

PROCESSES AND EFFECTS OF MASS MEDIA
COM 327 – 50; FALL 2017

Dr. Margaret D'Silva
Department of Communication
308C Strickler Hall
University of Louisville
Phone: 852-6976
margaret.dsilva@louisville.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Three (3) undergraduate credit hours. This course is designed to examine the role of mass media in society from the perspective of social scientific theory and research. You will also be introduced to cultural approaches to the study of mass media processes and effects. We will discuss the following media effects on individuals: physiological, cognitive, belief, attitudinal, affective and behavioral. Special attention will be given to effects of media on the public, variety of institutions, and on society. We will also analyze the influence of the internet on our lives.

COURSE READINGS:

Required: W. James Potter (2012). *Media Effects*. Santa Barbara, CA: Sage Publications.
ISBN: 9781412964692
Nicholas Carr (2011) *The Shallows: What the internet is doing to our brains* New York, NY:
W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN: 978-0-393-33975 pbk.

Readings: Articles will be assigned and made available to you.

OUTCOMES

When you successfully complete this course you will:

- * Know the major theories that inform the study of mass media processes and effects
- * Be able to apply some of these theories in class discussions
- * Know the research methods used to study mass media effects
- * Acquire the knowledge to become a critical consumer of mass media
- * Develop an understanding of the influence of the internet on your brain

CLASS FORMAT AND POLICIES:

This course schedule is subject to periodic revision. I will let you know the changes in advance.
The class will run on a Monday to Sunday schedule.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special learning needs are encouraged to discuss accommodations needs with me early in the semester. Student may be asked to contact the Disability Resource Center to determine academic accommodations (852-6938).

Plagiarism:

Any student caught cheating in any way will receive **a F for the semester**. Cheating includes but is not limited to handing in written work produced by someone else, collaborating excessively with another person and

claiming the work as your own, plagiarism, helping someone else cheat, etc. ***For a more specific description of plagiarism, consult Section 5-E of the undergraduate catalog. University of Louisville policies regarding plagiarism will be enforced.***

http://louisville.edu/undergradcatalog/ugcatalog/policies/jpb_revisions_v1/codes-of-student-conduct-rights-and-responsibilities.html

Title IX/Clery Act Notification

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain confidential support from the PEACC Program (852-2663), Counseling Center (852-6585), and Campus Health Services (852-6479). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students (852-5787) or University of Louisville Police (852-6111).

Disclosure to University faculty or instructors of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX officer.

For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide.

GRADING:

Exams: (60%) There will be 4 tests in the course (no final). Each test carries equal weight. The test must be completed by midnight, Sunday, of the assigned week. For example, Exam 1 will be available on Thursday of the assigned week and must be completed by 11:55 p.m. **Sunday of the assigned week.**

Discussion Board Post-Essays (25%): You will complete the assigned readings and make at least two posts. The first shall be a short meaningful reflective essay on the readings. The second post (24 hours apart from the first) shall be a thoughtful response to your classmates' reflective essay/essays.

Each post must be at least 100 words long (unless otherwise specified). Each essay (depending upon whether it is on the class readings or a response to your classmate) must include at least two of the following: (i) a brief description (a sentence or so) of what you understand is the main theme of the chapter or the post and your detailed reaction to it (ii) URL link of a video or news item or ad or article with a clear explanation of its relevance to the chapter or class; (iii) a personal experience/anecdote relevant to the reading/post.

I will monitor the discussions and participate if required; the discussions, however, are primarily a student operation. You are welcome to pose questions /rhetorical questions; however, these will not be considered part of this assignment. If the information in the posts is rudimentary or superficial, does not reflect an understanding of the reading, or completely off-topic, you may not receive all the points for this assignment.

If the essay meets the length, topic, meaningful content, and deadline requirements you get all the points!

The first graded discussion starts the first week of class.

Deadline: **Midnight, Sunday** of that week. **I will not open late posts.**

Research paper: (12+3%). You will complete a research paper approx. 4-5 pages long describing a media theory and examples illustrating that theory. You may use theories from Chapter 5 of the Potter book or concepts from the Shallows. The paper involves the application of a media theory. The paper shall include a 2 page description of one of the media theories or concepts and 2 or more examples illustrating the theory or concept both from the media (provide links to media source) and your own life. Please do not use a theory for which you cannot supply a media example or a personal experience.

3% points for submitting the draft paper to the Writing center and incorporating their feedback. More information on the virtual writing center is here: <http://louisville.edu/writingcenter/appointments-1/virtual-writing-center-faqs>

Paper Due Date

Your assignments are due on the assigned date. If you do not turn in your paper on time you will lose a letter grade for each day it is late. Any assignment that is more than three days late will not be accepted (i.e., a grade of zero will be assigned).

Grading Rubric

Introduction: _____ of 10 points

Description of theory: _____ of 30 points

The paper provides a clear and accurate description of the media theory. It reports literature that is relevant to the theory. Sufficient literature is used to describe the theory thoroughly (minimum three sources). The information comes from academic sources some of which are published research reports, books, book chapters, journal articles and ethnographies.

Examples of theory from media: _____ of 10 points

The paper uses at least one example from the media (provide link to url/media source to illustrate the theory. Describe the media story that you used as an example.

Examples of theory from personal experience: _____ of 10 points

Uses at least one example from your own personal life to illustrate the theory. Describe the experience that you used as an example.

Linking theory and example: _____ of 10 points

Provide a clear connection between the theory and the examples. Critique the theory. State the limitations of the theory. Perhaps the theory does not explain all aspects of your chosen example.

Conclusion: _____ of 10 point

Provide a concluding paragraph that is effective and summarizes the paper

Use of Sources: _____ of 15 points

In the paper, proper citations (according to APA) are given to support the statements you make. There is no evidence of plagiarizing others' ideas or categories. Page numbers are given against each direct quote; URL for new story

Reference page: _____ of 10 points. At the end of the paper, you give a list of sources, using APA style containing all of the references for the citations in the text of the paper. At least 3 sources are included.

Quality: _____ of 15 points

Ideas are expressed in complete sentences, correct punctuation, no grammatical errors, typos, and proper spelling. Your paper is 4-5 pages, double spaced, and typed in a regular, 12-point font. Overall quality of the paper.

Total: _____ of 120 points (12%)

Grading Scale: A+=97-100%;A=93-96%;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=<60%.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to revision)

<u>Week 1</u> Aug 21-27 Aug 25	Introduction; Potter: Chapter 1 <i>Last day to add/drop</i>
<u>Week 2</u> Aug 28-Sep 3	Potter: Chapters 2 & 3;
Sept 4	Labor day
<u>Week 3</u> Sep 4-10	Potter: Chapter 4 & 5
<u>Week 4</u> Sep 11- 17	<i>Exam 1 [Chapters 1 to 5]</i> Potter: Chapter 6 & 7
Sep 14	<i>Last day to apply for degree</i>
<u>Week 5</u> Sep 18-24	Potter: Chapters 8 & 9
<u>Week 6</u> Sep 25-Oct 1	Potter: Chapter 10 & 11 <i>Exam 2 (Chapters 6 to 11)</i>
Week 7 Oct 2-8	Potter: Chapter 12
Oct 9-10	Fall Break
<u>Week 8</u> Oct 9-15	Potter: Chapter 13 <i>Submit paper to writing center</i>
<u>Week 9</u> Oct 16-22 Oct 20	Potter: Chapter 14 <i>Last day to withdraw</i>
<u>Week 10</u> Oct 23-29	Potter: Chapter 15 <i>Upload feedback from the writing center</i>
<u>Week 11</u> Oct 30-Nov 5	Chapter 16 <i>Exam 3 (Chapters 12 to 16)</i>

Week 12 Carr: The Shallows (Chapters 1-5)
Nov 6-12 *Submit paper to instructor*

Week 13 Carr: The Shallows (Chapters 6-7)
Nov 13-19

Week 14 Carr: The Shallows (Chapters 8-10)
Nov 20-26

Nov 22-26 Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 *Exam 4 [The Shallows]*
Nov 27-Dec 3