

**I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

- A. Department Information:  
Division: Humanities  
Department: Speech & Performing Arts  
Course ID: SPEECH 135  
Course Title: Mass Media and Society  
Units: 3  
Lecture: 3  
Prerequisite: None
- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:  
An exploration of the history, effects, and role of the mass media in the U.S. The major forms of mass communication are studied (television, radio, film, newspapers and magazines). Focuses on critical analysis of media messages, effects of media on individual and society, and theories of communication. Students move beyond being "consumers" of media to "analysts" of media.

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One**

**III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS**

- A. Describe the role and influence of the mass media in shaping our culture and society  
B. Identify forces which shape and control the media  
C. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate media messages  
D. Identify developments of the media  
E. Describe the history and organization of the major forms of print and telecommunications media: newspapers, magazines, television, radio and film  
F. Name the specific mechanisms which control the media, and evaluate the ways in which each is influenced by the other  
G. Distinguish between the mass audience and the mass media, and compare the ways in which each is influenced by the other  
H. Describe the current trends and future developments in each of the major forms of the media.

**IV. COURSE CONTENT:**

- A. "We and people" and mass media  
1. New media, old media  
2. Technology endures, changes, and converges  
3. Media and economics  
4. Media and political participation  
5. Media and society
- B. How we communicate: processes and economics  
1. The communication process  
2. The mass communication process  
3. Uses of mass communication  
4. The U. S. mass communication system  
5. The U. S. mass media system and the world
- C. Books  
1. Growth of literary culture  
2. Books in American life  
3. Today's market structure  
4. Audience demand in book publishing markets  
5. Supplying the audience's demand
- D. Newspapers  
1. Newspapers in American life  
2. Today's market structure

3. Audience demand in newspaper markets
4. Supplying the audience's demand
5. Newspapers as organizations
6. American journalists
- E. Magazines
  1. Magazines in American life
  2. Today's market structure
  3. Audience demand in magazine markets
  4. Supplying the audience's demand
- F. The movies
  1. Film in American life
  2. Cultural and political development
  3. Today's market structure
  4. Audience demand in movie markets
  5. Supplying the audience's demand
- G. Radio
  1. Radio in American life
  2. Today's market structure
  3. Audience demand in radio markets
  4. Supplying the audience's demand
  5. International radio
- H. Television
  1. Television in American life
  2. Today's market structure
  3. Audience demand in television markets
  4. Supplying the audience demand
- I. Music and the recording industry
  1. Printed and recorded music in American life
  2. Social and cultural impact
  3. The recording industry
  4. Today's market structure
  5. Audience demand in recording markets
  6. Supplying the audience's demand
- J. Computers and the information highway
  1. Computers in American life
  2. The information highway
  3. Today's market structure
  4. Audience demand in computer markets
  5. Supplying the audience's demand
- K. Regulation and media law
  1. Regulation in American life
  2. Content and information regulation
  3. The threat of regulation
  4. Gaining access to journalists information
- L. Ethics
  1. Ethics in American life
  2. Classical ethics in a modern society
  3. Political and economic demand for ethical behavior
  4. Supplying ethical standards
  5. Ethical situations and dilemmas
- M. Public relations
  1. Public relations in American life
  2. Social and cultural impact
  3. Demand for public relations
  4. Supplying the demand for public relations
  5. Global public relations

- N. Advertising
  - 1. Advertising in American life
  - 2. Cultural and political impact of advertising
  - 3. Structure of advertising and demand
  - 4. Supplying the demand for advertising
- O. Race, gender, and class portrayal in the media
  - 1. Racial portrayals across media forms
  - 2. Gender portrayals across media forms
  - 3. Class portrayals across media forms
- P. Mass communication research
  - 1. Defining mass communication research
  - 2. Mass communication research in American life
  - 3. Mass media effects: continuing issues in media effects
  - 4. Cultural studies today
  - 5. Uses of media
  - 6. Influences on content
  - 7. Ideology

**V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

- A. Lecture
- B. Small group discussion
- C. Analysis of videos and films
- D. Analysis of media messages in print
- E. Analysis of case studies
- F. Journaling

**VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:**

- A. Reading: After reading the chapter on radio in your textbook, answer the questions at the end of the chapter. Be prepared to discuss your responses in class.
- B. Journal: Keep a media message journal for a period of one week in which you record information on all of the media messages you viewed, read, or heard. After you have completed your journal, analyze the messages with regard to their impact on you. Be sure to discuss those messages which were most powerful (and why), the audience for whom the messages were intended, etc. Prepare a 4-6 paper detailing your findings.
- C. Research: Conduct research on a segment of the media. After researching your topic and collecting a minimum of ten references, answer the following questions:
  - 1. Explain the significant developments in your topic area
  - 2. Describe the racial, gender, and class portrayals you find present or absent
  - 3. Discuss the regulation/legal aspects experienced by your segment of the media
  - 4. Evaluate the media's impact on the individual and society
  - 5. Discuss the future of your media segment.
  - 6. Prepare a 6-8 paper documenting your findings. You will also be asked to make 10-minute presentation to the class presenting your research.

**VII. EVALUATION(S):**

- A. Methods of evaluation:
  - 1. Objective evaluation to test students' comprehension of course material. Sample test question: Compare and contrast the economic markets of advertising and public relations.
  - 2. Subjective evaluation of students written work. Students are evaluated on their ability to apply course concepts to media messages as well as their ability to critical evaluate media forms and messages.
- B. Frequency of evaluation:
  - 1. At least two examinations
  - 2. At least two research papers

**VIII. TYPICAL TEXTS**

Folkerts, J. and Lacy, S. (2001). Media in your life: An introduction to mass communication (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Allyn & Bacon/Longman.

Rodman, G. (2001). Making sense of media: An introduction to mass communication. Allyn & Bacon/Longman

Baran, S. (2002). Introduction to mass communication (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). McGraw-Hill.

**IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None**