

## **JN 131 Introduction to Mass Communications**

MWF 2:00-2:50 Wynn Center RM 230

Dr. Michael Andrews

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Office hours: MW 1:00-2:00 & 3:00-4:00; F 1:00-2:00; TTH 10:00-12:00

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**Course Description:** This course outlines communication theories, history and economics and emphasizes communication processes, media functions and media industries. Newspapers, TV, magazines, books, radio and film (entertainment media) will be included, along with all of the online evolution of these industries. Three types of media -- news and information, entertainment and the strategic industries, advertising and public relations, will be studied. American media will be the focus, while global media is included.

### **Course Objectives**

1. Prepare students to better deal with the communication process--either as professionals employed in the media or as consumers of the media.
2. Provide a basic knowledge of the communication system, how journalism and media are related, the business of communication, the uses of media, and means of objectively evaluating media performance in light of media problems, promises, and potential.
3. Emphasize communication processes, media functions, and media-government interrelationships.
4. Focus on media economics, structure and future--all in historical and theoretical perspective.
5. Consider three facets of media—news and information, entertainment, advertising and public relations.
6. Consider American media though media in other societies will be discussed when appropriate.

### **Methods of Evaluation**

Grade Weights:

#### Grading guidelines:

90-100 (A)

80-89 (B)

70-79 (C)

60-69 (D)

Below 60 (F)

**Class attendance policy:** Preparing for class and attending class regularly are primary components in completing a course successfully. The *Stillman College Catalog* contains the entire class attendance policy. The parts of the policy dealing with unexcused absences, excused absences, and presenting excuses are as follows:

Unexcused Absences – *Unexcused absences exceeding the number of credit hours for a course can automatically suspend a student from a course. [For a MWF class, excessive absences amount to four; for T/Th classes, three.] Double absences may be charged for unexcused absences that occur on the day before or following a holiday. When a student is suspended from a class for excessive absences, he/she may be reinstated by the Vice-President for Student Affairs after a conference or counseling session with designated college staff.*

Excused Absences – *Students may obtain an official excuse by presenting the appropriate documentation to the Vice President for Student Affairs. **The excuse is not official until endorsed by the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.** Officially excused absences are permissible so long as such absences do not destroy the ability of a student to master course requirements.*

Presenting Excuses – ***The student must present the official excuse to the concerned instructor within 7 days of the student's return to class.** The presentation of a timely excuse will allow the student to make up all class assignments missed. The student will then have seven additional days to complete the make-up work.*

The college catalog also specifies that **frequent tardiness (3 or more) by students and early departures may lead to the assignment of an unexcused absence.** If you arrive in class after roll has been checked, you are responsible for notifying the instructor that the notation of "absent" should be changed to "tardy." You are responsible for keeping up with your absences, regardless of how they are accumulated.

**If you are participating in an activity that will make you absent the day work is due, you must turn in the work prior to your departure. Also, you must submit a copy of your calendar of scheduled events for the semester to me.**

### **Academic Conduct and Classroom Behavior:**

The Student's Pledge of Honor, which you recited at the New Student Confirmation Ceremony, should guide your classroom behavior: "As a member of the Stillman College community, I pledge on my honor that I will not lie, cheat, steal, or destroy, nor will I tolerate or condone this in other members of the community. I will do all within my power to uphold the high standards of integrity, honor, and excellence of Stillman."

- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any paper containing plagiarized material (from a published source, from another's paper, or from any other source) will be given a zero. (Plagiarism: Representing the words, data, works, ideas, computer programs or output, or anything not generated with attribution, as one's own)
- Fabrication: Presenting as genuine any invented or falsified citation or material.
- Misrepresentation: Falsifying, altering, or misstating the contents of documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites and transcripts.
- The College policy regarding dress codes will be enforced.
- Do not bring food or drink into the classroom.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you have special needs to be addressed under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please identify yourself to Jacqueline Currie, Director of Student Development Center, so that your instructor can work with the ADA coordinator to find reasonable accommodation. Contact Ms. Currie at (205) 366-8894, and at [jcurrie@stillman.edu](mailto:jcurrie@stillman.edu).

**Project Format:** The paper that will be part of your project is to be DOUBLE SPACED. You should use font size 12 and TIMES NEW ROMAN. In the upper left-hand corner of the typed document, include the following detail in this order: Your name, Instructor name, Class number and letter section, Due date of the paper.

### **Textbook and Auxiliary Materials**

Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication.

Free Online at: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=143> (I will also provide a PDF of the textbook on Canvas)

### **Course Units and Assignments**

Note: The following class schedule is a guideline, which may be adjusted according to class needs.

#### **Unit 1: Why Mass Media Matter**

##### **Part A: Introduction to Mass Communication**

- Read Chapter 1: Media and Culture
- Read Chapter 13: Economics of Mass Media

#### **Unit 2 Media and Government**

##### **Part A: Global Media/Western View of Media**

- Read Chapter 15: Media and Government

#### **Unit 3: Media Law and Ethics/Media Effects**

- Read Chapter 14: Ethics of Mass Media
- Read Chapter 2: Media Effects

#### **Unit 4: The 5 W's and H of news**

##### **What is News?**

- Read Chapter 4: Newspapers: Section 4.3 Different Styles and Models of Journalism
- Read Chapter 4: 4.6 Online Journalism Redefines News

#### **Unit 5: Other Print Media**

- Read Chapter 3: Books: Sections 3.2 & 3.3
- Read Chapter 5: Magazines: Sections 5.2 & 5.3

#### **Unit 7: Final Exam**

##### **Part A: Review**

##### **Part B: Final Exam**