



MCOM 1233 Mass Media and Society

Fall 2023 | TR 5:00PM-6:20PM | D101

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor: Christy Johnson

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Course Description & Objectives

This course discusses the basic principles of the mass media. We will interrogate the structure of our media system, functions of media, changes taking place in media and the potential effects of media. In this course, you should become more informed about how media work, what they do to us and for us.

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

You begin your core for mass communication with this course. This course also satisfies the Cultural & Global Understanding MSU core curriculum requirement. Students of any major can benefit from this course because they will become better-informed media consumers. Students are encouraged to seek out more in-depth readings on various topics.

Recommended Textbook & Materials

Materials will be distributed during class, through email, or posted to D2L.

Course Requirements

Exams:

Over the course of the semester there will be 2 exams that will test your knowledge of the required reading material and class discussion.

If you miss an exam, you will receive a grade of ZERO. No make-up exams will be given, except in case of a documented emergency or serious illness.

Journal:

You will choose a topic related to issues within the social, cultural, political, or economic forces of our society and use it throughout your journal. Your journal entries should include significant developments or works related to your topic through the lens of the time period discussed. More information will be provided in class.

In-class activities:

During the class, we will have in-class activities including discussions, finding relevant examples of media, and creating media content with various platforms (e.g., TV, print, radio, social-media, games, etc.). The details and instructions will be provided in class.

Participation

- This class includes various class activities. The activities are designed to be interesting and to help you learn. Thus, your active participation will affect how much you learn and how well you do in the course.
- If emergencies arise or your circumstances change, please communicate with me. This will help us work together to try to find a solution for your situation.
- In class, please:
 - behave professionally
 - arrive on time
 - be prepared
 - pay attention
 - actively participate
 - treat others with courtesy and respect
 - use language thoughtfully
- If you miss class, you miss the chance to participate in your education and the education of others in class. Your peers are counting on you to be in class and to participate.

Attendance

- Attendance will be taken at each class, and you will be allowed a total of **three** absences without penalty or question (i.e., unexcused absences). This does not apply to exam days (see Tentative Class Schedule). After your third unexcused absence, however, you will lose points from your participation grade and credit for class activities for each additional class missed.
- In case of excused absences, appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's notes, obituaries) must be handed in to me within a week. If you arrive late or leave early for a class, you will not receive full credit for attendance on that day.
- Finally, if you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and arrange with the instructor to make it up. As for missed assignments, if you have a legitimate explanation, alternate arrangements can be made at my discretion.

Grading

- Midterm exam = 20%
- Final exam = 20%
- Journal = 20%
- Class activities = 30%
- Participation = 10%
- Total = 100 %

Grading Criteria

The following scale will be used to determine the final grade:

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

Statements Related to the Current COVID-19 Situation

- Scientific data shows that being fully vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 and has the greatest probability of avoiding serious illness if infected in all age groups. Although MSU Texas is not mandating vaccinations in compliance with Governor Abbott's executive orders, we highly encourage eligible members of our community to get a vaccination. If you have questions or concerns about the vaccine, please contact your primary care physician or health care professional.
- Given the recent rise in cases, individuals are also strongly encouraged to wear facial coverings when indoors among groups of people, regardless of vaccination status. Although MSU Texas is not currently requiring facial coverings, they have been an effective strategy in slowing the spread.
- Safety and health of all are our top considerations. If you feel sick, do not come to class. If you need to miss class, contact me as outlined under class procedures, and I will work with you.

Course Policies

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is: (1) using someone else's source material (published or unpublished, including content from the Internet) without following accepted citation guidelines; or (2) submitting work that is not your own. The instructor will take appropriate disciplinary action for students if a student is caught cheating, plagiarizing or fabricating information. The MSU Student Honor Creed in your student handbook and the university catalog reinforces this policy: "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so." By remaining enrolled in this class, you acknowledge that you have learned the meaning of the term *academic dishonesty*. Students cannot use the excuse that they do not understand the concept of academic dishonesty.

2. **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):** You are permitted to use ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence (AI) tools to assist you in gathering information and brainstorming ideas but you may not copy and paste information directly from the AI tool and present it as your own without citation. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query and for assuring that it does not contain misinformation or unethical content and that it does not violate intellectual property laws. You are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of your assignment describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "ChatGPT was used to draft approximately 50 percent of this assignment and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style." Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited for academic integrity. For this course, we will use APA (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>).
3. **Disruptive Behavior:** Any student's classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or other students' ability to benefit from the instruction – or violates any other Standard of Conduct applicable to the classroom environment – will result in his/her removal from the class. (See MSU Student Handbook, "Standards of Student Conduct.").
4. **Special Accommodations:** Any student with a disability who is registered with the MSU Office of Disability Support Services (940-397-4140, CSC Room 168) and needs specific accommodations, or requires other considerations because of a disability, should notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester to ensure that these accommodations are provided. Please note that all information provided to me remains confidential.
5. **Cell Phones and Other Recording Devices:** The use of cell phones and other recording or electronic devices is strictly prohibited during class. The instructor may permit, from time to time, the use of cell phones for legitimate class reasons. Recording the class is prohibited, unless it is part of a reasonable accommodation under ADA, or unless students have special permission from the instructor. Computers/devices may be used for the purpose of taking notes during class; however, their use must be limited to course-related activities.
6. **Limited Right:** The university requires faculty to provide this statement to all students: By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.

7. **FERPA:** As a result of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, federal law bars the instructor from releasing information about students to parties outside the university – including parents/guardian - without the student's signed consent. Thus, in almost all cases the instructor will not discuss your academic progress or other matters with your parents. The instructor will only discuss grades with students. If there are any grade issues, the instructor will discuss grades during office hours.

8. **Campus Carry:** Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective Aug. 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at <https://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>. Please be advised that any violations of the law will be reported immediately.

9. **Social justice:** Social justice is one of Midwestern State University's core values, and I consider the classroom to be a place where students will be treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged. It is my expectation that ALL students be able to consider the classroom a safe environment.

Tentative Class Schedule

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to change and or move around scheduled lectures in order to facilitate potential unplanned events (cancellations or guest speakers). You will be notified ahead of time of any changes to the schedule.

Week Of	Topic
August 28: Week 1	Intro. to Mass Media and Society
Sept. 4: Week 2	Media Effects
Sept. 11: Week 3	History of Mass Media
Sept. 18: Week 4	1900s: The Beginning of Wireless Communication
Sept. 25: Week 5	1910s/1920s: The Roaring Screens: Mass Media and Cultural Revolution
Oct. 2: Week 6	1930s: Mass Media Amidst Change No Class Thursday, Oct. 5/Midterm Online
Oct. 9: Week 7	1940s: Mass Communication in an Era of Conflict
Oct. 16: Week 8	1950s: Golden Reels and Screens: Mass Media and the Postwar Paradigm
Oct. 23: Week 9	1960s: Revolution and Reshaping of Society
Oct. 30: Week 10	1970s: Mass Media and Societal Shifts
Nov. 6: Week 11	1980s: Decade of Diversity: Mass Communication in a Globalizing World
Nov. 13: Week 12	1990s: Mass Media and the Digital Age
Nov. 20: Week 13	2000s: Mass Media in the Age of Connectivity No Class Thursday, Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving)
Nov. 27: Week 14	2010s: Mass Communication in a Changing Landscapes
Dec. 4: Week 15	Modern Day Issues and Concerns/Review
Dec. 11: Week 16	Final Exam Tuesday, Dec. 12-5:45 p.m.