

COM 250-01 MASS COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY /
JOUR C 200-01 MASS COMMUNICATIONS

FALL 2009 Mon Wed Fri 2:30pm – 3:20 pm
Location: NF 147

Instructor: Mary J. Daniel
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Office Hours:

Thurs 1:30–2:30 (by appointment)
Friday 3:30–4:30 (drop in) 4:30-5:30 (by appointment).
Other times may be available, by appointment.

Catalogue Description: A survey of print, broadcast, and film media in their relationship and influence on society. Study topics include mass communication theories, documentaries, commercialism, news media, media effects, and control, feedback, educational broadcasting, and audience analysis. Cr: 3

Prerequisites: None.

The instructor may modify the material or schedule specified in this outline. Any required changes will be announced both in class and by email.

Purpose

This course surveys the rise of American mass media in their historical and current forms. The emphasis of the course is on developing students' media literacy, though a critical investigation of the history and structure of the media's institutions, and of impact of mass media on students' daily lives. The course centers on small group and class discussion sparked by issues raised in the required readings. We will investigate the distinctions and interrelationships between both traditional and new media, and examine them not only as conduits for culture, but as a cultural and economic force. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the media messages that surround them. Short written assignments are designed to encourage students to develop critical reading and writing skills. Regular quizzes will test their acquisition and comprehension of the course content.

Goals

- To provide an introductory historical survey of American mass communication media.
- To give a cultural perspective on the media, and an overview of how various aspects of the media connect.
- To develop student's media literacy: the ability to examine, analyze and evaluate the media messages that surround them, from an informed view of the impact of media institutions on individual and community life.
- To introduce students to some theories and debates informing mass communications studies.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course students should have acquired broad-based knowledge of the history and structures of American mass media, and an introductory understanding of some theoretical debates at play in mass communications studies. You will have had the opportunity to develop analytical skills, critical reading and thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, and media literacy skills.

Requirements

Required Text:

Campbell et al. *Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, 7th ed. Boston/ New York: Bedford/ St. Martins, 2009.

Recommended Texts:

Sawers, Neil. *Ten Steps to Help You Write Better Essays and Term Papers*, 3rd ed. Edmonton: The NS Group, 2000 & 2002.

Additional readings to help students with their reading and writing assignments may be recommended or assigned as the term progresses.

ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

The course readings, in tandem with the class discussions, are at the centre of this course: the other assignments all revolve around and depend on them. You will be asked to read one chapter (usually about 35 pages) approximately every week.

Textbook comprehension tests (5) 25%

There will be 5 tests, spread out over the course of the term (one for every 3 chapters of the textbook), designed to evaluate your retention and comprehension of the content of the readings. Questions will be short-form and/or multiple choice. Evaluation is based on whether your answers are correct or incorrect. There are 5 such tests in total. Together they will account for 25% of your overall grade.

Chapter questions (8 sets of 4-5 questions) 20%

For every chapter of the reading, you will be asked to answer 4-5 questions designed to help you clarify your own thinking on the issues raised by the text, and to help prepare you for class discussions. You will be expected to submit either a hard copy of your answers to the questions to the instructor at the start of the class for which they are due, or electronically by noon on the day they are due. These will be evaluated simply on the basis of whether or not they have been done, and if so, how complete they are. You are not expected to submit answers to chapter questions on weeks when a comprehension test is scheduled, or another assignment due. You are required to submit 10 of these over the course of the term. Together they will account for 20% of your overall grade.

Written Exercises (3) 15 %

Three 2-4 page written exercises will be assigned over the course of the term. These are designed to help you develop your academic reading, critical thinking, and essay writing skills for the course.

Final Paper 20 %

A 2000 word paper (8-10 pages double spaced) on a topic relevant to issues raised in the course, due in the last week of scheduled classes.

Course Participation (includes attendance). 20%

Attendance is mandatory for this class, and active participation in discussions strongly recommended. See below for notes on evaluation of participation, and for policies related to attendance.

COM 250 SYLLABUS

Grading System

A+	95-100%	exceptional work
A	90- 95 %	excellent work
A-	85-89 %	excellent work, for the most part
B+	80-85 %	very good work
B	75-79 %	good work
B-	70-74 %	good work, for the most part
C+	65-69 %	competent work
C	60-64 %	fairly competent work
D+	55-59 %	passing
D	50-54 %	marginally passing
F	below 50%	failing

Submission of assignments

Submission requirements particular to each assignment will be detailed when each is assigned. I will accept either hard copy or, as of the third week of classes, electronic submissions. Hard copy submissions must be handed directly to the instructor by the start of class on the day it is due. Electronic submissions are due by noon on the day it is due. Comprehension Tests assigned through Blackboard are to be completed by start of the class noted on the schedule. Please make sure you are able to access course materials via Blackboard by the third week of class.

Course Communication

You must use your IPFW email account in this class, and have access to Blackboard (IPFWs online course software). If you have not yet activated your school account, do so immediately. Go to Information Technology Services Help Desk in Kettler Hall, room 206 (phone: 481-6030) for directions on setting up your account.

I regularly send emails to students regarding assignments, course updates, schedule changes, and other announcements. You are required to check and read your class email on a regular basis, and to respond appropriately. I will be posting course information and assignments on Blackboard as the course progresses. Please make sure that you know how to access course materials through Blackboard by Monday of the third week of classes.

Contacting Me

If you would like to meet and/or consult with me outside of class time, please see me in my office (Neff 230M) during drop-in office hours, or send me an email to schedule an appointment.

Before sending me an email, always make sure to write COM 250 (followed by the subject of the email) in the subject line, so that I know to pay attention to it.

I am more likely to pick up email messages in a timely manner than I am a voice mail message. I advise you to use voice-mail as a back up only to an email.

I will check class email on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and will make every effort to reply within 2 business days.

Please reserve email correspondence for administrative issues (notifying of lateness of absence, clarification of assignment guidelines, technical problems), or for scheduling appointments. For more involved discussions about your particular assignments or your progress in the course, I prefer to meet with students in person.

Course Policies

CONDUCT, PARTICIPATION

This class is a shared learning environment that relies on each student's contribution to the learning process at hand. Respectful and considerate conduct is expected during class times. Students are expected to be in class on time, to remain in attendance for the whole of every class, and to contribute—through their participation in the course—to the learning of other students. While the class discussions are obvious access points for evaluating participation, participation also takes a subtler form of one's conduct in and contribution to the group as a whole.

When evaluating participation the following may be taken into consideration:

- Consistency and punctuality of student's attendance.
- Preparedness for class, including effort taken to complete assigned readings and exercises.
- Quality and frequency of participation in discussions.
- Willingness to engage with information and ideas presented by instructors and students.
- Consideration and respect for other students in the class.
- Willingness to share ideas, knowledge, opinions and learning with others in the class.
- Initiative and leadership in small group discussions.

As a general rule, please turn off cell phones and pagers and do not use text messaging or the Internet unless directly related to the course.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory for this course: the class-time discussions are its core. Poor attendance will affect not only your participation grade but will likely also have an impact on your ability to understand the underlying themes of the subject we are studying. Students will be allowed up to 2 unexcused absences without incurring a deduction to their grade. I will deduct 2 points from the 20 available for participation for each subsequent unexcused absence.

Valid excuses for absences usually require documentation (i.e. a note from a medical professional, counselor, or equivalent). Valid excuses for absences include illness and family emergency. Absences for reasons of religious observance may be excused, provided the date conflicts are brought to my attention within the first three weeks of class. Absences that occur as a result of work obligations are not, as a rule, excused.

If you miss a class it is your responsibility to take the initiative to do what you need to in order to catch up by, for example, contacting one of your classmates to find out what you missed, borrow notes, find out about assignments, schedule changes etc. It is not my responsibility to bring you up to date unless you have an excused absence.

As each class is less than 1 hr long, punctuality is essential, and you are expected to stay for the duration of the class. As with attendance, late arrivals and/or early departures will be taken into account when evaluating your participation mark.

LATE SUBMISSIONS.

It is imperative that students manage their time wisely. They should not let themselves fall behind schedule; otherwise they may find it extremely difficult to catch up by the time a deadline arrives. If students find that they cannot finish an assignment or keep up with the workload, they must speak to the instructor immediately, to discuss practical ways to make the course manageable.

I will deduct 5% of the grade per day that an assignment is late.

Requests for exceptions to this policy should be discussed with me in advance, and will generally only be granted in the event of documented illness or family emergency.

SPECIAL NEEDS.

“IPFW is committed to providing reasonable accommodation and access to programs and services to persons with disabilities. If you have a disability or acquire one, contact the office of Services for Students with Disabilities, Walb Student Union Rm. 113,260-481-665 <http://www.ipfw.edu/ssd/text-version/academics.shtml> “.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

It is plagiarism to present someone else's words, work or ideas as one's own. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may result in failure on an assignment, of the course, and, if repeated, dismissal from the University. You are responsible for being attentive to or observant of campus policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Conduct Code.

(http://www.ipfw.edu/senate/STU_CODE.HTM)

Civility /Ground rules for discussion

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to that relationship. It is my responsibility, as the instructor, to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavor.

I believe that the open exchange of ideas is central to learning. I hope to create an environment where students feel safe to venture differing opinions, to disagree, and to debate. To create that kind of environment it is imperative that students show each other consideration and respect, even while disagreeing. I expect students to not only express their ideas, but to genuinely listen, with an open mind, to the ideas of others.

Diversity and nondiscrimination

“IPFW is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the university seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The university believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. IPFW prohibits discrimination against any member of the university community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran.” (From the IPFW Student Handbook).

Disabilities Statement

If you have a disability and need assistance, special arrangements can be made to accommodate most needs. Contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (Walb Union, Room 113, telephone number 481-6658) as soon as possible to work out the details. Once the Director has provided you with a letter attesting to your needs for modification, bring the letter to me. For more information, please visit the web site for SSD at <http://www.ipfw.edu/ssd/> .

Students called for military duty

“If you are a student in the military with the potential of being called to military service and /or training during the course of the semester, you are encouraged to contact your advisor immediately.”

Other services for students

- **Center for Academic Support & Advancement (CASA)** KT G23 481-6817 www.ipfw.edu/casa study skills development, tutoring, STEPS short courses, supplemental instruction, ESL
- **The Writing Center** KT G19 481-5740 <http://www.ipfw.edu/casa/writing/> peer tutors who can help with all phases of the writing process
- **Career Services** KT 109 481-0689 <http://www.ipfw.edu/career/> assistance with on and off-campus job placement and internships
- **Information Technology Services Help Desk** KT 206 481-6030 www.its.ipfw.edu/helpdesk information on all aspects of computing at IPFW; hardware and software support (including Blackboard Vista 4); student e-mail accounts
- **Center for Women and Returning Adults** Walb 120 481-6029 www.ipfw.edu/cwra/ workshops, support groups, counseling, and other programs
- **Multicultural Services** Walb 118 481-6921 <http://www.ipfw.edu/odma/> skills workshops, support groups, diversity training, counseling, mentoring, cultural heritage programs; ASAP program
- **International Student Services** KT 104 481-6034 or 6923 <http://www.ipfw.edu/iss/> visa and INS issues; help with housing, counseling
- **Mastodon Advising Center (MAC)** KT 109 481-6595 <http://www.ipfw.edu/mac/> appointments with professional academic advisors; help with guiding students in deciding on their major and ultimately their career; help for exploring students, deciding students, and readmitted students; and various student resources.
- **Helmke Library Service Desk** 481-6505 www.lib.ipfw.edu reference librarian help, books, journals, reference, interlibrary loan reserve readings for courses: Reserves Express (REX): www.lib.ipfw.edu/rex/
- **Dean of Students office** Walb 111 481-6601 www.ipfw.edu/dos/ student health insurance, mentoring, grade appeals; free short-term personal counseling and support

Tips for success

- Come to class.
- Do the readings.
- Exercise independent thinking and initiative.
- Try to get as much as you can out of the process of completing the assignments: focus on the process, rather than the results.
- Take advantage of my office hours.
- Let me know if you are having problems keeping up with the assigned work - for whatever reason - either by email or through an office-hour appointment. Ideally in advance rather than after deadlines.
- Take advantage of the University's advising, counseling, tutoring and support services: you've paid for them, may as well use them.
- Be open and willing to learn, especially from others.
- Be open and willing to contribute to the learning of others.
- Be open and willing to engage with new ideas, to risk getting things wrong, and to learn all you can in the process.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Changes will be announced both in class and by email

WK	STARTING	Reading due	Mon	Wed	Fri
1	AUG 24	CHAPT 1	Course intro	Discuss course	Chapt 1 discuss
2	AUG 31	CHAPT 2	Chapt 1 cont'd. Questions due	Chapt 1 cont'd.	Chapt 2 Questions due
3	SEP 7	CHAPT 3	NO CLASS (Labor day)	Chapt 2 cont'd.	TEST: CHAPT 1-3 Discuss Chap 3
4	SEP 14	CHAPT 4	Chapt 3 cont'd.	Chapt 4 Questions due	Chapt 4 cont'd.
5	SEP 21	CHAPT 5	ASSIGN 1 DUE Chapt 5 questions due	Chapt 5 cont'd.	Chapt 5 cont'd.
6	SEP 28	CHAPT 6	TEST: CHAPT 4-6	Chap 6 discuss	Chapt 6 cont'd.
7	OCT 5	CHAPT 7	Chapt 7 Questions due	Chapt 7 cont'd.	Chapt 7 cont'd.
8	OCT 12	CHAPT 8	NO CLASS (Fall recess)	Chapt 8 Questions due	Chapt 8 cont'd.
9	OCT 19	CHAPT 9	TEST: CHAP 7-9	Chapt 9 discuss	Chap 9 cont'd.
10	OCT 26	CHAPT 10	Chap 10 Questions due	Chapt 10 cont'd.	Chapt 10 cont'd.
11	NOV 2	CHAPT 11	ASSIGN 2 DUE Chapt 11 discuss	Chapt 11 cont'd.	Chapt 11 cont'd.
12	NOV 9	CHAPT 12	TESTCHAPT 10-12 Chapt 12 discuss	Chapt 12 cont'd.	Chapt 12 cont'd.
13	NOV 16	CHAPT 13	Chapt 13 Questions due	Chapt 13 cont'd.	Chapt 13 cont'd.
14	NOV 23	CHAPT 14	ASSIGN 3 DUE Chapt 14 discuss	NO CLASS. Thanksgiving recess	NO CLASS Thanksgiving recess
15	NOV 30	CHAPT 15	Chapt 15 TEST:CHAP 13-16	Chapt 15 cont'd.	Chapt 15 cont'd.
16	DEC 7	CHAPT 16	Chapt 16 Questions due	Chapt 16 cont'd.	Chapt 16 cont'd.
Finals week	Date TBA		FINAL PAPER DUE		

Important dates

Aug. 24	Classes Begin
Aug. 24-28	Late Registration and Drop/Add
Aug. 28	Final Payment Deadline (late registrants)
Aug. 30	Last Day for Full Refund (for full-term classes)
Sept.4-7	Labor Day Holiday Recess Begins at 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 8	Classes Resume
Oct. 12-13	Fall Recess
Oct. 14	Classes Resume
Oct. 30	Credit-to-Audit Deadline
Oct. 30	Last Day to Withdraw from Classes without receiving a grade.
Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Recess Begins after Last Class
Nov. 30	Classes Resume
Dec. 14-20	Last Week of Classes and Final Exams
Dec. 20	Classes and Final Exams End