

Middlesex Community College

COM 101 – Introduction to Mass Communication

On-Line via Blackboard Learn

CRN # 3024 / 3 credits

Fall 2017 – Aug. 29 – Dec. 18

John Shafer, Professor

Office Hours: Mon/Tue/Thur, 1:30-3:30 PM

Office: Rm. 606 Chapman; *Phone:* 860-343-5811

email: jshafer@mxcc.edu

SYLLABUS

Course Description:

This course is an examination of the effect and impact of mass media on contemporary life and society. The course covers both the historical evolution of media as well as contemporary developments and issues. Areas of coverage include, newspapers and journalism, magazine and book publishing, radio and television broadcasting, motion pictures, music recording, Internet and social media, advertising and public relations; media law and ethics. Course work will include weekly chapter readings from the course text, quizzes, viewing of media materials, and regular participation in on-line discussion forums, which will require writing and reflection.

Prerequisite:

Placement in ENG 101; completion of ENG 101 or the taking of ENG 101 concurrently, including ENG 101E or ENG 101ALP.

Learning Outcomes:

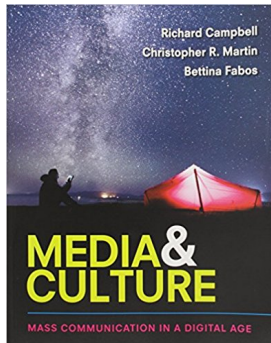
- To increase students' knowledge and understanding of the mass communication process and the mass media industries.
- To increase students' awareness of how they interact with those industries and with media content to create meaning.
- To help students become more skilled and knowledgeable consumers of media content.
- To develop students' understanding of the relationships among communication, mass communication, culture, and those who live in the culture.
- To recognize trends in mass media, especially concentration of ownership and conglomeration, globalization, audience fragmentation, public relations, hyper--commercialism, convergence, and the move toward digital distribution of mass media product.
- To understand the history and development of individual mass media technologies, and the industries and employment opportunities that have grown up around them.
- To apply students' enhanced understanding of mass communication theory toward improving their own media literacy skills.
- To demonstrate students' understanding of freedom, regulatory, and ethical issues as applied to both mass media industries and individual use of the mass media.

Graduation Requirements and Transfer Information:

This course fulfills a core program requirement in the Broadcast-Cinema, Communication Studies, and Digital Media Production programs at MxCC. It may fulfill a communication elective in other programs (check the on-line catalog carefully) and will also fulfill a Social Phenomenon requirement, humanities, liberal arts, and open elective requirements in all programs at MxCC. *Intro to Mass Comm.* is a common program requirement for most Communication programs at bachelor-degree institutions and this course should transfer in and fulfill the requirement. The course may also transfer and fulfill general education requirements in communication, humanities, or liberal arts areas. Check your transfer institution for specific information.

Text:

The text is available for purchase at the MxCC Bookstore or on-line booksellers such as Amazon.com. A copy is also available for in-library use from the reserve shelf in the library.



MEDIA & CULTURE: MASS COMMUNICATION IN A DIGITAL AGE, 11th ed. Cambell/Martin/ Fabos. MacMillian, Bedford, St. Martins, 2017. Loose Leaf plus LaunchPad and digital version, \$90 @ MxCC Bookstore. Rent it from Amazon.com for \$50 or buy a regular paperback edition for

A broad overview of the field of mass communication with specific focus on each major media area. This course is based on, and designed around, the text, which is essential. Quizzes and discussions will be based on weekly chapter readings.

Additional resources are available on the text's "LuanchPad" web site:
<http://www.macmillanhighered.com/launchpad/mediaculture11e/6293771>

Other Resources:

Other valuable resource materials will be available on Blackboard including relevant articles, videos, and links to media-related websites.

Grade Breakdown & Required Work:

- (10) Quizzes @ 5% each 50%
- (6) Discussion Forums @ 7% each 42%
- Final Exam (due Dec. 15) 8%

(10) Quizzes @ 5% each = 50%

There will be one quiz per week through Blackboard for each chapter; (14) total. You are required to take (10) quizzes. Each quiz has (20) multiple-choice questions. **Quizzes are normally due on Mondays by midnight** and will be available anytime prior to the due date (in case you'd like to work ahead). Quizzes are open book in nature with a time limit of (2) hours for each attempt, which is an average of six minutes per question. You are allowed two attempts for each quiz and may check which questions you missed before taking a second attempt.

QUIZ Schedule (10 required):

Quiz #	Chapter	Topics	Quiz Due Date
1	1	Mass Communication	Sep. 11
2	13	Media Economics	Sep. 18
3	2	The Internet & Digital Media	Sep. 25
4	3	Digital Gaming	Oct. 2
5	5	Radio	Oct. 9
6	4	Sound Recording & Music	Oct.16
7	6	Television	Oct. 23
8	7	Movies	Oct. 30
9	8	Newspapers	Nov. 6
10	14	The Culture of Journalism	Nov. 13
11	10	Books & Publishing	Nov. 20
12	11	Advertising	Nov. 27
13	15	Media Effects & Culture	Dec. 4
14	16	Legal Controls & Freedom	Dec. 11

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING QUIZZES:

As mentioned above, there will be (14) topics covered during the semester – one per week. Each topic includes a quiz. However, students are only required to take (10) quizzes. This means you may opt NOT to take (4). You choose which quizzes you would like to skip. But, you may still take all the quizzes if you want. In this case your lowest (4) grades will be dropped. Please note that even though you are not required to take all the quizzes, you should still read through all the required chapters, as information from them may still be needed to answer some of the discussion forum questions.

Discussion Forum Participation - (6) Forums @ 7% each = 42%

You are required to participate in the on-line discussion forum on Blackboard every other week. This is both an equivalent to class discussion and a form of written expression, and is an essential part of this class. You are required to contribute a minimum of (3) posts per discussion on one or both of the two topics covered the prior two weeks. Specific questions will be provided and you need to choose one of the questions to answer. Some questions are based on media materials in the media gallery. You should make at least one original post answering the question and you should respond to at least two student posts for your chosen chapter topic. Original posts should run a minimum of a full paragraph in length and will receive credit based on depth, insight, and relevance. All posts for each discussion forum topic are graded together cumulatively. **Topic question responses are due on Thursdays by midnight.** Responses to other students' posts are due the following **Sunday by midnight.** **NOTE: You may skip one Forum without penalty, by your choice.** See schedule below:

<i>Chapters</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Response Due</i>
1, 13	Mass Communication / Media Economics	Thur., Sep. 21
2, 3	The Internet & Digital Media / Gaming	Thur., Oct. 5
4, 5	Radio / Sound Recording & Music	Thur., Oct. 19
6, 7	Television / Movies	Thur., Nov. 2
8, 14	Newspapers / Journalism Culture	Thur., Nov. 16
10, 11	Books & Publishing / Advertising	Thur., Nov. 30
15, 16	Media Effects & Culture / Legal Controls	Thur., Dec. 14

Final Exam - 8% - Due by Monday, Dec. 18

There will be a brief final exam consisting of two short-answer questions that will ask you to identify and summarize important things that you've learned during the course. The exam will be provided the week before it is due.

Course Grading Scale:

The following standard percentage scale is used for converting numerical scores into letter grades. Any grades below 55% (including missed assignments) will automatically be converted to 55% as the numerical value for "F" for final grade calculations. Although this scale includes an A+ grade category, please be aware that the college itself does NOT include an A+ grade category, so A+ grades will convert to A on your college transcript. But you get the personal satisfaction of knowing you earned an A+.

Grades Between	Will Equal	Grades Between	Will Equal
97% and 100%	A+	73% and 76%	C
93% and 96%	A	70% and 72%	C-
90% and 92%	A-	67% and 69%	D+
87% and 89%	B+	63% and 66%	D
83% and 86%	B	60% and 62%	D-
80% and 82%	B-	0% and 59%	F
77% and 79%	C+	below 55% = 55%	F

Blackboard - Course Web Site / Grade Info

This on-line course is administered through Blackboard Learn. To access Blackboard go to: <http://my.comnet.edu/>. If you've never logged on to *MyCommnet* before, follow the link below the LOGIN box "*Need Your Initial Password*" for login directions. After logging in, look for the Blackboard link. If you have problems logging on or using Blackboard, call tech support at 860-343-5756.

Withdrawals and Incomplete Grades:

Fall 2017 Withdrawal Deadline: Friday, November 10

If for some reason you are unable to complete the course and do not wish to receive a grade, you may withdraw from the course and receive a "W" by filling out and submitting a withdrawal form from the records office before the deadline above. <http://mxcc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Withdrawal-Form-New.pdf> You must also request my permission by sending me an email, which I am always willing to abide. Otherwise, I will assign a grade based on the work you have completed and will have no choice but to assign an "F" grade if there is little or no work. A grade of "W" does not affect your grade point average so that would definitely be preferable to an "F" which does affect your GPA. If you have completed a substantial amount of work but are unable to finish before the end of the session due to unavoidable circumstances, I am usually willing to give an incomplete grade, which will give you an additional semester to complete the work. Again this is provided you communicate to me before the end of the session. Incomplete grades require a form to be filled out and signed by both of us.

Grading Concerns:

Grades will be posted on Blackboard under "MyGrades." Please check your grades carefully. Though I take great care to be accurate, occasionally a mistake is made. If you have any questions about the grade you received on an assignment or your final grade for the course, please ask me about it. If a mistake is discovered, I will change your grade appropriately. For this reason, it is important that you always save any written evaluations returned to you until well after the semester is over.

Additional College Policies and Information for Students

For further information and a complete description of relevant college policies for students, go to the following page on the college's web site:

www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/

Additional policies and information include the following:

- Academic Honesty & Plagiarism
- Accessibility & Disability Services
- Attendance Expectations
- Audio Recordings in the Classroom
- E-Mail Accounts for Students
- Grade Appeal Process (Review of Academic Standing)
- Non-Discrimination Policies
- Religious Accommodation Statement
- School Cancellations Due to Weather or Emergency Situations
- Student Code of Conduct
- Withdrawing From Class

Course Calendar

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic / Readings / Quizzes & Discussions</u>
Aug. 30	Introductions and Course Overview
Sep 5	Read chapter 1: Mass Communication / Take Quiz 1
Sep 11	Read chapter 13: Media Economics / Take Quiz 2 / Discussion Forum 1
Sep 18	Read chapter 2: Internet & Digital Media / Take Quiz 3
Sep 25	Read chapter 3: Digital Gaming / Take Quiz 4 / Discussion Forum 2
Oct. 2	Read chapter 5: Radio / Take Quiz 5
Oct. 9	Read chapter 4: Sound Recording & Music / Take Quiz 6 / Discussion Forum 3
Oct 16	Read chapter 6: Television / Take Quiz 7
Oct 23	Read chapter 7: Movies / Take Quiz 8 / Discussion Forum 4
Oct 30	Read chapter 8: Newspapers / Take Quiz 9
Nov. 6	Read chapter 14: The Culture of Journalism / Take Quiz 10 / Discussion Forum 5
Nov 13	Read chapter 10: Books and Publishing / Take Quiz 11
Nov 20	Read chapter 11: Advertising / Take Quiz 12 / Discussion Forum 6
Nov 27	Read chapter 15: Media Effects & Culture / Take Quiz 13
Dec. 4	Read chapter 16: Legal Controls / Take Quiz 14 / Discussion Forum 7
Dec. 11	Quiz 14 due Monday / Discussion 7 due Thursday
Dec. 18	Final Exam due by midnight