

COMM 305-03: Introduction to Mass Communication (Fall, 2014)

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30 AM – 10:45 PM, DA (Davison) 103

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Office hours: M/W 10:00 – 11:30 PM, and by appointment.

Course Description

COMM 305 is a survey course of the major functions, strategies, rights and responsibilities of various mass media that will provide you with the necessary critical tools to reflect upon, understand, and challenge the power exerted by the mass media. It fits with the mission of the University of Louisville's Department of Communication by assisting students in developing specific competencies related to communication. This course will prepare students to become more critical media consumers. The prerequisite to this course is COMM 201.

Course Goals

Through description, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of historical and contemporary trends, you will develop a deeper understanding of the economic, social, and cultural functions and responsibilities of the mass media in democratic society. The specific goals are:

- To become informed and critical users of mass media
- To develop an understanding of the historical evolution of each medium from books to newspapers to radio to television to the internet
- To understand the theoretical foundations of mass communication research
- To develop and nurture a cultural approach to the study of mass communication
- To understand how technology and economics have changed the formats and impacts of the mass media in contemporary societies

Required Text

Straubhaar/LaRose/Davenport, *Media Now : Understanding Media, Culture, and Technology*, 8th Edition, Cengage Learning (***Older Editions will work ONLY IF it is 2nd release of the 7th edition that came out in 2012 – it MUST have an independent video game chapter)

Course Requirements

Each student must take all four (4) scheduled exams to complete the course and to receive a course letter grade.

Exams

Four (4) exams comprised of T/F and multiple choices will be given from assigned readings and lectures.

Points Distribution

Exams	400 points total
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Exam 4	100 points
Attendance/Participation	20 points
Total	420 points

Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-66%	D- = 60-62%
F = below 59%		

Attendance

Attendance is required for every class period.

If you miss more than THREE (3) classes without valid excuses, a penalty of -2 points will be applied to your “attendance/participation” scores for every unexcused absence from the 4th unexcused absence. In other words, from the 4th unexcused absence, you will lose TWO (2) points per each occurrence (thus, it is possible to earn negative points from the attendance/participation scores, which will be applied to your total score).

Valid excuses of an absence are 1) *participating in the university sanctioned events*, 2) a serious illness *that requires hospitalization*, 3) *death in the immediate family*, 4) *birth of a baby for whom you are a parent*, and 5) *religious holidays recognized by the university*. You must bring authenticated written proof of such incidences to the instructor on your first day back.

- In case of excused absence, you are still responsible for following up the material you miss.

Any form of off campus work and personal travel will NOT be considered as valid excuses.

Doctor’s appointment, court appearance, being in jail, a birth given by your siblings/relatives or friend will NOT be considered as valid excuses. For those occasions, you should utilize those three opportunities you can miss class with no valid excuses.

Tardiness

If you come to class late **for more than 10 minutes** from the starting time, you will be considered as being late. **Two (2) tardiness will be counted as one (1) absence.** MAKE SURE to come to class on time.

Class Participation

You are expected to come to class having read all assigned chapter(s) and ready to participate in discussions.

Make-up Policy

Missed exam or assignment **may not be made up unless the following conditions are met:** (1) the excuse is valid as explained above; (2) the excuse is made in advance (if applicable); and (3) the excuse is documented. Otherwise, you will not be able to make up.

Please take time to look at the exam schedule: if you cannot make it to the exam on the scheduled day, you must try making arrangement to take it *prior* to the scheduled day & time.

In a case involving death in the immediate family or illness requiring hospital care or a birth of a baby for whom you are a parent, a makeup exam will be granted *without prior notice*. Under such conditions, authenticated written documents must be provided to the instructor

Plagiarism/ Academic Dishonesty

Any student engage in plagiarism (i.e., presenting someone else's work as your own or without proper acknowledgement) or any other type of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating on an exam) will receive **a zero for that assignment**.

Special Needs

Students with special learning needs are encouraged to discuss accommodations with me early in the semester. Student may be asked to contact the Disability Resource Center at Stevenson Hall to determine academic accommodations.

Classroom Decorum:

1. During class, please respect the right of your fellow classmates. **Do not carry on conversation in class**, and turn off cell phones. **Also, avoid getting to class late, leaving early and getting in & out of class during the lecture as these are very disruptive.**
2. **No laptop or ANY electronic devices will be allowed in class, unless you have a special need that require the use of laptop or other devices to take a note.**
3. For your own protection, you are expected to keep a photocopy of all paperwork submitted to the instructor.

Last Day to Withdraw: Oct. 23, 2014 (Thurs)

All items in this syllabus are subject to change.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or for similar reasons.

Course Schedule (Fall, 2014)

Week	Dates	Lecture Note Topic #	Titles	Book Chapter(s)
1	Aug 26		Orientation/Course Introduction,	
1	Aug 28	Topic 1.	Changing Media	1
2	Sept 2	Topic 2.	Media Uses and Impacts (Theories and Effects of Mass Communication)	14
2	Sept 4	Topic 2.	Media Uses and Impacts (Theories and Effects of Mass Communication)	14
3	Sept 9	Topic 3.	Media Policy, Law, and Ethics	15 & 16
3	Sept 11	Topic 3.	Media Policy, Law, and Ethics	15 & 16
4	Sept 16		Exam 1 (Chapter 1, 14, 15 & 16)	
4	Sept 18	Topic 4.	Books	3
5	Sept 23	Topic 4.	Books	3
5	Sept 25	Topic 5.	Magazine	3
6	Sept 30	Topic 5.	Magazine	3
6	Oct 2	Topic 6.	Newspapers	4
7	<i>Oct 7</i>		<i>Mid-term Break</i>	
7	Oct 9	Topic 6.	Newspapers	4
8	Oct 14		Exam 2 (Chapter 3, & 4)	
8	Oct 16	Topic 7.	Radio & Recorded Music	6 & 5
9	Oct 21	Topic 7.	Radio & Recorded Music	6 & 5
9	Oct 23	Topic 8.	Film	7
10	Oct 28	Topic 8.	Film	7
<i>March 6th - Last Day to Withdraw</i>				
10	Oct 30	Topic 9.	Television, Cable, and Mobile Video	8
11	Nov 4	Topic 9.	Television, Cable, and Mobile Video	8
11	Nov 6		Exam 3 (Chapter 5, 6, 7 & 8)	
12	Nov 11	Topic 10.	Video Games	13
12	Nov 13	Topic 11.	The Internet and the World Wide Web	9
13	Nov 18	Topic 12.	Public Relations	10
13	Nov 20	Topic 12.	Public Relations	10
14	Nov 25	Topic 13.	Advertising	11
<i>14</i>	<i>Nov 27</i>		<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	
<i>15</i>	<i>Dec 2</i>	Topic 13	Advertising	11
15	Dec 4		Final Exam, (Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 13)	