MEDIA AND SOCIETY

Course Description:

Media operate in a profoundly complex relationship with a society—shaping it and being shaped by it. From oral storytelling to the written word, from the telegraph to television, media expand (and sometimes contract) the communicative possibilities for the transmission of knowledge and culture. Today, media have impact on nearly every facet of our everyday lives. In this course, we will explore the history and development of each mass medium and their organizational, institutional, and cultural dynamics. We will study print media as foundation of all media, radio and television, cinema and corporate communications, and new and emerging media and ways in which various media function to support, undermine, and/or change the social landscape from the practices of everyday correspondence to the structuring ideologies that are often taken for granted. Included also are themes such as media production and consumption, globalization, cultural imperialism, race, class, gender in the media and popular culture.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1) Gain knowledge of the historical development and of today’s media industries;
2) Acquire the fundamentals of media criticism and their application;
3) Critically analyze media texts and other popular culture phenomena

Major Course Requirements and Expectations:

The following requirements of the course are outlined along with associated weights as a grade scale for learning assessment along with a grading distribution:

**Grade Distribution:**

- A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 59 and below

**Attendance and participation (10%)**: Each student is expected to be in attendance and participate in class discussions.

**News/Current Affairs Quizzes (10%)**: Unannounced quizzes on current events that require staying in tune with news and public affairs developments in the state, country and around the world. Stay in touch with headlines of the day!

**Class Readings/Lecture Quizzes (50%)**: These are multiple choice and short answer questions based on class readings and lectures. They will be given periodically throughout the semester on the dates noted on the class schedule.
Course Requirements (contd.):

**Topic Papers (2 at 10% each for a total of 20%):** Two 3 to 4-page double-spaced typed papers will be assigned during the semester. These will be explained further and discussed in class well in advance of their due dates.

**Final Exam (10%):** The final exam will be comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions (similar to the quizzes on class readings and lectures) and an essay.

**Required Textbook and Readings:**


Course Policies:

**Attendance and Tardiness:** Attendance is required—both physically and mentally. You are expected to take an active role in classroom discussions. Absences, late arrivals, and chronic failure to engage in class discussion will all be reflected in your participation grade.

**Late work and make-up exams**

- If there should be a legitimate reason for you missing class (illness, family emergencies, certain University-sponsored extracurricular activities), please provide the instructor with the notification prior to the event or as soon as you are able—before the missed class period. If appropriate, we can arrange alternate times for you to make up quizzes or exams, but it will be your responsibility to get any information from lecture from one of your classmates.
- Unexcused absences will be noted and reflected in your participation grade. Also, any work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.
- Late work for any reason considered unexcused will be panelized by at least one letter grade for each day it is late.

**Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage:** While in class, please make sure your phone is off or on silent (and in your backpack or out of sight), so it’s not heard in class. Also, limited laptop use is permitted—for note-taking only, but do not abuse this privilege.

- Please remember to check your email regularly for any course updates.
- If you would like to discuss any course readings, lectures, or assignments outside of class, you should feel free to contact me via email or by arranging to visit me during office hours or set up an appointment to see me at any other time.
- Please submit hard copies of your papers, prior to the class period on the due date. Marked copies will be returned to you.
- All writing for this course must be composed using a standard, 12-point font size, and with the standard 1-inch margins.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examination or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work). In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the course grade of F.
Dropping the Course

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation will not automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please check published dates for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom/professional behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Grade Appeals*

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 361-825-3466.

Notice to Students with Disabilities and/or Returning Veterans:

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible. Please have your accommodation letter from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Disability Services (DS) Office with you when you come to see me. If you are a returning veteran and experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Office for assistance. If you suspect that you may have any disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Disability Services Office (located in Room 116 Corpus Christi Hall) at 361.825.5816.

Class Schedule and Assignments on next page
COMM 1307.001 Class Schedule and Assignments (subject to change)

Jan 23: Introduction, course outline/expectations/textbook review

Jan 28-30: The Changing Media Landscape

Feb 4-6: Media Literacy

Feb 11-13: Mass Communication Formats: The Print Media

Feb 18-20: Audio Media

Feb 25-27: The Visual Media

Mar 4-6: Information and Its Discontents

Mar 11-13: SPRING BREAK

Mar 18-20: Networks and Digital Distribution of Media

Mar 25-27: Social uses of Media and the Web

Apr 1-3: Power of Journalism in a Democracy

Apr 8-10: Entertainment Media

Apr 15-17: The Media of Persuasion, Ethics of Media

Apr 22-24: Communication Law & Regulations

Apr 29-May 1: Communication Theory and Research

May 6: Media/Politics and Course Overview

May 12-16: FINALS WEEK -- Final Exam (date and time to be confirmed)