

MCO 110: Introduction to Mass Communication

Spring 2005, MWF 8:40 to 9:30 a.m., Mur 101

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Objective: This is a general studies survey course. This section is designed to provide you with an overview of the mass communications process in the United States. It will introduce you to the primary concepts governing and directing the industry. We will examine journalism and mass communication as the media operate synergistically converging and individually within our society. The course will help you learn the language and operations within the businesses of journalism and mass communication. It examines the relationships of the mass media, the history, the law, the global aspects of the media, and the importance of cultural diversity, cultural effects with social responsibility. The emphasis is on the business and operations from a point of view of someone exploring a business industry mass communications career.

Required Text: *The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age*, Joseph R. Dominick (8th Edition)

Assignments: Readings as directed on the schedule. This will make the course more interesting, class discussions more revealing, and hopefully provide a content focus relevant to your careers. *Stay ahead*, speed the chapters prior to class according to the schedule.

Attendance: Required. There will be no formal roll call. However, I will make every effort to reward attendance—presenting specific exam questions during the daily lectures, text reviews for exams, and journal collections all require attendance.

Honors Credit: Honors credit projects are welcome. Come and see me.

Exams: “Where performance is measured, performance can improve.” So, there will be four (4) exams: three midterms and a comprehensive final as scheduled by ASU. The first three exams will cover the scheduled reading and lecture material untested to-date. The final is comprehensive. I will post review notes and text references on the Blackboard prior to each exam.

Administering the Exams: The exams are *all* one-hour, closed book, open mind, multiple choice style, and administered in class. The rules are basic: (1) Once *anyone* has left the classroom, no additional exams will be distributed—in other words, *be on time* or you may not be able to take the exam. (2) No electronic devices are permitted in class during exam time. (3) There are no make-up exams or extra journal opportunities without formalized, written documentation, for example, from the ASU health center, a funeral home, etc. If events warrant such a make-up, *notify me immediately*. Make-up exams will be scheduled during the final exam week. These exams will be comprehensive from the textbook and will always be in essay style. (4) Incompletes are given in accordance with University rules. Remember the axiom, “poor planning does not constitute an emergency.”

Grades are earned. They are not negotiated!

Grades: Grades are determined by simply averaging your exam GPA scores. You must have taken each of the four (4) exams to receive an assigned final grade, otherwise an “E” may be recorded. Grades for each exam will be posted. There are sixty-three questions on each exam. Your grades are assigned simply by numerical scale. *There is no “rounding-up” of decimals. You must earn the points.* Grades are assigned according to the following ASU scale as applied to your exam/GPA points.

A+ = 63 - 61 = 4.3 - 4.1	B+ = 53 - 51 = 3.33 - 3.1	C+ = 43 - 41 = 2.3 - 2.1
A = 60 - 57 = 4.0 - 3.7	B = 50 - 47 = 3.0 - 2.7	C = 40 - 36 = 2.0 - 1.6
A- = 56 - 54 = 3.6 - 3.4	B- = 46 - 44 = 2.6 - 2.4	D = 35 - 27 = 1.5 - 0.7
E = 26 = 0.6 and below or missing exam		

The basic rule: Special considerations are given to one student, only when that same consideration can be afforded to all. So, please plan your attendance accordingly. Examine your personal schedule now, January 19th and be sure it coincides with ASU attendance and calendar requirements throughout the semester and into the exam week.

Communication: Please be aware that general announcements and class notes for your review will appear on Blackboard. So, be sure your ASU e-mail and your “myasu.edu” are functional. If you use an alternative e-mail system you’ll want to link it to your ASU server and get your mail forwarded appropriately.

Procedures: Lectures generally follow the topics in your syllabus. The term “generally” gives us leeway to develop discussions of specific interest to the class as well as accommodate professional guests from the industry and the constantly changing conditions within the business. We will spend considerably more class time on specific media, than on popular culture. The class schedule is organized to help you stay current with your reading schedule and to provide you instructor with the overall subject direction. It will help you space your reading evenly across the semester and thus you’ll be able to stay ahead of the lectures, studying as you go.

Please turn off all electronic devices prior to class.

English Proficiency Exam: *IF* you are planning on becoming a journalism and mass communication major, you need to pass this exam. It will be scheduled once during this class time. It is also scheduled regularly throughout the semester by the Cronkite School office. *This exam has no effect on your course grade. If you are not intending to be a Cronkite School major I’ll give you this day off.* Passing this exam is one of the Cronkite School entrance requirements. The exam may be taken once a semester and students can take it only three times.

Suggested Reading/Class Schedule:

Week 1, Jan. 19—**Foundations:** Human communication and economic foundations
—Communications model & theories
—Critical Listening

—Mediated communication
—Media economic model
Readings Chapter 1

Week 2, Jan. 24—Foundations: Journalism & control functions of the media
—Government's control
—News defined & controlled
—Writing foundations
Reading Chapter 2 & 12

Week 3, Jan. 31—**The Media:** Newspapers
—Historical eras of the press
—Anatomy of an editorial page
—Business and news organization
Reading Chapter 3 & 4

Week 4, Feb 7—The Media: Magazines & Books
—History and development of printing
—Anatomy of book and magazine publications
—Book publishing industry and process
—Magazine industry and process
Reading Chapter 5 & 6

Week 5, Feb 14—The Media: Radio, Music, & the Recording Industry
—Business of music
—Recording history
—Music and the law
—Radio and the music industry partnership
—History and invention
—Business and advertising precedents
—Radio and music industry anatomy
Reading Chapter 7 & 8

Exam 1 – February 21, 8:40AM sharp

Week 6, Feb. 21 – The Media: Film Industry
—Anatomy of film industry
—Entertainment versus information
—Producing & distribution
Readings Chapter 9

Week 7, Feb. 28—The Media: Television
—Historical people and precedents
—Physics of television
—Station organization
—Cable, satellite & television services

- Historical evolution
- Industry organization
- Cable and the law
- Cable company organization
- Convergence and new media

Week 8, March 7— The Media: Cable & Satellite

- Defining new technology (distribution)
- Television and the Internet
- Nonbroadcast and freelance video
- Anatomy of the television business

Reading Chapter 10

Week 9, March 14 – Spring Break, Yeepee!!

Week 10, March 21 – The Media: Journalism and the Internet

- Organization and structure
- History and evolution
- Economics
- Journalistic and social implications

Reading Chapter 11

[Exam II – March 28, 8:40AM sharp](#)

Week 11, March 28 – **Media Service Structures:** Public Relations

- Definitions of advertising, public relations, and marketing
- Industry organization
- Agency Organization
- People and precedents

Reading Chapter 13

Week 12, April 4, Media Service Structures: Advertising

- Agency organization
- Advertising and the law
- Campaigning

Reading Chapter 14

Week 13, April 11, Media Service Structures: Syndication & Research

- History and precedents
- The business in each medium
- Syndication company organization (television & radio)
- International syndication
- The business of research and criticism
- Popular criticisms

- Research terms and directions
- Ingredients of good research
- Ethics and social responsibility
- Media codes

Reading Chapter 18, pp. 477 to end.

Week 14, April 18 — Media law

- Constitutional law
- Differing forms and origins
- The Telecommunications Act

Reading Chapter 15

Week 15, April 25 — Ethic, Ethnicity and Cultural Awareness

- Issues in mass media
- Popular culture issues
- Professional issues

Reading Chapter 16

Week 16 – May 2—Global Perspectives

- Defining global
- Comparative systems
- International controls
- Global media issues

Reading Chapter 17

Exam III – April 29th – 8:30AM sharp

Exam IV – the **Final Exam** is scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2005 at 7:40 a.m. (it will last one hour—as all other exams).

CHECK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND PLAN ACCORDINGLY!

“Education is what you have left, after you have forgotten everything you have memorized.” Author Unknown

Suggested professional subscriptions:

Broadcast journalists—*RTNDA Communicator*—www.rtna.org
Broadcast Production & Entertainment—*TV Week-Electronic Media*—www.tvweek.com
Management—*Broadcast and Cable Magazine*—www.broadcastingcable.com
Print & Public Relations—*Editor and Publisher*—<http://www.editorandpublisher.com>
Entertainment—*The Hollywood Reporter*—www.hollywoodreporter.com

Suggestions on how to “Use” your textbook:

“Doing a little extra will pay enormous dividends ...”

Book sense is ... passion,
Book sense is ... character,
Book sense is ... knowledge,
Knowledge is power!

If you can broaden your personal experience through the eyes of an author, then reading your texts are critical to the foundations of your career. It enhances the depth of your understanding and better prepares you for different career options as you learn from the experience of your authors. Our industries are by nature synergistic and converging, so it is essential that you understand the basic operations of all industries that complement your career direction. To get the most out of the class and your text I’d suggest the following approach:

- Speed read the Chapters—Speed read the chapters *before* the lecture. Just scan them *in accordance with the class schedule*. Look at the major headings and get an idea of the primary content covered. Note the sidebars for definitions and relevant information.
- **NB** Review the Chapters—During the afternoon or evening, immediately following class lectures, use the textbook to reinforce elements under discussion. Look over the chapter headings again and read what your authors have said about what we have discussed. *Use the glossary and index* searching for topics, definitions and concepts related to our discussion. **Type yourself a set of notes utilizing your combined class notes and your reading.**
- If you are a journalism and mass communication major—write in and all over your text and keep it in your personal library for future reference.
- The text is not a novel. It is a reference book. Treat it as such.

Extra Credit Opportunity: Creative Writing

(1) Purchase a 6x9 *hardback journal* (as shown in class, no soft back, spirals or the like will be accepted). (2) *Write regularly* (MWF), beginning January 24. (3) *Write descriptively*. Write professionally. Remember your professor is a “G” rated individual. The assignments will be given *only* once a week at the very beginning of class – be on time. (4) *Attend every class*, because during class *you will also be assigned specific topics* for selected days. The exercise in one in reporting your observations and improving your creative writing. You need only write a minimum of *two or three paragraphs each day*, more if you have an inspirational moment. (5) *Organize your entries chronologically by week and day*. There should be a minimum of three entries per week. (6) *Always bring your journal to class*. You will be asked at selected, unannounced times, throughout the semester to turn in your journal for inspection. There are the attendance rewards attached to your extra credit. This assignment will not be graded. **This assignment option is an “all or nothing,” extra-credit opportunity.** It utilizes the same rules for “missing exams,” in terms of specific journal assignments and pick-up days. Assuming

you've followed the above directions *exactly*—creating an entry at least three times per week; written on the assigned topics; and handed your journals in for inspection during/and at the end of the semester—*then, you get the extra credit, which means that 0.3 will be added to the GPA of your combined exam scores.* Failure to follow the directions verbatim results in NO extra credit.

Your ASU Identification Numbers: Please note you have been given several different identification numbers by ASU. This is for your protection and privacy. The number the registrar gives me for the posting of your test scores and the number you are to place on your answer sheet is called the “posting ID.” This number is made up of the last 4 digits of your Affiliate ID and the last 3 digits of your ASU ID. Both these ID numbers can be found on your ASU SunCard. Here is a link with helpful information: <http://www.asu.edu/registrar/mainFAQ.html#161e>.