MCOM 2307 – Mass Media & Society
Fall 2014 Syllabus

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: “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.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: In all of the Human Expression cores courses, students are expected to work on some basic competencies: communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and personal responsibility. In order to reach these objectives, by the end of this class you should be able to:

1. Understand the variety of ethical and value systems and be able to use this understanding in personal and professional decision-making.
2. Identify influences on society from mass media.
3. Recognize trends in mass media processes, products and personality.
4. Understand national and global views of mass media.
5. Identify and understand influences upon the mass media.
6. Differentiate between and among different schools of thought about and within the various mass media.
7. Think critically about mass media.

REQUIRED READING:
Select reading assigned in class.

RECOMMENDED MEDIA CONSUMPTION:
Immerse yourself in mass media to get the most out of this class. Read newspapers and magazines daily in print and online. Watch news programs regularly. Examine press releases and advertising campaigns. Look at You Tube, Facebook, and other social media in the context of this class. Bring in clips and articles and ideas to class for discussion.

Here are some suggested things to read:

Magazines: The Economist, Time, Atlantic Monthly, National Geographic
Viewings: PBS Newshour – online and on the air; The Daily Show with John Stewart; CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360; local television stations
Listening: Local stations, NPR stations streamed
Online: Politico.com, bbc.com, TexasTribune.org, Probulica.org, Youtube.com, Hulu.com, Poynter.org
Resources: www.grammarly.com, newsroom101.net
In addition to the above, the following books will make you better writers:


**THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MY CLASS:**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. I treat our class like a business. We’re partners, and I expect you to show up as you expect me to show up. I don’t need excuses when you are absent, unless you have a doctor’s note or other type of verification. Just let me know. However, our attendance together is what makes this class work. So, if you have more than six (6) absences, your final grade will drop by 10 percent. More than nine (9) absences may result in a 20 percent drop.

- Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance or university-related activities should inform the instructor by the second class meeting.
- You are responsible for turning in all assignments by deadline even though you may be absent. You are also responsible for lecture materials, announcements and assignments made during any absence.
- 10 minutes late or leaving early may be considered absent.
- No make-up tests will be allowed unless you must be absent on the day of an in-class exam and have notified the instructor at least three (3) days in advance. Any make-up exam must be taken before the exam. No make-up tests allowed for online exams or quizzes.
- Students late to in-class exams on test days may not be allowed to take the exam if students have already completed the exam and left the room.

**Assignment Policy:**
- Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the start of each class, printed and stapled. Late assignments will be penalized by one letter grade per day late (i.e., if it is one day late, you lose 10 percent off the top.)
- Assignments must be typed using the format for the assignment.
- Assignments and due dates may change at the instructor’s discretion with fair notice.
- Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. This does not mean, however, that merely completing all assignments guarantees a passing grade.
- All assignments must include student name, date, assignment name, course name and word count.

**Classroom Courtesies:**
- Cell phones are a part of our lives. They are a part of our communication. Be courteous when using yours in class or I will have to create a silly rule.
- No eating unless there is enough for everyone. Beverages (non-alcoholic) are allowed. Bottles, cans and glasses are expected to depart with you.
- Laptop and tablet use is for note-taking and class-related research. Other uses will be noted and these devices can be restricted in class.
- Talk, debate, ask questions, and challenge, but stay on topic.

**Access to Technology:**
- I use Blackboard to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback, and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates. Check Blackboard regularly.
Academic Honesty:
- Practice academic integrity and accept responsibility for your actions.
- Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others’ work (including test and paper “banks”), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor.
- Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
- PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. This 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. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

GRADING: Here what you’ll be graded on: There are 800 points possible.
- Class attendance (100). You are expected to be at all classes. You get 100 points for that. Any class you don’t make, you subtract 3 points. You are still subject to University Policies regarding attendance. Excessive absences will not be tolerated in this class or university. Please understand and adhere to the UT-Tyler attendance policy.
- Media Log (50). You will spend a week detailing your mass media consumption.
- Class presentation (100). You and your group will give a presentation about publishing a book. You will work together as a group, and you will each earn up to 100 points. Your group for this will be peer reviewed and reviewed by the instructor.
- Quizzes (100 points). There will be a varied number of quizzes throughout the semester based on the readings.
- Media/Life Paper (100 points). You will write a short paper detailing whether you believe the media reflect life or life reflects media – with examples and evidence.
- Term Paper (150). You will pick a mass communication job and write extensively about the history, function, role and purpose of the particular job. Your grade will be divided into three parts – outline (25); first draft (25); final draft (100).
- Midterm Exam (100 points).
- Final Exam (100 points).
- Extra Credit: You will have the opportunity to earn extra credit throughout the semester.

Grades are based on the overall points available for you to earn:

Grading Rubrics: Most assignments will have a basic rubric to help guide you in completing the assignment. However, the following apply to all assignments:
- Clean copy is important. Your grade for each assignment will be reduced depending on how many errors you have. 5-10 errors (grade drops by 10 percent); 11-15 (grade drops by 20 percent); 16 or more (grade drops by 30 percent).
- Facts are important. Your grade for each assignment will be reduced depending on how many errors of fact you have. One error (grade drops by 20 percent); 2-3 errors (grade drops by 30 percent). Three or more errors result in a zero for the assignment.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class, and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
RESOURCES: You need to take advantage of the different resources available to you at UT-Tyler:

Writing Center: Take advantage of writing help. 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.

Disability Services: In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns, please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

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/StudentRightsandResponsibilities.html.

Grade Replacement: 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 that students need to be aware of. 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 Schedule of Classes for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

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 Rightps 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.