

Instructor: Dr. Christopher White

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Classroom: DRCB 125 M Days 9:00-9:50

Office Hours: # 102 M/W 10-11 and 3-5 and T Days 10-11 and 3-5

Text: *Introduction to Mass Communication* by Baran 5<sup>th</sup> edition

Course Description: This course will survey the history and theory of mass media in American society with an emphasis on issues in broadcast television, broadcast radio and print journalism. Topics addressed include: the impact of the printing press, the evolution of print media, the telegraph, the film camera and wireless technologies; the structure of contemporary media industries; the influence of advertisers, regulatory agencies and ratings services; the production, distribution and syndication systems; the social influence and use of mass media content; and the relationship of media content to the development of personal and collective values.

Students will be introduced to essential concepts in communication theory, to significant events in media history, to emerging developments in the print and electronic media industries. MCM 130 will prepare students for effectively assessing a socio-political environment that is increasingly mediated by mass communication messages. Fundamental skills essential to the development of Media Literacy will be emphasized with regular in-class critiques of print and television content. MCM 130 will familiarize students with the essential terms and analytical skills central to media studies and is designed to prepare first-year students and transfer students for more advanced studies in upper-division professional, production and theoretical courses.

Course Objectives: Ask yourself a question: What do you think about mass media in America? I hope that after you leave this class you will have a different -- more complex and critical -- appreciation of our media environment. That is, I hope you will never watch TV, listen to the radio or read a newspaper the same way again.

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- understand essential terms and nomenclature employed in media studies
- assess the emergence & development of print & electronic mass media in American history
- apply theoretical concepts related to mass media studies
- describe how mass media in American interacts with politics, business and personal values
- critique the economic structure of the American mass media industries
- develop media literacy skills to become more self-empowered & socially engaged

The class will consist of lectures, screenings and discussion. Take notes. Every day. Date your notes. That helps. Honest. You might be tested on *anything* that is said or screened in-class. Hand-outs, too. View screenings critically and note the video that is screened, note why it was shown and remember any comments made regarding the screening. Lecture notes are not posted on Blackboard.

Grades: Four (4) tests                      50+50+100+100

Tests composed of multiple-choice questions and short answer/essays.

There will be two written assignments that will require you to (1) analyze a TV advertisement in detail and (2) keep a personal, analytical diary of media use. Up to 10 points MAY be added to your final total if these assignments are completed to my satisfaction (5 pts apiece).

Grade Scale: A - 270-300    B - 240-269    C - 210-239    D - 180-209    F - 0-179

Make-up Exams available only in extreme cases. They are likely to be essay. Ouch!

Attendance: after five (5) absences, subtract 10 points from your final grade total for each additional absence (For whatever reason -- no excuses accepted. Don't waste absences!

Being late for class is considered being absent. I take roll regularly, please be seated and ready to go to work by the time I finish the roll. Exceptions made for weather conditions. After an absence you are responsible for all work assigned for the next class. Do not ask me "What happened last class?" Find out from a classmate.

### Additional Policies

No beepers, cell phones, palm-pilots, MP-3 players, satellite dishes or anything that otherwise beeps, vibrates or whistles allowed in class. No eating, sleeping or doing work unrelated to the class. Live with it. Do not do work from other classes in my class. Use laptops ONLY for doing work for this class. In fact, during my classes, DO NOT do work for any other class or for any other purpose. Generally students will refrain from behavior that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process. And please maintain complete honesty and integrity in your academic experience both in and out of this classroom (this from Faculty Handbook).

Note: No calling the Instructor at home. Never, ever, never – that's why God created Office hours & Email. Extra Credit: Except for the aforementioned 10 points -- None. But I do notice intelligent, active in-class participation.

### Readings & Course Outline

The schedule for readings and/or lectures is likely to change -- depending on current events related to the mass media. You will always be informed at least a week ahead of time when a chapter or part of a chapter is due. Some chapters will be read in their entirety (like Chapter 1); some chapters will read in their entirety but split-up (like Chapter 6); and some chapters will be read only in part (like Chapter 13). Exact page numbers for reading assignments will be announced in class. Some additional chapters or sections of chapters may be assigned during the semester & some materials may be put on reserve at the library.

1st Week	Introduction
2nd Week	Ch 1 Mass Communication, Culture & Literacy
3rd Week	Beginning of Ch. 3 Books, Ch 4 Newspapers, Ch 5 Magazines
	First Test during Week Four (exact date TBA)
4 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 6 Film
5 & 6 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 7 Radio & Sound Recording (beginning)
	Second Test About Week Seven (TBA)
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 8 Television
9 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 7 Radio & Sound Recording (end)
10 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 5 Magazines (end) & Ch 3 Newspapers (end)
11 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 14 Regulations & Ch 2 The Evolving Communication Process
	Third Test about Week Eleven (TBA)
12 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 11 Public Relations & Ch 12 Advertising
13 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 13 Theories & Effects
14 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch 15 Global Media
15 <sup>th</sup> Week	Ch. 10 The Internet and the WWW
	Fourth Test scheduled by SHSU during Finals Week

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Students with disabilities covered by the Americans with disability Act should go to the Counseling Center and Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in a timely manner to obtain the documentation required. Students are responsible for initiating the process of documenting the need for an accommodation under the ADA act.

### **Religious Observance**

University policy allows for students to observe religious holy days without penalty. If you intend to miss class as a result of the observance of a religious holy days or as a result of the necessary traveling time required for religious observance, such an absence will not be penalized so long as you have notified the instructor in writing of the dates and times of class sessions that are missed. The deadline for notification is the 12 class day. Students Absent from class as a result of religious observance are required to submit any due assignments immediately on their return to the classroom. Makeup tests and quizzes will also be provided on return to the class. 1.01 Section 51.925 of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education shall allow a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. The student, not later than the 15th calendar day after the first day of the semester, or the 7th calendar day after the first day of a summer session, must notify the instructor of each scheduled class that he/she would be absent for a religious holy day.