123-01 Introduction to Communication and the Media

Gwyneth Mellinger
COMM 123 – INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIA
FALL 2014
10 A.M. TO 11:15 P.M. TUES/THURS

Instructor: Dr. Gwyneth Mellinger
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Office Hours: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. M (also by appointment)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This introductory course will acquaint students with the human communication process and the media that make mass communication possible. The class will cover most print, electronic, digital, and hybrid media and examine the effects of media and media institutions on individuals and society. The class discussions, activities, and readings will explore the historical, social, political, cultural, legal, and economic aspects of the communication process and the industries that evolved around them.

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

• Identify key functions of human communication and the mass media.
• Describe the social and economic history of the mass media.
• Analyze the mass media’s role in the modern communication process.
• Critique the media’s impact on human relationships and on democracy.
• Describe the interrelationship between media and culture.

REQUIRED READINGS/VIEWINGS:


(Additional readings and videos may be posted on the class Canvas site.)

CLASS STRUCTURE:

This course consists of four units. Students should plan to read assigned chapters prior to the week in which we will explore the material in class. Class meetings will be devoted to discussion and activities focused on concepts from the reading and from students’ observations of the media. As such, we also will take time for students’ mini-presentations on news about the media and relevant media content that they have discovered on their own. Most weeks we also will take individual and team quizzes.

CLASS ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:

In a class in which participation contributes to the learning process for all students, regular attendance is necessary. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period and students will receive five attendance points for each time they are present when roll is taken. Once class begins, the instructor will not be able to adjust the roll to make note of late arrivals. There is only one way to earn these points: Be on time and be present when roll is taken.

This policy is not meant to penalize but to reward. The conscientious student who comes down with the flu, decides to take a day off from class, or must travel for an athletic event will not be hurt by this policy. For information about the university policy on attendance, please see the University Catalog.
**Tests/Quizzes:**

We will take regular quizzes and two exams, with the last test scheduled for the final exam period, which is 8:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 18.

Most Thursdays students will take the weekly quiz individually, then will retake the same quiz in small groups. We’ll then average the two quiz grades together.

Students will be divided into groups of three or four to facilitate teamwork on the weekly quizzes. We will reconfigure the teams at mid-semester to allow students to collaborate with others in the class.

Individual quizzes and exams will be seated and proctored. All electronic devices, including earpieces and Internet-enabled wristwatches, will be stored in bags or backpacks and will not be accessible during testing. Once quizzes and exams are distributed, students may not leave the room and return to resume the test.

All students are expected to takes quizzes and exams at the scheduled times. As a general rule, makeup and early quizzes and exams will not be given. Students who must miss class to participate in a university-sponsored activity, including athletic competition, will be allowed to take the quiz or exam prior to the absence. Students who anticipate missing a quiz or test because of a university-sponsored activity are responsible for making all necessary arrangements with the professor at least one week before the absence.

Students who must miss a quiz or test because of illness or a family emergency, including a funeral, must notify the professor prior to the absence, and provide documentation. Accommodations for the missed quiz or test will depend on the circumstances; only in the most extraordinary circumstances will makeups be scheduled retroactively.

No early or makeup quizzes or tests will be given to accommodate discretionary travel. For example, students should consult the syllabus before purchasing airline tickets to travel during breaks and should advise their parents of dates when travel means missing a quiz or exam.

Bottom line: Early and makeup quizzes and exams will be rare, and the decision to grant them is the professor’s. Fairness and the equitable treatment of all students in the class will be the guiding principles in making such determinations.

**Mini-Presentations:**

Students will also be assigned to one of four “mini-presentation” rosters. Most weeks, each student in a designated group will write a two-page paper on a topic related to the week’s assigned chapter – either a current news item about the media or a media example that illustrates a concept discussed in the reading. News items should have been published within the past year. In the paper students will explain the artifact’s relevance to the week’s reading and to the class as a whole. This assignment should be uploaded to the Canvas site as a Word document. It should be double-spaced and include both formal documentation (internal references and works-cited list) and links to any Web resources.

Papers must be uploaded to the assignment link on Canvas by 8 a.m. on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted.

Each week students who submitted papers will share their items with the class. When called upon, students must be prepared to present the content of their papers using classroom technology. Students must be in class to present; any videos should consume no more than 1.5
minutes. The entire presentation should take five minutes (not, three, not ten – but FIVE). Students will not be reminded when their papers are due and their presentations scheduled. Please make note of your group’s weeks and put those dates on your calendar. A combined rubric for the paper and presentation is attached to this syllabus.

**Canvas:**

We will use the course Canvas site for the grade book, announcements, and submission of mini-presentation papers. Please set your notification preferences in Canvas. You will be responsible for all notifications sent through the course Canvas site, including information about assignment changes and class cancellations.

The syllabus is archived on the Canvas site and also may be viewed there.

**Use of Electronic:**

Please silence your phones at the beginning of class.

In contrast to some other courses, your electronic devices are not banned here (except during exams, as noted above). In fact, during many regular class sessions, we will use our phones, laptops, and tablets to look up answers to questions or resolve disagreements that arise during discussions. That said, please do not use these devices for social communication during class or to shop for shoes and concert tickets.

An illustration will clarify this distinction: “With freedom comes responsibility.” Had you heard those words during a class discussion and wondered about their origin, you might have performed an Internet search and learned that this quotation is attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt. That would be an appropriate in-class use of a smart phone; texting a friend during class to share this bit of wisdom would not.

**Et Cetera:**

In order to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of all students, there will be no "extra credit" opportunities available in this class. All students will have the same opportunity to succeed in this course and will be governed by the same syllabus.

If you need help at any point in the semester, please let me know immediately.

That said, please come see me at some point in the semester, even if you are not facing challenges in the class. I am deeply interested in your thoughts about communication and the media, your coursework, your academic experience in college, your interest in internships and community service, and so forth. Just as access to faculty is one of the reasons you are attending Xavier and not a large state institution, the opportunity to know my students is a reason I am teaching at Xavier and not a large state institution.

**Academic Integrity:**

Honesty is a foundational requirement in a community of scholars committed to learning and discovery. The university’s policy in this area, which is found in the online University Catalog, will guide us:

The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism,
Unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation.

All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own.

Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an “F” in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course. If disputes of interpretation arise, the student, faculty member, and chair should attempt to resolve the difficulty. If this is unsatisfactory, the dean will rule in the matter. As a final appeal, the academic vice president will call a committee of tenured faculty for the purpose of making a final determination.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodations, you must register with Disability Services in the Learning Assistance Center before accommodations can be implemented. The first step to coordinate reasonable accommodations is to contact the Learning Assistance Center (745-3280) in the Conaton Learning Commons, Suite 514, to schedule an appointment. Then, you will need to meet with me to discuss your accommodations for this course. (This statement was prepared by the LAC staff.)

If you are certified to receive extra time on quizzes and tests, or you require a note taker or other assistance in the classroom, please see me the first week of class.

**GRADING:**

This percentage scale will be used to assign letter grades on students’ final point totals:

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<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>94 - 100</td>
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<td>90 - 93</td>
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The points determining the final grade will be derived from the following:

- Two exams (200 points each) = 400
- Thirteen quizzes (10 points each) = 130
- Three mini-presentations (40 points each) = 120
- Advertising assignment (40 points) = 40
- Attendance/participation (5 points/class) = 145 (estimate)

To allow some flexibility, the professor reserves the right to reduce the number of points available by, for example, cancelling a quiz.
**Tentative Class Schedule:**

Please listen in class and monitor the announcements on Canvas for any changes in the following course calendar, including the addition of readings and videos. This tentative class schedule will allow students to plan for recurring deadlines, quizzes, and exams, though it is possible that those dates may change slightly.

**UNIT ONE**
Mass Communication, the Internet & Digital Media

**Week 1: Aug. 26 & 28**

- Course introduction
- Review for practice quiz by focusing on pp. 36-7 and main concepts in Chapter 16

**Week 2: Sept. 2 & 4**

- Read Chapter 2, “The Internet, Digital Media, and Media Convergence,” pp. 43-73
- Group 1 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Sept. 2)
- Quiz 1: Review for graded quiz by focusing on pp. 74-5

**Week 3: Sept. 9 & 11**

- Read Chapter 13, “Media Economics & the Global Marketplace,” pp. 449-77
- Group 2 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Sept. 9)
- Quiz 2: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 478-9

**Week 4: Sept. 16 & 18**

- Read Chapter 3, “Digital Gaming and the Media Playground,” pp. 77-111
- Group 3 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Sept. 16)
- Quiz 3: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 112-13

**UNIT TWO**
Sounds and Images

**Week 5: Sept. 23 & 25**

- Read Chapter 4, “Sound Recording and Popular Music,” pp. 119-51
- Group 4 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Sept. 23)
- Quiz 4: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 152-3
Week 6: Sept. 30 & Oct. 2

- Read Chapter 5, “Popular Radio and the Origins of Broadcasting,” pp. 155-89; Chapter 16, pp. 565-73 only
- Group 1 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Sept. 30)
- Quiz 5: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 190-1 and relevant concepts in Chapter 16

Week 7: Oct. 7

- First 200-point Exam
- Fall Break: No class on Thursday, Oct. 9

Week 8: Oct. 14 & 16

- Group 2 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Oct. 14)
- Quiz 6: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 234-5

Week 9: Oct. 21 & 23

- Read Chapter 7, “Movies and the Impact of Images,” pp. 237-67; Chapter 16, pp. 561-5 only
- Group 3 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Oct. 21)
- Quiz 7: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 268-9 and relevant sections of Chapter 16

UNIT THREE
Words and Pictures

Week 10: Oct. 28 & 30

- Read Chapter 8, “Newspapers: The Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism,” pp. 275-309
- Group 4 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Oct. 28)
- Quiz 8: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 310-11

Week 10: Nov. 4 & 6

- Read Chapter 9, “Magazines in the Age of Specialization,” pp. 313-41
- Group 1 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Nov. 4)
- Quiz 9: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 342-3

Week 11: Nov. 11 & 13

- Read Chapter 10, “Books and the Power of Print,” pp. 345-73
- Group 2 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Nov. 11)
- Quiz 10: Review for quiz by focusing on pp. 374-5
UNIT FOUR
Advertising, PR and Media Effects

Week 12: Nov. 18 & 20

- Review exam
- Read Chapter 14, “The Culture of Journalism: Values, Ethics, and Democracy,” pp. 485-515
- Group 3 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Nov. 18)
- Quiz 11: Prepare for quiz by focusing on pp. 516-7

Week: 13: Nov. 25

- No class: Thanksgiving holiday. Students will complete an out-of-class assignment.

Week 14: Dec. 2 & 4

- Thanksgiving media assignment due (8 a.m. Dec. 2)
- Read Chapter 11, Advertising and Commercial Culture, pp. 381-415
- Quiz 12: Prepare for quiz by focusing on pp. 416-17

Week 15: Dec. 9 & 11

- Read Chapter 12, “Public Relations and Framing the Message,” pp. 419-45
- Group 4 mini-presentation deadline (8 a.m. Dec. 9)
- Quiz 13: Prepare for quiz by focusing on pp. 446-7

Final Exam Period: 8:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 18

ROSTERS FOR MINI-PRESENTATION DEADLINES

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<th>GROUP 1</th>
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<td>Eckerle</td>
<td>Erdelac</td>
<td>Falco</td>
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# QUIZ TEAM ROSTERS

**FIRST 6 QUIZZES (PLUS PRACTICE):**

1. Baek           Bergeman          Borah           Caponi
2. Cloney         Craycraft         Eckerle         Erdelac
3. Falco          Fantozzi          Forero           Helton
4. Hiltz          Hyman             Laipple          Lamach
5. LeRoux         Lessard           Metts            Millerick
6. Mitchell       Morris            Murphy           Nelson
7. O'Brien        Orr               Rotte            Saltis
8. Sawyer         Schutzenhofer    J. Smith          P. Smith
9. Trevithck      Truesdell         Vinson           Zanttt

**SECOND 7 QUIZZES:**

1. Eckerle        Hyman             Mitchell         Saltis
2. Craycraft       Trevethick       Orr              Metts
3. Forero          Caponi            J. Smith         Nelson
4. Sawyer          Morris            Laipple          Erdelac
5. Vinson          Truesdell         Rotte            Millerick
6. Helton          Cloney            P. Smith         O'Brien
7. Le Roux         Fantozzi          Borah            Shutzenhofer
8. Baek            Murphy            Lamach           Falco
9. Hiltz           Lessard           Zanttt
10. Bergeman
COMM 123: Intro to Communication & Media
Mini-Presentation Rubric

_____ of 40 points

TOPIC: _____ of 5 points

- Is the topic relevant to the week’s reading assignment?
- Does the topic have clear relevance to media and communication?
- Is the topic current? Is the media article or artifact less than one year old? If historical, is the topic clearly related to the current state of media and communication?
- If presented, does the presenter make clear to the audience why the topic is appropriate for this assignment?

THE PAPER: _____ of 20 points

- Is the paper at least two FULL pages and no more than three pages in length (standard Word margins, 12-point Times or Times New Roman, double-spaced)?
- Is the paper well-written? Has it been proofread? Is it free of mechanical errors?
- Does the introduction make the topic’s relevance clear and offer a focused thesis statement?
- Does the paper thoroughly and clearly discuss the topic and its relevance to media & communication?
- Does the paper offer a distinct conclusion?

DOCUMENTATION: _____ of 5 points

- Does the paper include a bibliography that contains a full citation for each source AND the url for any online source?
- Is borrowed material correctly acknowledged within the body of the paper?
- Are paraphrase and direct quotation performed correctly?

PRESENTATION: _____ of 10 points

- Was the student in class to present when called upon? (-10 if the student’s absence is unexcused)
- Does the presenter offer a clear statement of the topic’s relevance?
- Does the presenter clearly describe the article or artifact?
- Does the presenter include visuals that enhance the presentation or clarify the topic?
- Does the presenter speak clearly and display a professional demeanor when speaking before the class?