

Course	MEDC 5000 - Media Communications
Term	Fall 1, 2009 Little Rock Metropolitan Campus, Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Instructor	Name: Rod Sweetman Phone: 501-375-1511/501-920-4765 (cell) Email: rjsweetman@aristotle.net
Catalog Description	This is the requisite course in the media communications program. Students examine communications theory and its application to mass media. Consideration is given to the distinctive characteristics of each of the major mass communications systems, including print, radio, television, and interactive media. The course introduces students to the graduate program and describes program expectations, as well as introduces research methodologies used throughout the program and discusses academic preparation for MEDC 6000 Seminar in Media Communications. Therefore, students are required to take this course even if they have academic and/or professional experience in media communications.
Prerequisites	Students should have an educational background or professional experience in media communications, or they must enroll in 6 credit hours of additional preparatory undergraduate coursework, as determined by an academic advisor.
Course Level Learning Outcomes	Upon the successful completion of this course, students will have the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Explain communications theory and its application to the mass media, including a working knowledge of the nature and history of mass media. * Analyze the relationship between historical perspectives and current characteristics for each of the major media systems covered in class; building a framework of how media will continue to change. * Explain at least three commonalities and differences within the major types of media and the implications of those commonalities and differences for both messages and audiences. * View the media from the perspectives of potential employment, production and consumption of media messages. * Understand the work of the leading thinkers in the world of mass communications and to synthesize their theories into papers and discussions. * Comprehend academic research in media-related areas, and write at the graduate level using academic style appropriately.

	<p>* To better understand expectations within the graduate program, research methodologies to be used in the program (particularly MEDC 6000 Seminar in Media Communications), and the direction they want their graduate experience to take.</p>
<p>Materials</p>	<p>Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture, by Stanley J. Baran, ISBN: 0073378909, Sixth Edition, McGraw Hill.</p> <p>Mass Media and Society: Taking Sides—Clashing Views in Mass Media and Society, by Alison Alexander and Jarice Hanson, ISBN: 0073515248, Tenth Edition, McGraw Hill.</p>
<p>Grading</p>	<p>Students will be graded according to the following scale:</p> <p>93-100 A</p> <p>90-92 A-</p> <p>87-89 B+</p> <p>83-86 B</p> <p>80-82 B-</p> <p>70-79 C</p> <p>0-69 F</p> <p>Students will be expected to complete all assignments upon the designated deadline. The assignments consist of the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class participation and homework-100 points 2. Mid-term- 250 points 3. Final- 350 points <p>The GRADUATE catalog provides these guidelines and grading options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A/A- Superior graduate work • B+/B/B- Satisfactory graduate work • C Work that is barely adequate as graduate-level performance • CR Work that is performed as satisfactory graduate work (B- or better). A grade of "CR" is reserved for courses designated by a department, involving internships, a thesis, practicums, or specified courses. • F Work that is unsatisfactory • I Incomplete work • ZF An incomplete which was not completed within one year of the end of the course. ZF is treated the same as an F or NC for all cases involving G.P.A., academic warning, probation, and dismissal.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IP In progress • NR Not reported • W Withdrawn from the course
<p>Activities</p>	<p>Lectures, Class Discussions, Group Projects, Guest Speakers, Mid-Term, and Final Paper. Lectures will primarily be used to clarify and amplify material found in the text and handouts. In a graduate setting, students are expected to CONTRIBUTE to the discussion on any topic, so it would behoove you to prepare before each class (READ!). There may be some instructional videos/Powerpoints, etc to spur analysis and digestion of the material. Test material may include any information from the text or information presented in class, whether from lectures, computer programs, personal experience, videotape, web sites, or handouts. Each class will begin at 5:30 p.m. There will be timely breaks during the class time.</p> <p>Since this is primarily a "hands on" course, you will be expected and encouraged to help each other with problems in virtual travel, searches, idea generation, etc. However, each student is expected to master course assignments on an individual basis. Work turned in for credit MUST be your own. Students who are discovered cheating or committing plagiarism may be awarded a failing grade for the course, and may also be subject to dismissal or further action.</p>
<p>Policy Statements: University Policies</p>	<p>University policies are provided in the current course catalog and course schedules. They are also available on the university website. This class is governed by the university's published policies. The following policies are of particular interest:</p> <p>Academic Honesty The university is committed to high standards of academic honesty. Students will be held responsible for violations of these standards. Please refer to the university's academic honesty policies for a definition of academic dishonesty and potential disciplinary actions associated with it.</p> <p>Drops and Withdrawals Please be aware that, should you choose to drop or withdraw from this course, the date on which you notify the university of your decision will determine the amount of tuition refund you receive. Please refer to the university policies on drops and withdrawals (published elsewhere) to find out what the deadlines are for dropping a course with a full refund and for withdrawing from a course with a partial refund.</p> <p>Special Services If you have registered as a student with a documented disability and</p>

	<p>are entitled to classroom or testing accommodations, please inform the instructor at the beginning of the course of the accommodations you will require in this class so that these can be provided.</p> <p>Disturbances Since every student is entitled to full participation in class without interruption, disruption of class by inconsiderate behavior is not acceptable. Students are expected to treat the instructor and other students with dignity and respect, especially in cases where a diversity of opinion arises. Students who engage in disruptive behavior are subject to disciplinary action, including removal from the course.</p> <p>Student Assignments Retained From time to time, student assignments or projects will be retained by The Department for the purpose of academic assessment. In every case, should the assignment or project be shared outside the academic Department, the student's name and all identifying information about that student will be redacted from the assignment or project.</p> <p>Contact Hours for this Course It is essential that all classes meet for the full instructional time as scheduled. A class cannot be shortened in length. If a class session is cancelled for any reason, it must be rescheduled.</p>
Course Policies	<p>Students are expected to adhere to the above schedule in reference to the participation and completion of class lectures, discussions, group activities, and written assignments, including a mid-term and final.</p>
Weekly Schedule	<p>Week 1: Introductions. Course orientation; i.e., syllabus, course requirements, and overview. Instructor Lecture Chapters 1 & 2 from Media, Literacy, and Culture. Instructor Lecture Issue 1 from Mass Media and Society. Discuss mid-term. Class Discussion.</p> <p>Week 2: I will be out this week. Read ahead for the next class. Answer the following question from your readings in Media, Literacy, and Culture. E-mail your answers to me before the start of week 3's class.</p> <p>What are the five major trends currently reshaping the mass communication process? How does each promise to do so? Which trend would you choose to utilize to advance an issue important to you? How would you do it?</p>

Week 3:

Instructor Lecture Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 from Media, Literacy. Group activity. Class Discussion.

Week 4:

Instructor Lecture Chapters 9 & 10 from Media, Literacy, and Culture.
Instructor Lecture Issues 5 & 7 from Mass Media and Society. Group activity. Class Discussion.

*Prepare for Mid-Term

Week 5:

Instructor Lecture Chapters 11 & 12 from Media, Literacy, and Culture.
Instructor Lecture Issues 6 & 8 from Mass Media and Society. Guest Speaker. Group activity. Class Discussion.

*Mid-Term Due

Week 6:

Instructor Lecture Chapter 13 from Media, Literacy, and Culture. Instructor Lecture Issues 9 & 10 from Mass Media and Society. Group activity. Class Discussion.

Week 7:

Instructor Lecture Chapters 14 & 15 from Media, Literacy, and Culture.
Instructor Lecture Issues 11, 12, & 13 from Mass Media and Society. Guest Speaker. Group activity. Class Discussion.

Week 8:

Instructor Lecture Issues 15, 16, 17, 18, & 19 from Mass Media and Society. Group activity. Class Discussion.

*Prepare for Final

Week 9:

	<p>Class conclusion</p> <p>*Final paper due</p>
Additional Information	<p>*Students are strongly encouraged to maintain good attendance and punctuality. In the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, students are responsible for contacting the instructor directly, either by phone or email, prior to the beginning of class.</p> <p>*Instructions for written assignments- All written assignments must be word processed, double-spaced. The mid-term and final papers must include a citation page (not to be included in the main body of the paper). Not submitting a citation page will result in a punitive grade (please refer to academic honesty section of syllabus).</p> <p>The APA style guide is available on the Webster web-site, and can be used as a format for graduate-student reports.</p>

Approval: JEM