

MCOM 2307: MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

Instructor: Dr. Dennis D. Cali

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Office: CAS 227

Online Office Hours: Tuesday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (notify ahead) 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 mass media, culture, and society.

A primary Mass Communication Degree 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 2307, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate personal responsibility in the use of mass media
2. Describe how media shape perceptions, human relations, culture, and communication
3. Apply critical thinking skills in reflecting on mass media in society
4. Identify breakdowns in the communication processes in mass media

Graded Assignments and Weight Value

Media Log	10%
Communication Process Assignment	10%
Read and Respond Reports	30%
Laws of Media (“Tetrad” Analysis)	10%
<i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> Report	10%
Technological Innovation in the Professions Group Report	20%
Final Exam (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 (not according to default Canvas calculations):

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: All required readings and video presentations will be provided in Canvas.

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)
 - c. You should show this same courtesy in your emails to your classmates.
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 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.**

The Use of Artificial Intelligence:

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

In this course, any use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT must be appropriately acknowledged and cited, following the guidelines established by the APA/MLA/Chicago Style Guide, including the specific version of the tool used. The submitted work should include the exact prompt you used to generate the content and the AI's complete response as an appendix. Because AI-generated content is not necessarily accurate or appropriate, you must assess the validity and applicability of any submitted AI output. You will not earn full credit if inaccurate, invalid, or inappropriate information is found in your work. [APA Style Citation Information](#) [MLA Style Citation Information](#) [Chicago Style Citation Information](#).

Unless otherwise indicated, you are free to use AI in work submitted. However, if in the instructor's assessment, AI is used but not acknowledged, you will not receive credit for the assignment.

See these guidelines on citing the use of ChatGPT (or any other chatbot):

<https://www.libcognizance.com/2025/05/how-to-cite-chatgpt-in-apa-mla-and.html>

Note: You must include the prompt that you used in generating the response. You may include it in the body of the text (preferably) or in the References/Works Cited list.

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.

To allow for the inevitable technical difficulties due to electricity outages, internet connectivity, computer crashes, space/size limitations as well as personal difficulties that arise and interfere with class responsibilities, **I URGE YOU TO SUBMIT WORK WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE ASSIGNED DATE AND TIME** (e.g., if an assignment is due on Sunday at 11:59, you should not wait until Sunday at 11:00 p.m. to submit your work; get it in a day or two before-hand).

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

Guide to Uploading Video in Canvas Studio:

Here is a guide for students on how to turn in a Canvas Studio video to an assignment - <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Studio/How-do-I-submit-Canvas-Studio-media-as-a-File-Upload-assignment/ta-p/1677>

Guide on how to upload videos to Studio - <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Studio/How-do-I-upload-media-files-in-my-Canvas-Studio-account/ta-p/1705>

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: You are responsible for reading materials posted on Canvas. Although the weekly assignments ask you generally to update only one main idea of the chapter, you should read the entire contents.

“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.

Other Information regarding University Policies and Information is found in the Syllabus Module within Canvas.

Class Schedule (Tentative)

January 12	Overview of Class and Assignments; "Getting Started" tutorial Syllabus; Introduction to Ourselves; Assignment: <i>Read Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> (posted in Canvas)	Video Introductions due Sun. Jan. 18 by 11:59 p.m. <i>Read Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> by Sunday, Nov. 17
January 19	Introduction to Media Ecology Approach <i>Assignment: Media Log</i>	Media Log due by Thur., January 29 by 11:59 p.m.
January 26	Mass Media Process Communication Process MEDIA LOGS DUE SEPTEMBER 11 <i>Assignment: Communication Breakdown</i>	Submit assignment by Sunday, February 1 by 11:59 p.m.
February 2	Four Media Cultural Epochs <i>Assignments:</i> 1. <i>Watch video lectures on the Four Media Epochs</i> 2. <i>Review Assignment on Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> 3. <i>Submit Discussion post</i>	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, February 8 by 11:59 p.m.
February 9	<i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> Discussion	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, February 15 by 11:59 p.m.
February 16	Media in Ancient Empires	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, February 22 by 11:59 p.m.
February 23	Writing	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, March 1 by 11:59 p.m.
March 2	Print	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, March 8 by 11:59 p.m.
March 9-13	SPRING BREAK	
March 16	Television	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, March 22 by 11:59 p.m.
March 23	Social Media	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, March 29 by 11:59 p.m.
March 30	Artificial Intelligence	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, April 5 by 11:59 p.m.
April 6	Tetrad Presentations; <i>Assignment: Technological Innovation in the Professions</i>	Submit Discussion Post by Sunday, April 12 by 11:59 p.m.
April 13	Workshop: Group Presentations on Technological Innovation	
April 20	Group Presentations on Technological Innovation Final Exam (Reflective Essay)	