

MC-550-01: Seminar: Communications Media and Society
Department of Mass Communications
Spring 2017, 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Luis C. Almeida, Ph. D.
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Location and Meeting Time

R: 6:00pm to 8:50pm
eCenter Conference Room

Office Hours

Monday 10:00am - 11:00pm
Via email (I reply all emails)

Course pre-requisites

MC 501

Instructor's Educational Philosophy

My goal is to provide a stimulating environment for learning. I come from a cognitive constructivist point of view where I see learning as an interactive activity. I believe that the best way to learn is by doing and that we can assist learning with visuals. I am a firm believer that "a picture is worth a thousand words."

Course Description

Analysis of the contemporary posture of the media nationally and internationally, as they have depicted events and influenced popular thought.

Course Expectations

This course will consist of class discussions, writings, keynotes, research. **IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT YOU TAKE THIS CLASS SERIOUSLY. DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!!! IF YOU DO IT, CHANCES WILL BE HIGH THAT YOU WILL NOT PASS THIS CLASS.**

Course Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- 1) Discuss and elaborate thoughts on the the impacts of media in the 21st century.
- 2) Analyze the impacts of media nationally and internationally.

- 3) To isolate events in popular culture that has had an impact on media thought.
- 4) Write a final paper on technological determinism and how it impacts society today.

Required Text

Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Mass Media and Society, Expanded (12th edition). I
SBN: 978-0078050428

Becoming a Brand. The Rise of TechnoModeration (1st Edition).
ISBN: 9781682738573

Texts Produced in Pdf format by instructor

Evaluation

1. **Participation (20%)** – Showing up for class on time is a given. Participation means contributing regularly to the class, via discussion, presentation, answering and raising questions. Discussion and debate are ways of assuring your understanding and adding valuable perspective. Besides, it is the role of the communications professional to communicate regularly with management, the media and of course, targeted consumers. The class gives you the chance to test your problem-solving skills. It is important to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings and ready to discuss them. Be sure to speak up in class. Share your ideas, questions and point-of-view with the class. If you've seen or heard a particularly interesting ad, bring it in and bring it up. Let's have a dialog, not a lecture. Participation accounts for 20% of your final grade.
2. **Written Research Assignments (40%)** – Each week, you will be required to write a comprehensive analysis of literature in this class. Students will present their work to the group in class each time we meet. Students are encouraged to speak with a professor on a weekly basis in regards to their progress with their comprehensive analysis. This session will account for 40% of your final grade.
3. **Midterm (20%)**. Students are to take a midterm examination in this class. Midterm questions will be open ended in nature, produced by the professor but the taking of the exam will be open book. The midterm will be worth 20% of the student's grade.
5. **Final Exam (20%)**. Students will be required to take a final examination in this course. The final examination will be cumulative and will also follow the design format of the midterm examination. The final exam will have questions suggested by the instructor. The final exam will be worth 20% of the student's grade.

Grade Scale

90% - 100% = A

80% - 89% = B

70% - 79% = C

60% - 69% = D

<60% = F

Highly Suggested Course schedule

Date	Activities
Week #1	<u>Book Chapter</u> : Introduction to Communications Media. NOTHING DUE!
Week #2	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>American Values.</i>
Week #3	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>American Values II.</i>
Week #4	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Interactive Video Games.</i>
Week #5	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Alcohol Advertising.</i>
Week #6	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Alcohol Advertising Part II. .</i>
Week #7	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS
Week #8	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Impact of Blogging.</i>
Week #9	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Midterm Examination.
Week #10	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Impact of Blogging Part II.</i>
Week #11	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Problems of Technology.</i>

Week #12	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Technological Determinism</i>
Week #13	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Big Media.</i>
Week #14	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Big Media II.</i>
Week #15	<u>Book Chapter</u> ; DUE: Written Assignment. <i>Privacy In The Information Age.</i>
Week #16	DUE: Final Examination.

Evaluation Rubric

A= Excellent This work is comprehensive and detailed, integrating themes and concepts from discussions, lectures and readings. Writing is clear, analytical and organized. Arguments offer specific examples and concisely evaluate evidence. Students who earn this grade are prepared for class, synthesize course materials and contribute insightfully. B=Good This work is complete and accurate, offering insights at general level of understanding. Writing is clear, uses examples properly and tends toward broad analysis. Classroom participation is consistent and thoughtful. C=Average This work is correct but is largely descriptive, lacking analysis. Writing is vague and at times tangential. Arguments are unorganized, without specific examples or analysis. Classroom participation is inarticulate. D= Unsatisfactory This work is incomplete, and evidences little understanding of the readings or discussions. Arguments demonstrate inattention to detail, misunderstand course material and overlook significant themes. Classroom participation is spotty, unprepared and off topic. F=Failed This grade indicates a failure to participate and/or incomplete assignments.

Writing

Copywriters aren't the only advertising people who write. Scholars do a lot of technical writing. Presentations, research findings, research media plans, recommendations, memos, all depend on the ability to communicate succinctly and persuasively.

Original Work

Originality is the hallmark of the advertising industry. **Students caught plagiarizing in this class will receive an "F" for the assignment.** Be aware of the strong industry sanctions against plagiarism. **Students plagiarizing more than once will receive an F for the course.** Consult the Student Handbook for more information on this topic.

Make-up/Late Work Policy

I strongly suggest that students follow this syllabus verbatim. **DON'T** leave the projects to the last minute. I **WILL NOT** accept them if they are late. If students upload projects ahead of time, I will grade them accordingly. My recommendation is that students follow the syllabus's suggested deadlines! If students choose this route, chances are **very high** that students will get a good grade in this class. Students can make-up an assignment if the student provides official documentation from a physician or coach. Unjustified missed have a different protocol. Students who miss assignments without a justification or reason can make up the missed assignment by writing a 25 page paper on the subject.

Use of Email:

Assignments will not be accepted when sent via email, unless the instructor have instructed that assignments may be submitted in this format. Information regarding grades and evaluation of assignments will not be distributed to students via email. If students want to inquire about a grade on an assignment, the evaluation of an assignment, or his/her grade in the course, students are welcome to come to my office during office hours or by appointment. I do not routinely check email after office hours or on weekends.

Use of Smartphones and Laptops:

The use of cell phones or other portable communication devices at any time during class is prohibited, unless to be used in the course. Students are expected to have their cell phones turned off when entering class, otherwise. At no time will students check messages, text, or be otherwise looking at or handling your cell phone or other electronic device during class. Mutual respect is a priority in this course.

Use of laptops, tablets and other electronic devices is limited to activities directly related to class. Students may take notes on computers or use the computer for team group work as assigned during class. Students are not permitted to use a computer to access email, check Facebook, or browse the web during class, unless under special circumstances.

Student Responsibilities

Late assignments are not accepted without documentation equal to an excused absence.

Assignments are due Friday at 11:55PM. Students anticipating being absent from class for a reason consistent with the attendance policy must make arrangements for handing in an electronic copy of the assignment prior to the Friday at 11:55PM deadline when the assignment is due.

Emailed assignments will not be accepted. Let me repeat... EMAILED ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of **one (1)** unexcused class absence. A second unexcused class absence and each subsequent unexcused absence will result in the loss of one-half of a letter grade (5 percent) from the student's final grade in this course. If

students miss 30 minutes or more of a class session, students will be considered absent for the day. Documentation for absences for which a student wants to be excused must be presented to the instructor on the first day the student returns to class after the absence. **If a student misses more than 3 classes, students will receive an F for the course.**

If students have perfect attendance, e.g., students are never late for or absent from class for any reason excused or unexcused, students will receive a five percent (5%) bonus to his/her final grade at the end of the semester. A two percent (2%) bonus will be given to students who have never missed a class while healthy or without an athletic commitment.

Excused absences will be granted only for the following circumstances:

- 1) Illness that prevents class attendance. The student must have documentation from the health center or another physician that indicates the student cannot or should not attend class. Health center documentation is not acceptable unless it indicates the student is unable to attend class. Schedule your routine medical appointments at times that do not conflict with class time.
- 2) Family emergency. Serious illness or death of an immediate family member. Documentation of this emergency must be provided.
- 3) Participation in a university sponsored activity. Permission for an excused absence must be obtained in advance of the activity and the student must have a letter from the faculty sponsor indicating the student's involvement in the activity.
- 4) Activity conflict. Assignments due during a time that a student is participating in a student activity must be handed in to the instructor prior to departure or immediately upon the student's return, with the instructor's permission. Assignments due during a time when a student is excused for other reasons will be due at the beginning of the second class following the student's return, unless other arrangements are made with the instructor.

Note About Absences

Students absent or late for class are responsible for obtaining any information relating to class lectures, discussions or assignment instructions covered during their absence, from other members of the class. The instructor will not provide outlines or notes from class lectures, other than the content uploaded to blackboard.

Granting of incomplete grades:

Incomplete or "I" grades are assigned only in extreme circumstances where a student is unable to complete a course assignment due to illness or other emergency. This is a faculty decision and students should not anticipate this as an option simply because they are unable to complete the course work on deadline.

Academic Integrity Policy

You in this course are expected to act within Jackson State University's policy on academic integrity. Please refer to JSU's student handbook. All work in this course is to be completed individually, unless instructed otherwise.

Diversity Statement

Jackson State University is committed to creating a community that affirms and welcomes persons from diverse backgrounds and experiences and supports the realization of their human potential. We recognize that there are differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area. All persons are encouraged to respect the individual differences of others.

Students With Disability Accommodation

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requiring an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and Compliance Officer, P.O.Box 17999, Jackson, Ms 39217, telephone (601) 979 -2485 as early as possible in the semester. If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a documented disability, please make an appointment with the instructor before class.

Dr. Almeida's Advice

Come to class regularly and participate. Do your homework and act with respect towards your peers. **DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!** Read the weekly assignments, come prepared to learn and share. Don't hesitate to come to office hours, in case you have questions or no questions. There is no penalty to stop by, just rewards. When I was in college, I spoke with my professors regularly. This habit helped me find a career. **DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO ASK QUESTIONS!** Be proactive not reactive.

Make sure you have a backup plan. Keep in mind that flash and external hard-drives go bad. They are good options but they often fail when you need them the most. You must have a plan C. How about backing up files via dropbox or google drive? Please keep in mind that I need your files in order to give you a grade.

Be wise... Listen, plan, execute, ask! Enjoy your college career. It is likely they will be the best four years of your life.