

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak directly to Disability Support Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible (preferably within the first week). All discussions remain confidential. Contact: Disability Support Services, 521-6695.

## **MCM 2100: INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION** SPRING 2009

**Instructor:** Dr. Jamie Litty

**Office:** Rm 249 Old Main    **Office Phone:** x6654

**Home Phone:** 910-266-9177 *No phone calls after 10 p.m.*

**Office Hours:** M 2:00 – 3:00; T 9:30 - 11; R 3:30 – 6:00 or by appointment

**E-mail:** [jamie.litty@uncp.edu](mailto:jamie.litty@uncp.edu)

**Required text:** Vivian, J. (2009). The media of mass communication (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson. ISBN 0-205-52110-X

**Course overview:** [catalog description] Examination of channels used to communicate with mass audiences in the United States, with emphasis on developments in books, newspapers, magazines, film, radio, television, and the World Wide Web. Includes news, advertising, public relations, New Media, and global communications concepts and the social, cultural, political, and economic impacts of media on society. Controls on media will be described, and media theories will be explored.

**Course goals:** Students will

1. understand the evolution of mass media;
2. recognize the products and procedures of the mass media as forms of communication;
3. perceive mass communication as a process that functions within political & economic frames;
4. consider major theories of media effects on individuals and society;
5. acknowledge ethical considerations for current media practices.

**Course objectives:** Students will

1. study basic models and definitions of communication in order to develop an understanding of how *mass* communication relates to those.
2. learn a semiotic framework for interpreting form, style, and messages of media.
3. encounter sociological, psychological, and political-economic approaches to the study of media production and reception.
4. explore mass communication topics of individual interest in reaction papers and scholarly research (and share with the class).

**Assessing student learning:** The professor will evaluate the student's achievement in the course by means of classroom speaking opportunities, exams, opportunities for the presentation of research, and written records of ongoing reflections on media experience and course material. The student's final grade in the course is constituted as follows:

▪ Class Participation	10%
▪ Reaction papers	7.5%
▪ Other homework	7.5%
□ Exams	55%
▪ Research paper	20%

### Course policies:

Attendance. The Department of Mass Communication emphasizes attendance at every class period, and you cannot earn class participation points if you are not present. Furthermore, there are no make-up exams provided in this course except for documented participation in a required university-sponsored event (please consult your professor in advance) or for a documented/verifiable illness. No late homework will be accepted. Lecture notes are not provided by the instructor to students who missed class except for the event/illness exceptions mentioned above. You cannot make up in-class activities.

Academic misconduct. **Unauthorized collaboration** (for example, working with another student on the same reaction or term paper or homework exercise) will result in a failing mark (i.e., zero) on that assignment.

**Cheating** on an exam will result in a failing mark on that exam. This includes, but is not limited to, taking or providing answers or questions before, during, or after class.

**Plagiarism** committed in oral presentation or term paper will result in failing mark (i.e., zero) on that assignment. This includes the incorporation of sentences and unique phrases lifted from the work of another student or from another source of information without quotation marks, proper attribution, etc.

Academic misconduct listed above, and other forms of **fraud**, will be reported to the university administration.

Writing. All documents prepared outside of class must be typed (unless otherwise noted) in 12-point Times New Roman, double line spacing, with one-inch margins all around. Minimize the mistakes in your spelling, grammar, and punctuation so that your meanings are clear, your facts are correct and your sources are cited—since those things, rather than your writing *per se*, affect your grades.

Class participation. Think before you speak! Students may speak candidly but should be respectful and thoughtful of their classmates. Attendance is not the same as class participation. Your score at the end of the semester will be based on substance and amount. The class participation grade may seem very subjective, but on **average**, the professor should hear from you once a week. Class discussion must be relevant to the course material.

Grading. Grading policies include all those already mentioned regarding missed deadlines, missed exams, academic misconduct, and participating in class. Guidelines on what content to include in your papers and other assignments will be provided during the term.

**Course schedule:** [Subject to change]

Week One	Communication, the masses, and media	Chapter 1
Week Two	(continued)	Chapter 2
Week Three	Signs and sign systems	<b>off Monday MLK Jr. Day</b>
Week Four	Print	Chapter 4
Week Five	Print (cont.) News	Chapter 11
Week Six	Cinema The “language” of film	Chapter 7
Week Seven	(cont.)	Chapter 14
Week Eight	Sound as signifier Radio	Chapter 8
Week Nine	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Week Ten	Television	Chapter 9
Week 11	The Internet & convergence	Chapter 10
Week 12	Advertising & persuasion	Chapter 13
Week 13	Mass communication as social science	Chapter 15
Week 14	The psychology of audiences	Chapter 16
Week 15	Media ethics	Chapter 20
Week 16	(cont.)	

**Final Exam Week: Student presentations of paper during exam period**

**This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Mary Helen Walker, Disability Support Services, D.F. Lowry Building, 521-6695.**