



Course Syllabus: Mass Media and Society

College of Fine Arts
MCOM 1233 Section 103
Fall 2026

Contact Information

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Course Description

- This course is designed to give students an overview of how the mass media operate and their place in American society.
- Students will briefly examine career opportunities in mass communication.
- Students will also examine and analyze contemporary issues facing the mass media.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

I have not assigned a mandatory textbook for this course. Your reading materials will be primarily from handouts, PowerPoint slides, and research.

The following textbook is recommended but not required:

Converging Media 7th Edition
John V. Pavlik, Shawn McIntosh

https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fmidwesternstate.bkstr.com%2fpages%2fcourse-materials-results%3fshopBy%3dcourse%26departmentDisplayName%3dMCOM%26courseDisplayName%3d1233%26sectionDisplayName%3d102%26termId%3df1bc68bd-6a35-40d9-9050-904889730c1a%26utm_medium%3demail%26utm_source%3dfollett%26utm_campaign%3drush_fall-2026-syllabus&c=E,1,clfbT5nGPNRdZIHcWbK36wskCTx4DU_k9ao9kY-M1TeRRVKG_K2-

[Aa6INzEGjDxDvuRv8TznCRe7JrbW_e7l5SQbio6KpEnUG4qzyJHMG-mWKeNSwdHK2_ptzk,&typo=1](https://www.moffettlibrary.com/Aa6INzEGjDxDvuRv8TznCRe7JrbW_e7l5SQbio6KpEnUG4qzyJHMG-mWKeNSwdHK2_ptzk,&typo=1)

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

AI Policy

Students are prohibited from using any form of artificial intelligence in this course.

Grading

Table 1: Percentage allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Weighting
Test 1	20%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Personal Journal	20%
Participation	10%
Final Project	25%

Table 2: Total percentage for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	90% - 100%
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	Less than 60%

Test

A test will be given during week 3 and will account for 20% of your overall course grade.

Projects Required

This course will require students to write six journal entries throughout the semester. These entries will consist of analyses of articles pertaining to the mass media. Students will turn in one entry each week, starting from the weeks specified in the course schedule. More details about the journal will be given in class.

Mid-Term Exam

Students will be given a timed Mid-Term Exam during week 8. Further details pertaining to the exam will be given during the semester.

Final Project

In lieu of a final exam, students will be given a final project. This will be in the form of an oral presentation based on concepts/materials covered during the course. Specific details will be provided during the semester.

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Given that this is a mass communication class, class participation is especially important. **Students are therefore expected to participate, as this will account for 10% of their final grade. To earn the participation points, students must be actively engaged in class discussion. Attendance does not mean participation.**

Extra Credit

I do not typically give or accept extra credit assignments. Students are expected to take advantage of my office hours, utilize handouts, keep abreast with readings and all other course material to earn the best possible grade

Late Work

Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time, at the beginning of class, on the assigned due date. Late work will not be accepted, unless there are extenuating circumstances that led to the work being late. I reserve the right to determine whether or not the reason given by the student is legitimate.

Make Up Work/Tests

A student who misses an assignment/project will only be allowed to do a make-up assignment if the student missed the original date because of a legitimate reason. Once again, I will decide whether or not the reason is valid.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: August 27, 2026
- Deadline to file for graduation for December graduates: September 21, 2026.
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23rd at 4pm

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Students are expected to be respectful of both their peers and the instructor and conduct themselves in a manner that is in accordance with the university's Code of Conduct. Cell phones should be kept off or on silent for the duration of class. Texting and using social media are not allowed during class. Students are expected to bring their writing materials to each class in order to take notes during lectures.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#)

to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 08/24 – 08/28	Course Introduction Definition of Communication Definition of Mass Communication Mass Communication Theory	N/A
Week 2 08/31 – 09/04	Mass Communication Theory Cont'd Pervasiveness of Mass Media Effects of Mass Media	N/A
Week 3 09/07-09/11	Industry Concerns Formation of Mass Media	Test 1 – 09/10
Week 4 09/14 – 09/18	Media Convergence: Brief History Role of the Internet Current Problems	Journal Entry 1
Week 5 09/21 – 09/25	Print: Newspapers Magazines Books	Journal Entry 2
Week 6 09/28 – 10/02	Aural: Radio Recording	Journal Entry 3
Week 7 10/05 – 10/09	Visual: Television (over-the-air/cable/ satellite/streaming) Film (Theatre/Streaming)	Journal Entry 4
Week 8 10/12 – 10/16	Strategic Communication: Advertising Public Relations	Mid-Term Exam – 10/13
Week 9 10/19 – 10/23	Strategic Communication Cont'd	Journal Entry 5
Week 10 10/26 – 10/30	Freedom of Expression/First Amendment	Journal Entry 6
Week 11 11/02 – 11/06	Final Project Details Freedom of Expression/First Amendment Cont'd	N/A
Week 12 11/09 – 11/13	First Amendment Cont'd	

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 13 11/16-11/20	First Amendment Cont'd World-Wide Web/Social Media	N/A
Week 14 11/23-11/27	World-Wide Web/Social Media Cont'd Thanksgiving Holiday – November 25 th – 29 th	N/A
Week 15 11/30 – 12/04	FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS	Final Project – 12/01 & 12/03