview	Course syllabus	None
	F 1/14	Media overload?	TBA	None
Week 2	M 1/17	No class meeting – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day		
	W 1/19	Media, Metaphors, and Messages	Postman, Ch. 1 and 2	None
	F 1/21	The rise and fall of the printed word	Postman, Ch. 3-5	Online discussion posts
Week 3	M 1/24	The Electronic Effect	Postman, Ch. 6 and 7	Activity 1; Last day to withdraw with “W”
	W 1/26	Shows and Images	Postman, Ch. 8 and 9	None
	F 1/28	Everything as Entertainment	Postman, Ch. 10 and 11	Quiz 1; online discussion posts
Week 4	M 1/31	Media and Culture	Lule, Ch. 1	None
	W 2/2	Media and Culture (cont.)	Lule, Ch. 1	Response writing 1
	F 2/4	Media Effects	Lule, Ch. 2	Quiz 2; online discussion posts
Week 5	M 2/7	Media Effects (cont.)	Lule, Ch. 2	Activity 2
	W 2/9	Books: The first mass medium	Lule, Ch. 3	None
	F 2/11	E-publishing	Lule, Ch. 3	Quiz 3; online discussion posts
Week 6	M 2/14	Newspapers and print journalism	Lule, Ch. 4	None
	W 2/16	Electronic journalism	Lule, Ch. 4	None
	F 2/18	Magazines	Lule, Ch. 5	Quiz 4; online discussion posts
Week 7	M 2/21	Magazines (cont.)	Lule, Ch. 5	None
	W 2/23	Music	Lule, Ch. 6	Activity 3
	F 2/25	Music (cont.)	Lule, Ch. 6	Quiz 5; online discussion posts

Week 8	M 2/28	Radio: Golden age and mid-century rebirth	Lule, Ch. 7	None
	W 3/2	Radio: Digital transition and tribulations	Lule, Ch. 7	Response writing 2
	F 3/4	The future of audio	TBA	Quiz 6; online discussion posts
3/7-3/11: Spring break (no class meetings)				
Week 9	M 3/14	History of the movie industry	Lule, Ch. 8	None
	W 3/16	VHS, DVD, and Streaming	Lule, Ch. 8	None
	F 3/18	Television's ascent	Lule, Ch. 9	Quiz 7; online discussion posts
Week 10	M 3/14	TV anytime and anywhere: Timeshifting and mobility	Lule, Ch. 9	Activity 4
	W 3/16	Game On!: The rise of electronic and video games	Lule, Ch. 10	None
	F 3/18	Special: Dr. Britt's video game time machine	None	Quiz 8; online discussion posts
Week 11	M 3/21	Connected: The internet as social and cultural force	Lule, Ch. 11	None
	W 3/23	Social media	Lule, Ch. 11	None
	F 3/25	Advertising and Public Relations	Lule, Ch. 12	Quiz 9; online discussion posts
Week 12	M 3/28	Economic issues in mass media	Lule, Ch. 13	Activity 5; Last day to drop course
	W 3/30	Media globalization	Lule, Ch. 13	Response writing 3
	F 4/1	Introduction to Media Ethics	Lule, Ch. 14	Quiz 10; online discussion posts
Week 13	M 4/4	Digital media and ethics	Lule, Ch. 14	None
	W 4/6	Media and government	Lule, Ch. 15	None
	F 4/8	Introduction to Media Law and Copyright	Lule, Ch. 15	Quiz 11; online discussion posts
Week 14	M 4/11	Tablets and smartphones	Lule, Ch. 16	None
	W 4/13	New delivery methods	Lule, Ch. 16	Activity 6

	F 4/15	Privacy issues in the digital age	Lule, Ch. 16	Quiz 12; online discussion posts
Week 15	M 4/18	More changes ahead?	TBA	None
	W 4/20	Final exam review, Part 1	None	Response writing 4
	F 4/22	Final exam review, Part 2	None	None
Final	Friday, April 29, 12:30-2:30 p.m., CAS 104			