

***The University of Findlay***  
**College of Liberal Arts**  
**FALL 2007 Syllabus**

***The Mission of the University of Findlay is to equip our students  
for meaningful lives and productive careers.***

COMM 170.01 Introduction to Mass Communication  
Credit hours: 3  
Meeting time/place: MWF GFAP 110  
Prerequisites: none

Instructor: Diana Montague, Ph.D.  
Faculty office: 1124 N. Cory St. # G  
(419)434-4623 Fax (419)434-4616  
Office hours:  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9-10 a.m.  
Thursday 9-11 a.m.  
Also by appointment

**Course Description**

Students examine the history of journalism, the influence that journalism has had on American culture, international press issues, current media controversies, and ethical and legal issues involved in mass communication.

**Relationship to the Conceptual Framework:**

This course will introduce you to the many facets of mass communication, with an emphasis on exploring the mass media's cultural impact and developing media literacy skills.

**Course objectives:**

Through lecture, class discussion, group projects, Web postings and individual projects, this course will examine the media's history, controversies, adaptation to technological advancements, ethical policies, and ongoing impact on culture. Each chapter of the Baran text has explicit objectives and goals that will address these issues and help hone media literacy skills.

***Required Textbooks  
and other materials***

- Intro. to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture  
Fifth Edition by Stanley J. Baran. Mayfield Publishing (2008)  
ISBN 9780073302713
- CD-ROMs that accompany text

***Knowledge Base***

In addition to the text, videos/DVDs, Web sites and newspaper articles will be used.

## **Grading policy**

Tests and quizzes must be taken when they are scheduled; no make-up tests or quizzes will be given. Late homework and projects will **not** be accepted. (Deadlines are everything in journalism.)

You will have the option of either doing a 15-minute class presentation on a current issue in a specific medium/media field or a traditional research paper on a topic approved by the instructor. Details and deadlines for these options will be discussed early in the semester.

### Grade percentages:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Exams: (4 @15 percent)                                   | 60 percent |
| Homework, blackboard postings,<br>Current events quizzes | 15 percent |
| Research project/ class presentation                     | 10 percent |
| Final exam:  | 15 percent |

### Grading scale:

|    |        |    |       |
|----|--------|----|-------|
| A  | 93-100 | C  | 73-76 |
| A- | 90-92  | C- | 70-72 |
| B+ | 87-89  | D+ | 67-69 |
| B  | 83-86  | D  | 63-66 |
| B- | 80-82  | D- | 60-62 |
| C+ | 77-79  | F  | 0-59  |

## **Course expectations:**

Communication is a field that runs on deadlines. It also runs on personal responsibility and maturity. As a student, school IS your job. You are expected to be here and be on time, but there will be no attendance policy for this class. You are responsible for what is presented in class whether you are here or not, so if you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from your classmates. **Any quiz, exam or in-class project that is missed cannot be made up.** NOTE: If you're late to class on a quiz day you may begin taking the quiz from the point you arrive in class.

You are expected to read assigned chapters **before** you come to class—this will make our classroom time more interesting as we can have more questions and discussion about the issues in the text rather than extensive lecture on what you should have read. When there are homework assignments to be done online, they should be posted on Blackboard under “Discussion Board,” by the stated deadline for each assignment. Each posting is worth up to 10 homework points; late postings won't be given homework credit. Other media-related homework assignments will also be assigned.

Because the news is "new" every day, we will also discuss current events in class and have weekly quizzes (usually on Fridays). Thus, to be prepared for classroom activities and get a variety of perspectives of current events, you should read newspapers (print and online editions), listen to radio news, and watch television, particularly TV news.

## **Classroom decorum**

- Please turn off all cell phones and pagers before class begins. (If a cell phone rings in class, I get to answer it.)
- No food, beverages or tobacco products are allowed in the classroom, so please do not bring any to class.
- As conflict is a staple of media history and current media practices, I hope we will have lively conversation as we examine the media/culture connections. There should be dissenting opinions amongst us--I just ask that we hold our discussions in a manner that respects other speakers and different points of view.

## **Final Exam Date:**

Wednesday, December 12

2 p.m. (take-home final due submitted through Blackboard)

## **The University of Findlay Honor Code:**

I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie or commit any act of plagiarism during my academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University's Honor Code, I may, in my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.

## **Plagiarism policy**

Any unauthorized use of another's work will not be tolerated in this course. This means you cannot copy others' work, nor can you use information gathered by another person as your own research. (Don't copy quotes or other text out of a previously published article without specific attribution to that article.) **Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course.** Here's a good Website from Washington State University on plagiarism:

<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/main.html>

## **Special Services**

If you are a student with a disability, it is your responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Service and notify your instructor one week prior to any needed service so that reasonable accommodations can be made for you.

## **Course and Instructor Evaluation**

The University of Findlay cares about the quality of your education. So do I. During the final week of classes, you may have the opportunity to respond to a course evaluation form concerning COMM 170. Your anonymity is assured. The results will not be communicated to the instructor until after grades are delivered. The results are used to guide course design and delivery in future classes. Both the professor and the Dean have the opportunity to read and discuss the results of your course evaluations. Student responses are used in the evaluation of the professor, the course and the program. Your opinions, suggestions and insights are important to me and to the department. What's more, I want to hear from you during the semester because I believe that more immediate evaluation is important to our work. I encourage you to talk with me outside of class to discuss how we are doing.

## General Education Learning Outcomes Addressed

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Goal 1. Students will take courses which expose them to a range of basic religious beliefs and diverse ethical perspectives and which encourage them to develop their own perspectives on global issues.               |   |
| Goal 2. Students will become familiar with the historical, scientific, literary, and/or philosophical content of a range of disciplines.   | X |
| Goal 3. Students will acquire and practice skills for reading, writing, speaking, listening, abstract inquiry, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and using computers and related technology.                       |   |
| Goal 4. Students will develop an appreciation for and means of analyzing art, literature, music, communication, science, and/or theatre.   | X |
| Goal 5. Throughout their general education experience, students will analyze and reflect upon the challenges facing our global society as well as the importance of being a life-long learner and responsible citizen. | X |
|  |   |

## *Instructional Strategies*

|                                     |   |                                 |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Debate                              | X | Library and Internet Research   | X |
| Discovery/Independent Research      | X | Reading assignments             | X |
| Discussion/Questioning/Interviewing | X | Video/Audio Review and Critique | X |
| Experiential Learning               | X | Lecture                         | X |

## *Methods of Assessment*

|                             |   |                                 |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Electronic Discussion Board | X | Participation                   | X |
| Exams                       | X | Quizzes                         | X |
|                             |   | Research project & presentation | X |

### **A note to communication majors:**

Communication majors are required to prepare a portfolio for COMM 410 Senior Assessment--a required course--during their senior year. The portfolio must document the skills you have developed in all areas relevant to your major. Please save CLEAN (no teacher's marks), revised copies of all relevant assignments, presentations, term papers, etc., so you won't have to begin your portfolio from scratch.

### **Tentative Course Outline (Subject to minor revisions throughout the semester)**

#### **Week of:**

- Aug. 27** Introduction to course, **Ch. 1** Mass Comm, Culture and Literacy
- Sept 3** Ch. 1 continued (**no class Monday—Labor Day**)  
begin **Ch. 2** The Evolving Mass Communication Process
- Sept. 10** **Ch. 2** The Evolving Mass Communication Process
- Sept. 17** **Ch. 13** theories and effects **Test: Friday ch 1, 2, 13**
- Sept. 24** **Ch. 3** books
- Oct. 1** **Ch. 4** newspapers
- Oct. 8** **Ch. 5** magazines **test Friday ch 3, 4, 5**
- Oct. 15** **Ch. 6** film
- Oct. 22** **Ch. 7** radio, recording, popular music
- Oct. 29** **Ch. 8** television
- Nov. 5** **Ch. 10** Internet and World Wide Web **test Friday 6, 7, 8, 10**
- Nov. 12** **Ch. 11** Public Relations and **Ch. 12** Advertising
- Nov. 19** **Ch. 12** Advertising
- Nov. 26** **Ch. 14** media freedom, regulation, ethics
- Dec 3** **Ch. 15** global media **test Friday ch 11, 12, 14, 15**

#### **Final Exam Date:**

Wednesday, December 12

2 p.m. (take-home final due)