

COMM 1307: Introduction to Mass Communication

Spring 2021

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m., Zoom

Professor Drew Morton

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Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 12:15-1 p.m., Wednesdays from 9-11 a.m., and By Appointment (All Virtual)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This course introduces students to the fields of communication, including theory, law and regulation, history, social implications, and mass-media operations.

Before the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Exhibit an understanding of the technological developments that have driven the evolution of mass communication (mastery will be assessed by the objective midterm and final exams).
2. Exhibit an understanding of the industrial structures that have defined mass communication (mastery will be assessed by the objective midterm and final exams).
3. Exhibit an understanding of the terminology and theories that define the study of mass communication (mastery will be assessed by the objective midterm and final exams, written assignments, and classroom participation).

REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS:

Baran, Stanley J. *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture* (10th Edition, McGraw Hill, 2019).

Other readings may be distributed via photocopy, PDF, or e-mail.

Students may need to utilize Netflix, Hulu, and/or Amazon to stream video titles on their own.

SCHEDULE:

The course will meet twice weekly at the designated time via Zoom. Recordings of the class sessions will be uploaded to the Blackboard for students who need or wish to engage in an asynchronous learning experience. All assignments will be due on the Friday of the given week.

WEEK ONE (January 19 and 21): Introductions

Reading: Baran, Chapter 1

WEEK TWO (January 26 and 28): Convergence Culture

Reading: Baran, Chapter 2

WEEK THREE (February 2 and 4): Books

Reading: Baran, Chapter 3

WEEK FOUR (February 9 and 11): Newspapers

Reading: Baran, Chapter 4

Out of Class Screening: *Page One: Inside the New York Times* (Andrew Rossi, 2011, 96 minutes).

One Page Review of *Page One* Due on February 12th by 11:59 p.m.

WEEK FIVE (February 16 and 18): Magazines

Reading: Baran, Chapter 5

WEEK SIX (February 23 and 25): Film

Reading: Baran, Chapter 6.

Outside of Class Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941, 119 minutes).

One Page Review of *Citizen Kane* Due on February 26th by 11:59 p.m.

WEEK SEVEN (March 2 and 4): Radio, Recording, and Popular Music, Midterm Review

Reading: Baran, Chapter 7.

Midterm Review on March 4th, please take midterm online by March 5th at 11:59 p.m.

WEEK EIGHT (March 9 and 11): A Crash Course in Public Speaking, Television

Reading: Baran, Chapter 8.

WEEK NINE (March 16 and 18): Video Games

Reading: Baran, Chapter 9.

Outside of Class Screening: *King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters* (Seth Gordon, 2007, 79 minutes).

One Page Review of *King of Kong* Due on March 19th by 11:59 p.m.

WEEK TEN (March 23 and 25): The Internet and Social Media

Reading: Baran, Chapter 10.

Outside of Class Screening: *The Social Network* (David Fincher, 2010, 120 minutes).

One Page Review of *The Social Network* Due on March 26th by 11:59 p.m.

WEEK ELEVEN (March 30 and April 1): The Internet and Social Media, Audacity Tutorial

Reading: Baran, Chapter 11.

WEEK TWELVE (April 6 and 8): Public Relations and Advertising

Reading: Baran, Chapter 12 and 13.

Short group presentations on the PR chapter and the Advertising Chapter. You can have up to 3 people in your group, 5 groups per chapter. You get a section of the chapter to present on, so you need to summarize and illustrate the concept. You can include videos, short activities, and questions. Whatever you see fit. You have 12 minutes to present between the three of you. Everyone needs to talk!

WEEK THIRTEEN (April 13 and 15): Theories and Effects of Mass Communication.

Reading: Baran, Chapter 14.

WEEK FOURTEEN (April 20 and 22): Podcast Troubleshooting

Students are required to make a 4 minute argumentative podcast applying ONE aspect of Chapters 13-15 to ONE of the introductory chapters (Chapters 3-10). Examples: Video games make children violent, social media makes people anti-social, the government should implement net neutrality guidelines, etc. Must include AT LEAST 3 peer reviewed sources.

WEEK FIFTEEN (April 27th): Final Exam Review, Podcasts Due

Midterm Review on April 27th, Podcasts due April 27th, please take midterm online by May 5th at 11:59 p.m.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Discussion/In Class Quizzes: 10%

Written Reviews: 10% (2.5% each x 4)
Group Presentation: 20%
Midterm: 15%
Final: 15%
Final Podcast: 30%

COURSE POLICIES:

Be sure to complete your reading and assignments on the date they are scheduled on the syllabus.

Late assignments are not accepted.

In accordance with the University's academic integrity policy (see below), students who violate the policy will earn an automatic F for the course.

Cell phones are to be set on vibrate and not to be used during class.

Be sure to bring all your course materials to class each day we meet.

Finally, please allow a 24-48 hour turn-around time for any e-mails. Due to this policy, be sure not to leave any major concerns/questions about assignments for the last minute!

I reserve the right to alter this syllabus.

TAMUT POLICIES:

Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of 'F' in the course and/or disciplinary actions. For additional information, see the university catalog.

A&M-Texarkana Email Address: Upon application to Texas A&M University-Texarkana an individual will be assigned an A&M-Texarkana email account. This email account will be used to deliver official university correspondence. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via the university email account and is expected to check the official A&M-Texarkana email account on a frequent and consistent basis. Faculty and students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework.

Drop Policy: Beginning with the first class day of the semester, faculty should report to the Registrar's Office via the preliminary class roster and/or email communication, by a date established by the Registrar's Office, any student who

is not attending their class or who has not logged into Blackboard for an online class.

Faculty members shall automatically initiate an administrative drop for any student who has not been in attendance (face to face class) or has not reported in (web or web enhanced class) by the due date of the preliminary class roster as established by the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office will notify students by certified mail and/or email that the instructor has initiated the drop process and will instruct them to contact the instructor immediately. If the instructor does not rescind the request in writing within seven (7) days of documentable receipt of the notification, the Registrar's Office will drop the student from the class. Faculty who fail to submit an administrative drop by the established deadline, must record the grade earned by the student at the end of the semester. Faculty submitting a grade of F for a student will be required to enter the last date of attendance during the grading cycle.

Subsequent to the census date final roster, all drops during the semester must be student initiated.