

MCOM 2307: MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description: This course, covering major forms of mass media—film, radio, television, new media—will instruct students on how to take a critical approach to media and interpret the interplay of media, culture, and society.

A primary program student learning objective of MCOM 2307 is that upon successful completion of MCOM 2307, students should be able to describe the role that history, culture, and other factors play in mass media in shaping our human relations and communication with diverse others.

Primary learning objectives of MCOM 2307 as part of the Human Expression component of the UT Tyler core is that it would help to promote critical thinking, personal responsibility, social responsibility, and teamwork.

Toward accomplishing these student learning objectives, upon completion of MCOM

1. Demonstrate personal responsibility in the use of mass media
2. Describe how media consumption influences human relations and communication with diverse others
3. Apply critical thinking skills in reflecting on mass media in society
4. Identify breakdowns in the communication processes in mass media
5. Identify historical and cultural contexts of mass media
6. Identify production values used in mass mediated messages
7. Recognize the role that a given medium plays in shaping perceptions

Graded Assignments and Weight Value

Chapter Entries	20%
Communication Process Assignment	10%
Media Remake Assignment	20%
Music Production Values Assignment	20%
Technological Innovation Group Assignm	20%
Media Log and Reflection Essay	10%
Total	100%

Grading

For each graded assignment, students will receive an A, B, C, D, or F, corresponding with a number value. For example, an A carries a numeric value of 4, a B is worth 3, C is worth 2, D is worth 1, and F is worth 0. To calculate your grade, multiply 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 that corresponds with your letter grade by the percentage value (above) of a given exercise. For example, if you receive a B for the Chapter Entries, you would multiply 3—which corresponds with a B—by 20% and you would get a .60 for that

assignment. To calculate your final grade, you would add each score and divide by 100. Final grades will be awarded as follows:

Numeric Value of Grades:

A = 4	D = 1
B = 3	F = 0
C = 2	

If your grade falls between two numbers (e.g., between a 3 and a 2), you will receive the grade corresponding with the lower number (in this case, a C, corresponding with 2) since technically you will not have achieved a B (a 3.0)

Required Readings:

- Selected chapters from Art Silverplatt, *Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages* (available on Canvas site)
- Postman, N. (1985/1986). *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. New York: Penguin Books

Assignment Policy

1. Assignments do have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. You will need to submit each assignment via Canvas before the due time.
2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor’s discretion with fair notice to students.
3. Late work will not be accepted.
4. Students must complete all assignments to pass the course. This does not mean that merely completing all assignments guarantees the student will pass the course.
5. Spelling, grammar, and neatness will factor into your grade for each assignment.

Expectations: We all approach courses with certain expectations. I expect you to:

1. Work hard – learning requires constant reading, researching, thinking, discussing, and working with your classmates and me. Everyone has something important to contribute. My job is to provide orienting material, to prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge, and to offer feedback. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
2. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed.
3. Display Classroom Courtesies. All communications among yourselves and with me should:
 - a. Refrain from ad hominem comments (personal insults)
 - b. Be on-topic (Talk, debate, ask questions, and challenge yourselves and each other, but stay on topic).
 - c. Be honest
 - d. Be the result of thoughtful consideration (not arising from impulse)
4. Regarding emails to me and from me:
 - a. All emails should follow proper email etiquette:
 - i. They should begin by addressing me (e.g., “Hi, Dr. Cali” or “Dear Dr. Cali” or “Hello, Professor” or “Good morning,” etc. I won’t respond to emails that lack such a salutation.

- ii. They should be courteous (see above)
 - b. I will respond to your emails during weekdays within 24 hours (barring extenuating circumstances)
5. I use Canvas and email to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. I expect you to check both daily and stay aware of what is coming up.
6. Communicate - If you have a problem with an aspect of the course throughout the semester (e.g., getting an assignment in on time, needing to be absent from a class, getting your book, checking out equipment, or anything I'm doing as a professor), talk to me about it.
 - a. I will be available for meetings during office hours and by appointment.
 - b. You may correspond via email or, if necessary or helpful, we can arrange Zoom meetings.
7. Hold me to the same standards and expectations that I hold you to.

Academic Honesty Policy: Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker’s or writer’s indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action. **PLAIGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Regarding Late Work: I DO NOT ACCEPT UNEXCUSED LATE WORK. Since one of the primary objectives expressed in the University’s mission statement is that students “will act with honesty and integrity,” I will enforce rigorous standards of honesty and personal responsibility. Work is considered late if work is not presented on the date assigned. Unexcused work receives a “0.” Any exceptions to this policy—which would be very rare!—would be at my discretion; in this case, the student:

- must submit to me a written petition requesting that his/her absence be excused
- must show official documentation verifying the basis for absence
- must be prepared to present the missed work at the very first opportunity I make available after the student’s return
- must provide appropriate documentation that his/her failure to complete the assignment on the assigned date was unavoidable
- may be penalized for failure to present work as assigned.

If you know in advance that you will not be able to be present on a particular date on which work has been assigned, please let me know well in advance of the due date for the work. Likewise, if you experience COVID-related hardships, please let me know.

Audio/Video Recording of class lectures is prohibited without prior approval. However, on occasion the instructor may arrange recording for instructional purposes.

Oral and Written Work: Assignments may have an oral and/or written components. Especially since this is a communication class, grading of oral and written work will consider quality and thoroughness of analysis, style, adherence to format, and proper mechanics (grammar, spelling, organization, clarity, cohesiveness). All work submitted to me should be typed and double-spaced.

The quality of both your written and oral work will figure into your grade for the assignment.

Reading Assignments: In class lectures, I will ordinarily highlight portions—not the entirety—of the chapters assigned in your readings. However, you are responsible for the entire contents of all chapters and may be tested on any portions of those readings.

“Outside” Participation: Because much of what this course teaches is learned in personal reflection and application, some activities or preparation for in-class activities take place outside of class.

University Policies and Resources

UT Tyler Honor Code

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free

University All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quit lines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract. The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid State-Mandated

Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities Revised 05/19

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA

Statement It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic

Conduct Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- copying from another student's test paper;
- using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially. ii. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit. iii. "Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty. iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

Important Covid-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories

Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as specified

by [Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations](#). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

Recording of Class Sessions

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

UT Tyler Resources for Students

- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

Class Schedule (Tentative)

January 11	"Getting Started" tutorial Syllabus; Introduction to Ourselves	Video Introductions due Sun., 1/17 by 11:59 p.m.
January 18	Chapter 1: Introduction to Media Literacy Approach Assignment: Media Log	Respond to Ch. 1 by Sun., 1/24 by 11:59 p.m. Media Log due by Sun., 1/24
January 25	Chapter 2: Mass Media Process <i>Assignment: Communication Breakdown</i>	Submit assignment by Sunday, 1/31 by 11:59 pm
February 1	Communication Breakdown Presentations ; Chapter 3: The Historical Context on Mass Media	Respond to Ch. 3 by Sun., 2/7 by 11:59 p.m.
February 8	Chapter 4: The Influence of Cultural Context on Mass Media <i>Assignment: Historical-Cultural Remake</i>	Respond to Ch. 4 by Sun., 2/14 by 11:59 p.m.
February 15	Historical-Cultural Remake Presentations	
February 22	Chapter 5: The Influence of Structure on Mass Media	Respond to Ch. 5 by Sun., 2/28 by 11:59 p.m.
March 8 – 13	SPRING BREAK	
March 15	Chapter 6: The Role of Framework on Mass Media	Respond to Ch. 6 by Sun., 3/7 by 11:59 p.m.
March 22	Chapter 7: The Role of Production Values on Mass Media <i>Assignment: MTV Analysis</i>	Respond to Ch. 7 by Sun., 3/14 by 11:59 p.m.
March 29	MTV Analysis Presentations	MTV Analysis due by Sun., 3/21 by 11:59 p.m.
April 5	Technological Innovation	Read articles posted in Canvas
April 12	Neil Postman, <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i>	Respond to Postman's AOTD by 4/4 by 11:50 p.m.
April 19	<i>Group Assignment on Technological Innovation</i>	Group Assignment on Techno due FRI, 4/30 by 11:59 p.m.
April 26	Group Presentations on Technological Innovation	