

Journalism 1210
Mass Communication and Society
Fall 2009
MWF 8-8:50 a.m.

Instructor: James E. Mueller, Ph.D., associate professor

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Office Hours: 9:30-10:30 a.m. and noon-1 p.m. Monday and Wednesday and by appointment.

Teaching Assistant: Lindsey Coyne

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Office Hours: _____

Required Text

Biagi, Shirley. *Media Impact* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson-Wadsworth, 2005.

Recommended

Turning Point Response Device—commonly referred to as a “clicker.”

Note:

A student of this institution is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Course Description and Objectives

This course explores the general principles of mass communication including the historical, economic, social, ethical and legal factors influencing the operation and content of the mass media. It also examines the impact of new technology on media. It examines the main areas of mass communication and the careers available.

After completing the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communication.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Understand the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communication.

- Critically evaluate mass media content.
- Understand the functions and operations of the various fields of mass media including print and broadcast journalism, public relations and advertising.
- Understand the legal and ethical issues that impact mass media.

Information for students who plan to major in journalism: This is a pre-major course. Since you are in the class, you are classified as a pre-major in journalism, not as a journalism major. When you have earned at least a C in this course and the others in your pre-major, you must apply to become a major and therefore have access to upper-level journalism courses.

Each semester, you'll need to print your official transcript, highlighting all of the journalism courses that you have taken. You'll use this transcript to obtain codes in the journalism office before registering for classes.

The Department of Journalism, as of November 2006, no longer allows students to take a course more than twice. Once you have waited 12 months after receiving a D or F in a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.

Grading

Your semester grade will be determined by your score on three exams and class attendance. The exams, including the final, will not be cumulative but instead will cover about one-third of the course content. Each exam will have 50 questions worth one point apiece.

Class attendance is worth 15 points. Attendance will be taken promptly at 8 a.m. by the teaching assistant, who will mark you present if you are in your assigned seat. This process should take about 10 minutes. Students who arrive after the teaching assistant has finished marking the seating chart will be counted absent. (You may choose your seat on first-come, first-served basis. We will assign seats and begin taking attendance, Wednesday, Sept. 2.)

Students who have no more than one unexcused absence will earn the full 15 points for attendance. Students with two unexcused absences will earn 12 points. Students with 3 unexcused absences will earn 10 points. Students with more than four unexcused absences will earn 0 points for attendance.

The total points possible for the semester will be 165, although **I reserve the right to change this total by adding quizzes or homework should the need arise.**

Semester grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

| | |
|---|---|
| 90-100 percent of total points possible | A |
| 80-89 percent | B |
| 70-79 percent | C |
| 60-69 percent | D |
| Less than 60 percent | F |

If a student demonstrates exceptional improvement in test scores and has exceptional attendance, I will consider raising a borderline grade to the next highest level.

In addition, students can earn extra credit worth a maximum of 15 points—equal to about one letter grade—based on their use of a clicker. These extra credit points will be awarded at the end of the semester based on the percentage of correct answers students give to questions posed throughout each class. The total number of clicker questions has not been determined because it will depend on the progress of class discussion, but there will usually be 3-5 questions for each class. (Some of the questions will be opinion questions for which any answer provided will be counted as correct.) Students who are repeatedly absent will significantly lower their clicker point total.

Students are not required to use the clickers, and it is possible for a student to earn any grade without using the clickers. However, it is strongly recommended that students use them because there will be little or no points possible besides the exam grades and attendance. The best way to try to make up for a poor exam performance is with the clicker.

Students are not buying a grade by purchasing the clickers. Any student can earn an A by doing well on the exams. And students who buy the clickers but don't use them regularly will not earn enough points to significantly affect their grades. The clickers are simply a way to earn extra points and participate more actively in class. Active participation leads to higher exam scores. We will not use the clickers until the second or third week of the semester. We will make an announcement in class regarding the registration and use of the clickers. Each clicker is individually registered to one student. Students may not share clickers.

Students who decide to use a clicker are responsible for registering it, maintaining it, bringing it to class and learning how to use it. I will not add points for students who miss clicker questions for any reason other than an excused absence. We will devote part of a class to registering and learning how to operate the clickers. Students who miss this session for other than an excused absence will not receive individual training.

Course policies

Attendance, Extra Credit and Expectations

You are responsible for reading the assignments before class, attending class and taking notes. There will be material covered in class that is not in the textbook but will be on the exams. In addition, at times I will present some information that is different from the material in the textbook, and I will expect you to know that for the exams.

Power Points will be posted on Blackboard, but they are not a substitute for attending class. The Power Point outlines are just that—an outline of the lecture. You should take notes explaining the bullet points in the outlines. If you do miss class, you should get the notes from a fellow student. Do not email or call me to find out what you missed. There are more than 300 students in this class. I cannot go over material individually for students who miss class.

You will lose the points for any exams, clicker questions or other assignments that you miss because of absence or tardiness.

Making up missed work will only be allowed in the rare case of documented illness or family emergency. Documentation for an illness is a note from a doctor or nurse that states explicitly that the student was too ill to attend class. Documentation for a family emergency could be a note from a relative explaining the emergency and should include a phone number so the instructor can verify the note. **You are responsible for turning in such documentation during the class period within one week of the absence(s). You will not be allowed to take a makeup if you miss this deadline.**

Cheating, including but not limited to plagiarism, copying from another student's exam or using another student's clicker to enter data for that student, will not be tolerated. See the Journalism Department Honor Code for more detail on these standards. The minimum punishment in this class for such cheating will be an F for the assignment in which the offense occurred, but I may assign an F for the course depending upon the nature of the offense. The offense may also be reported to the department administration for possible further disciplinary action.

Students who disrupt the class by talking, entering the classroom late, using cell phones, and/or using laptops for games or surfing may be asked to leave. The instructor may drop students who repeatedly disrupt the class with these types of behaviors.

The Journalism Department complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a qualifying disability as defined in the ADA and would like to request accommodation, please see the instructor by the 12th class day.

Email

I will make every effort to respond to student email within 24 hours Monday through Friday, but because of the size of this class and my other duties for the university, that will not always be possible. Do not expect a reply during the weekend.

Your email subject line should include "1210 class." Your email should address me as Dr. Mueller, and you should include your full name and student number. **Use the email address at the top of the syllabus. Do not email me through Blackboard. I do not check that email address as frequently as the address at the top of the syllabus.**

Tentative Course Calendar

Every effort will be made to adhere to the following schedule. **However, I reserve the right to change the schedule should the need arise.** Readings should be done at the beginning of the week. Chapters refer to the Biagi text.

Week beginning:

Aug. 28 Introduction to class.

Aug. 31 Mass Media and Everyday Life. Chapter 1.

Sept. 7 Monday, no class, Labor Day. Books. Chapter 2.

Sept. 14 Newspapers. Chapter 3.

Sept. 21 Magazines. Chapter 4.

Sept. 28 Radio. Chapter 6. **Exam 1, Friday, Sept. 25.**

Oct. 5 Movies. Chapter 7.

Oct. 12 Television. Chapter 8.

Oct. 19 Digital Media. Chapter 9.

Oct. 26 News and Information. Chapter 12. **Exam 2, Friday, Oct. 30.**

Nov. 2 Advertising. Chapter 10. Public Relations. Chapter 11.

Nov. 9 Public Relations. Chapter 11.

Nov. 16 Law and Regulation. Chapter 14.

Nov. 23 Ethics. Chapter 15. **No class on Friday, Nov. 27, Thanksgiving.**

Nov. 30 Global Media. Chapter 16.

Dec. 7 Summary and Review. **No class on Friday, Dec. 11.**

Exam 3, the final exam, will be held 8-10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 16, in this auditorium. It will NOT be comprehensive but will be over the material covered after Exam 2.

Statement of Student Learning Outcomes, UNT Journalism

Since 1969, the UNT Department of Journalism has been accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. This national accreditation also extends to the Mayborn Graduate School of Journalism, the only accredited professional master's program in Texas. About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the United States are accredited by ACEJMC. National accreditation enhances your education here, because it certifies that the department and graduate school adhere to many standards established by the council. Among these standards are student learning outcomes, covered by journalism courses in all sequences.

This course, JOUR 1210, will help to meet the student learning outcomes that have been checked by your professor, Dr. James E. Mueller.

Each graduate must:

- Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practices.
Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

August 23, 2005

Registration Information (JOUR 1210)

1. Name (**PRINT**) _____
2. Student ID# _____
3. Where do you want to work when you graduate from UNT? Circle your choice.
- A. Newspaper
 - B. Magazine
 - C. TV
 - D. Radio
 - E. Film
 - F. Advertising
 - G. Public Relations
 - H. In media, but undecided on a specific field.
 - J. Other (Please Specify)_____

4. Student agreement for JOUR 1210

I have thoroughly read and understood the syllabus for JOUR 1210 (Fall 2009) and will follow class procedures.

Signature

Date

Please turn in this signed sheet to me (not the entire syllabus) by the end of class on Friday, Sept. 4. Students who do not turn in a signed sheet may be dropped from the class roster.