

**Syllabus**  
**COMM 1307 Introduction to Mass Communications**

**Department:** Communication Department

**Discipline:** Mass Communications

**Credit:** 3 hours lecture, 0 hours lab

This course satisfies a core curriculum requirement in Language, Philosophy, and Culture

**Prerequisites:** There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Campus:** Fall 2016, Levelland Campus, Communications building

**Textbook:** Media & Culture 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2015 Update

**Supplies:** Three-ring loose leaf notebook

**Class Meeting:** Room CM 151 Monday and Wednesday 6:00pm – 7:15pm

**Course Description:** This course provides a broad survey of mass communications as it affects the culture of individuals and society. This course includes discussions of traditional, non-traditional and social media as well as an introduction to mass communication theory. Discussions of current trends and developments are also included.

**Course Purpose:** The purpose of this course is to provide the opportunity for students to learn about the power and impact of mass communication media on society and its culture. The student is exposed to a discussion of the history of each medium, the strengths and weaknesses, and the responsibilities and challenges associated with each. The student is also introduced to the concept of cultural literacy and basic theories of mass communication.

**Course Requirements:** In order to maximize the potential to successfully complete this course, the student should attend all class and complete all assignments. Since this is a lecture and discussion class, each student will need to spend time taking and organizing lecture notes and preparing for in-class discussions.

**Evaluation: Grade determination:** The student's grade will be determined by completing assigned work, as well as participation in class discussion in current media issue discussions, and performance on exams.

3 Exam Average	125 points	375
Homework/Project	50 points	200
Final paper/project	100 points	100
In-class written final	125 points	125
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	Total	800

Students may be exempted from the In-class portion of the Final Exam. A student must be able to meet these terms to be exempted from the in-class portion: (December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

- A in the class with 2 absences
- B in the class with 1 absence
- C in the class with 0 absences

**Attendance Policy:** Persons who arrive after the roll is checked will be considered absent. Attendance in this class is mandatory. Students with more than four absences will be dropped from the class with either an F or an X without further warning.

**Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following areas:

- Mass Communications relationship to society and culture
- Media Literacy
- The history, current role and future of the internet, newspapers, magazines, film, radio, television, music, and technology
- The history, current role and future of the public relations industry, and the advertising industry
- Mass communications theory
- The relationship between media and government in free and oppressed societies

**Current Issue Discussions-** During the course of the semester, several class meetings will be devoted to group discussions of the current issues affecting various areas of mass communications. These discussion topics are fluid and change from semester to semester. Some examples of topics discussed in previous semesters include: the regulation of the internet; changes and differences and likenesses of generations; the effects of the 9/11 tragedy on mass media; the protection of privacy in the information age; mass media and children; the media's focus on body image and how it affects individuals.

**Students with Disabilities-** Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Special Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability

to the Special Services Coordinator. For more information, call or visit the Special Services Office in the Student Services building, 894-9611 ext. 2529.

**Diversity Statement-**In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

**Contacting your Instructor-** Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or concerns about your progress in this class. It is acceptable to call me at home, provided you call at a reasonable hour. Please try to let me know in advance if you will have to miss class. You may reach me by phone at 716-2436, or via e-mail at [balonzo@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:balonzo@southplainscollege.edu).

Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies-

1. When discussing mass communications relationship to culture, students will:
  - 1.1 identify elements of the basic communication model.
  - 1.2 differentiate between encoding and decoding.
  - 1.3 apply the model to the real world of communication.
  - 1.4 recognize examples of “noise” that can interfere with communication.
  - 1.5 recognize differences in culture.
  - 1.6 differentiate between dominate and bound culture.
  - 1.7 recognize ways culture divides, defines, and unites.
  - 1.8 differentiate between micro-level and macro-level discussions of mass communications.
  
2. When discussing media literacy, the student will:
  - 2.1 differentiate between oral literate cultures.
  - 2.2 describe early attempts at writing.
  - 2.3 describe ways literacy changed efforts to communicate.
  - 2.4 compare power structures in society before and after literacy
  - 2.5 recognize how literacy set the stage for democracy.
  - 2.6 differentiate between communication before and after Gutenberg.
  - 2.7 compare traditional literacy to cultural literacy
  - 2.8 describe the concept of viewing media from multiple points of view

3. When discussing the history, current role and future of the internet, newspapers, magazines, the film industry, the radio industry, and the television industry, the student will:
  - 3.1 compare the differences and similarities of the development of each medium
  - 3.2 differentiate between the strengths and weaknesses of each medium.
  - 3.3 describe the current trends related to each medium.
  - 3.4 identify the challenges facing each medium.
  - 3.5 project possible future developments for each medium
  - 3.6 compare the affect each medium has on the individual and society.
  - 3.7 identify the individuals who have shaped each medium.
  
4. While discussing the history, current role and future of the public relations industry, and the advertising industry, the student will:
  - 4.1 compare the differences and similarities the exist between advertising and public relations.
  - 4.2 differentiate between the strengths and weaknesses of both fields.
  - 4.3 describe the current trends related to both fields.
  - 4.4 identify the challenges facing both fields.
  - 4.5 project possible future developments for both industries.
  - 4.6 identify the individuals who have shaped each medium.
  - 4.7 identify ways in which public relations and advertising work together for the same goal.
  
5. When discussing contemporary mass communication theory, the student will:
  - 5.1 differentiate between 12 popular theories of mass communication.
  - 5.2 identify the central issues of each theory.
  - 5.3 apply each theory to real world examples.
  - 5.4 recognize strengths and weakness of each theory.
  - 5.5 recognize similarities and differences in the theories.
  - 5.6 differentiate between sound and questionable theories.
  - 5.7 differentiate between proper and improper theory application.
  
6. When discussing the relationship between mass media and government in free and oppressed societies, the student will:
  - 6.1 identify how governments use media.
  - 6.2 identify how individuals use media to shape.
  - 6.3 compare the relationship between media and government in free societies and oppressed societies.
  - 6.4 compare where most Americans of different ages learn about the actions of government.

- 6.5 describe what is meant by the media's watchdog role.
- 6.6 describe what is meant by the gatekeeper role.
- 6.7 recognize the relationship between elected officials and the media
- 6.8 compare the equal time rule and the fairness doctrine.