

Syllabus
MCOM 3390.001 – Mass Communication Theory
Fall 2019 – M/W/F 10:10 - 11:05 a.m.

Instructor: Anita Brown

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Office Hours: T/Th 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., and by appointment

Course Description: An overview of mass communication theories emphasizing their development and application in practicum and research. Theories will include those concerning effects, audience psychology and sociological aspects of mass media.

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

1. Competency: Writing and Storytelling

- a. Write correctly and clearly using the formats and compelling storytelling styles appropriate for the audiences and purposes for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
 - i. Develop competence in library research for literature specific to mass communication theory and research.
 - ii. Identify the epistemological, ontological, and axiological placement of the various mass communication theories.

2. Competency: Analysis and Systematic Inquiry

- a. 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.
 1. Determine their own positions concerning media influence and management, and review practical applications of those theories.
 2. Describe the ideas that influence the practice and development of communication systems (i.e., print, radio, television, internet, etc.)
 - ii. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism.
 1. Describe the relationship between theory and ethics and practice.

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.

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- i. Understand a broad range of approaches to mass communication theory and models.

Evaluation and Grade Calculation -

Attendance/participation	10%
In-Class Theory Activities	15%
Journals	20%
Tests (2)	20%
Group Theory Presentation	10%
Final Paper (3 parts)	25%
1. Pitch	
2. Outline	
3. Final	

Total	100%
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Percent	Letter Grade
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% and below	F

Course Requirements

A. Required Readings:

1. Baran, S. & Davis, D. (2013), Mass Communication Theory
2. Additional readings assigned in class

Assignment Policy

1. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, links, and reading assignments.
2. Assignments do have deadlines and these deadlines need to be met. You will need to submit each assignment before the due date and time.
3. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
4. No make-up tests or quizzes will be allowed after tests close on Canvas.

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5. 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.
6. Spelling, grammar, and neatness count.
7. Multiple pages must be stapled, or paper clipped together. It is your responsibility to see this is accomplished.
8. All assignments must be submitted using the format required for the assignment. Each assignment submission will include requirements for submission/formatting. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed and submitted via Canvas.
9. For many assignments, not all, the submission folder will stay open for a week after the due date. Any assignments turned in after the due date will receive a point per day deduction. Specific point values that will be deducted each day can be found on the assignment overviews on Canvas.
10. Assignments will be discussed in class, students will be given a course schedule, Canvas includes a syllabus function that outlines upcoming due dates, due dates can be seen listed on each assignment under the assignment tab in Canvas, and each meeting day will include a “daily overview module” in Canvas that will cover anything that is due that day. There are SEVERAL ways to determine what is coming up due in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of what is coming up due and to stay on top of your assignments.

Assignment Overview:

1. **Theory Activities:** Throughout the semester there will be a variety of in-class and at-home activities assigned to students. The goal of the theory activities is to help build connections to and increase understanding of the role of theory in the world. To receive points for in-class activities, you must be in class the day that the activity is completed. There will be no make-up assignments, unless your absence falls into one of the exceptions listed in the attendance policy. Out-of-class assignments must be completed on or before each due date listed. The date of each activity is listed in the schedule.
2. **Journals:** Throughout the semester, you will be required to write journals covering a variety of topics. Generally, the journal topics will follow the readings required for the week. The purpose of the journal assignments is to help you examine topics deeper and to explore your own thoughts about the material. The requirements and writing prompts for each journal can be found on the assignment submission page. Note: Simply meeting the requirements does not guarantee that full points will be rewarded for the assignment.
3. **Tests:** There will be two tests that you are required to take throughout the course of the semester (midterm and final). For each test, you will have a set number of days to take the test and can use your notes/reading materials/PowerPoint material. The purpose of the tests is to have you revisit the material, so please do so while you take the test. The test format for both are short answer and essay questions that ask you to use real-world

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examples and share your own understanding of the material. The tests should not be started mere hours before it is due – they take time. Make sure you use your time wisely to complete the tests before the due time and day. Make-up tests or extensions beyond the due date will not be permitted, unless there are extreme circumstances surrounding the reason for missing the deadline.

4. **Theory Presentation:** A major assignment this semester will be a group presentation over an assigned theory. Working as a group, you will research the theory and then give a presentation wherein you “teach” the theory to the class. The purpose of this is to examine some of the more prominent theories on a deeper level and allow students to touch on information an additional time outside of lectures. You will be able to select your group, but theories will be assigned by me. Requirements and due dates for this project can be found under the “Important Documents” module on Canvas.
5. **Major Paper:** You will have a major paper due at the end of the semester that combines academic research and critical thinking. The purpose of this paper is to help students gain a deeper perspective of the role of mass communication theory in the real world, and to allow students to participate in a construction of knowledge. There will be two parts that will be required to be completed throughout the semester (pitch, outline and annotated bib, and the final paper). The requirements and due dates for each part can be found under the “Important Documents” module on Canvas and in the assignment submission. The full project is worth 150 points, with the point breakdown being outlined as follows:
 - i. Point breakdown:
 1. Paper Pitch – 15 points
 2. Outline and Annotated Bibliography - 35 points
 3. Final product – 100 points
6. **Extra Credit Opportunities:** Throughout the semester there will be opportunities to receive extra credit. These opportunities should be viewed as something to further your knowledge and not as a way to skip assignments. The point values given for extra credit assignments are not high enough to replace regular assignments. Points received for extra credit will go into your attendance/participation grade. Extra credit opportunities include:
 - i. Attending the Student Success Career Conference on September 5. You can receive 10 points per session attended. To receive the full points, you must write minimum of 250 words about each session you attend. Guidelines for paragraphs can be found in the assignment submission.
 - ii. Bring a tangible and symbolic item for the class to help them remember the theory that you and your group presented over. More information will be provided when presentations are discussed in more detail.

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

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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 present new information and prepare a climate in which you can contribute your own special knowledge. Your job is to be prepared to contribute.
2. Participate – you must be an active part of the course to succeed. You will also have to give effort outside of class.
3. Display Classroom Courtesies
4. Talk, debate, ask questions, and challenge yourselves and each other, but stay on topic.
5. Limit use of cellphones, tablets, or other device use during class. I understand emergencies and the need to take a call or text. If this must happen, be discreet, don't disturb others, do not let it get in the way of your learning, and DO NOT abuse this.
6. 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.
7. Communicate - If you have a problem with anything throughout the semester... 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.
8. Hold me to the same standards and expectations that I hold you to.

Attendance and Tardiness Policy: Critique and lectures are a vital part to the learning process in this course; therefore, students are expected to attend class. If you do not attend class, you cannot participate in group discussions, in-class assignments, and critiques. Overall, 15% of your final grade comes from in-class assignments and attendance. Your attendance grade starts at 100. Each student is allowed 2 absences. After the second absence, your attendance grade will be lowered by 3 points each day you are not present. Exceptions to the attendance policy include illness supported by a doctor's note, a school sponsored event that the student has given prior notice for, and religious observances. Other exceptions will be handled on a case by case basis and must be discussed with me.

See the current UT Tyler catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second course meeting.

Students more than 15 minutes late may be considered absent. Additionally, if you arrive after I have taken attendance, it is your responsibility to ask me to add you to the attendance list. If you don't, you may receive an absence for the day.

If a student must be absent the day an exam/presentation is scheduled, he/she must notify the instructor before class time. No make-ups will be allowed if the instructor is not given a legitimate excuse before the time of the exam or presentation.

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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.**

Course Withdrawal: The last date to withdraw from classes without penalty is **November 4, 2019.**

University Policies

A. UT Tyler Honor Code:

1. 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>

B. Campus Carry:

1. 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>

C. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:

1. 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, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

D. 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

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E. Student Standards of Academic Conduct

1. 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.
 - a) "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:
 - (1) copying from another student's test paper;
 - (2) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
 - (3) failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
 - (4) 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;
 - (5) using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
 - (6) collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
 - (7) discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
 - (8) 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;

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- (9) substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
 - (10) 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;
 - (11) falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
 - (12) 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
 - (13) 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.
- b) “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.
 - c) “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.
 - d) All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.
- F. The **U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: BUS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

G. Disability/Accessibility Services:

1. 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,

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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.

2. 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.

H. Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

1. 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. (For Fall, the Census Date is Sept. 9th.) 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.
2. 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.
3. The Census Date (Sept. 9th) is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:
 - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
 - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
 - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
 - d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment

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- e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

I. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

1. 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).
2. 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.

J. Student Absence due to Religious Observance:

1. 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.

K. Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:

1. 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.

L. Social Security and FERPA Statement:

1. 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.

M. Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

1. 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.

N. UT Tyler Resources for Students:

1. UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu

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2. UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
3. 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.
4. UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)