

**William Paterson University
COMM 1200, Media and Society
Winter 2015/16**

Online Class

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Please put “Student Comm 1200” in the subject line when emailing.

Office hours are by appointment only: The best way to get my attention is by e-mail. I’m online frequently. Please try to keep the message short. If you have something that needs face-to-face discussion, please contact me to set up an appointment.

Required Text: No assigned text – multiple readings as assigned by the professor.

Valuable Guides for this course:

Online: Term Paper Style Manual: <http://apastyle.apa.org/> - At the APA website you will find [a tutorial](#) that takes you through the basics of APA style and how to structure and format your work.

In Print: AP Stylebook. The stylebook is useful if you are planning a career in journalism. You will likely have other classes where it will come in handy.

Course Description:

This is an overview course tracing the creation, development and technology of mass media from print, radio and television to movies, cable and the Internet. Students will have opportunities to examine – *through discussion, writing and presentation* - media institutions and communication systems in terms of personal and social impact. Issues, policies and ethics of the contemporary media landscape will also be discussed, including media convergence, the shifting media platforms and the role of media in democratic expression.

So how does this class work?

EACH DAY: Your job is to respond to the day's question with your answer: a substantial couple of paragraphs or so (about 300 words total), and then leave/write one decent comment/observation and question on each of your classmate's threads after you have read them (responding to their initial 300 word answer). Simple enough so far... Then read the all questions posted to you by the other students and respond/answer to just 6 of those questions of your choice (make sure you don't answer a similar question twice). Extra credit will be given to those who engage in typed 'conversation' after this point.

Get all initial posting done by 11:59 p.m. EST, the earlier the better! It is expected that the follow up postings will of course run into the next day - so bear in mind that more than one day's topic might be active at the same time. However, all posting on a day's topic must be finished by 11:59 p.m. EST the following day. Always check back on your own threads to see what comments you need to reply to. This class is a living thing and can get busy very quickly.

Course Objectives:

- Recognize the impact media has on individuals and society.
- To relate the history of each medium and identify the social, technological and economic issues that influence them.
- Appreciate the power of each media platform and distinct formats that define each one.
- Understand the processes of each medium and how each one disseminates information.
- Understand the mass media as a business enterprise, consumer force and social institution.
- To critically analyze the information presented by the mass media through criticism, not cynicism – to become a savvy media consumer.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify and understand key events in the history of mass media.
- Identify, understand and articulate the basic theories and role of mass media in society.
- Identify and engage in an informed analysis of media-related issues and practices.
- Identify and explain how technological advances, convergence and audience fragmentation influences entertainment, news and information delivery and consumption.
- Identify and explain the key regulatory and public policy issues in media.
- Understand the role and practices of the news and entertainment industries.
- Understand and describe audience measurement and how media industries respond.

- Understand and describe the role of advertising in media.
- Understand and describe professional ethics in media.

Important Class Notes:

- All chapter readings assignments must be completed prior to the dates listed on the course schedule.
- Instructor and Student Approach - you should consider this an opportunity to work and learn in an environment of mutual respect. You need to be engaged in the discussion, and an active participant in our class.
- All your work in this class is assumed to be yours and original material. If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.
- All assignments are due on scheduled date. There is no make-up work and late submissions are not accepted.

Course Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. But things do happen. People get sick. If there's a reason that you won't participate in class for a **recognized emergency**, please, if possible, let me know ahead of time. If a pattern of absence develops, more than once, your final grade will be impacted.

As this is an online course, you must understand that **two unexcused absences (that is, failing to contribute in/to a day's online discussion) mean your final course grade will drop by a 1/2 letter grade. Three unexcused absences will result in automatic failure of the class.**

Course Requirements:

Papers (2)	50%
Class participation	20%
Final Exam	30%

I will share more detail about the group project, tests and papers as the semester develops.

Grades:

A	92-100 % Points
A-	90-91.9 % Points

B+	87-89.9 % Points
B	83-86.9 % Points
B-	80-82.9 % Points
C+	77-79.9 % Points
C	73-76.9 % Points
C-	70-72.9 % Points
D+	67-69.9 % Points
D	63-66.9 % Points
F	62 % and below