

# Communication 460: Media Studies Symposium

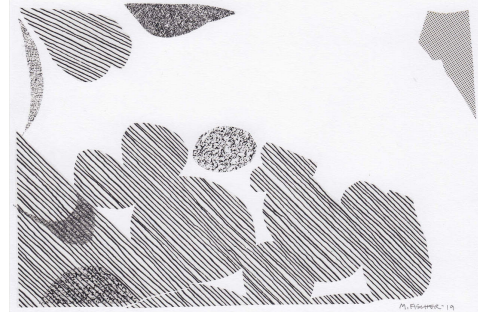
Spring 2020

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:45pm in CAC 239

Course website: Canvas

Instructor: Alex Ingersoll - [alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu](mailto:alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu)

Office Hours: (CAC 309) Tue & Thur 2:00-3:00pm



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## Course Objectives<sup>i</sup>

*“That you are here — that life exists and identity,  
That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.”*  
-Walt Whitman

This course provides upper-level Media Studies students with the opportunity to either edit and revise existing work or work on an entirely new project that synthesizes skills learned over the course of past semesters, and then develop a presentation for a public symposium setting. Along the way, we’ll also discuss the process of coming up with ideas, planning large-scale projects, soliciting and providing peer feedback, and taking the work that you’ve done and presenting it to a broader audience for the sake of both artistic success and public exposure.

Much of the course will feel like an independent study, and in fact many classes will be designed as work time or independent instructor/student meetings. But we will meet in a large group several times over the semester to pitch ideas to each other, give and receive feedback, and present works in progress. Finally, the semester will culminate in the public exhibition of completed works.

### Course Objectives:

1. Students will create and/or revise work in a cohesive area, subject, and/or topic.
2. Students will effectively communicate how their work relates to similar contemporary and historical works of media.
3. Students will effectively communicate about the technical and conceptual elements of a cohesive body of work visually, orally, and in the written form.

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## Communication

Due to the collaborative nature of media production and the limited time available to complete each project, effective communication among all classmates and the instructor is CRITICAL. I will often send emails to the class through your UWSP account or Canvas. You will need to have and regularly check an active UWSP email account. Much of the work in the course is geared toward group coordination and therefore necessitates a willingness to cooperate. This course requires each student to commit to the success of every other student’s project at each step of the working process.

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<sup>i</sup> This syllabus is subject to change as my opinions change and evolve, especially with your help and guidance.

## Evaluation

Your final grade in this course is a composite of the different projects listed below. Detailed explanations of each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate times. Late work will not be accepted past the assigned due date. All work will be collected at the beginning of class unless stated otherwise.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Total</u>
Scholarly Presentation Report	10%
Pitch	10%
Working Group Updates / Feedback	10%
Production Schedule / Plan	10%
Work in Progress Report	10%
Body of Work	25%
Presentation	25%

## Grade Breakdown

A (100-93.5%) A- (93.4-89.5%) B+ (89.4-86.5%) B (86.4-83.5%) B- (83.4-79.5%) C+ (79.4-76.5%)  
C (76.4-73.5%) C- (73.4-69.5%) D+ (69.4-66.5%) D (66.4-59.5%) F (<59.4%)

## Evaluation Cont.

Since the success of this class depends upon your presence in class, it is expected that you will come to every class on time and ready to engage in the day's materials. Students who attend every single meeting will see their diligence reflected both in their participation grade, and most likely, in the quality of their work. For an absence to be considered excused, you must present University-approved documentation. Your second and third unexcused absences will result in 1 full letter grade deduction from your attendance grade. Lateness of more than ten minutes will count as 1/2 of an absence. (Repeated lateness of less than ten minutes will also add up to an absence, at my discretion). **If you have four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.** If you do miss a class, please be sure to check with me and/or your classmates for what you missed and make sure you receive any assignments, handouts, etc.

Again, this course focuses on media writing and production as a collaborative process. Creating an environment of mutual respect is *paramount* to successful work. While difference of opinions and vigorous debate are highly encouraged, you will be expected to refrain from using disparaging remarks (e.g., sexist, racist, homophobic language) in class, lab, or written work. **Finally, classes may include material may challenge you as an audience member (or potentially offend) and I expect you to approach these materials in the spirit of the wider educational environment. The selection of these materials are intended to spark a healthy discussion and I expect mature and respectful interactions.**

## Communicating with Me

The best way to talk to me is during my office hours or scheduled class hours. I am available over email but it may take me a day to respond. This means that you will need to ask questions about assignments more than 24 hours before they are due. If you are having problems completing the assignments, you need to communicate the issues with me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due so we may lay out alternative courses of action.

## Assignments

### Scholarly Presentation Report

You will attend a scholarly presentation outside of class time. In a 1-2 page paper describe the presenter's materials, content, and overall presentation style as well as how you might be able to incorporate some of these elements into your own presentation.

### Final Project

You have three options for your semester-long project in this class, and for each of these, you also have the option to work in groups of two. You will be *required* as part of your production schedule/plan to outline how your course history (or curriculum map) provides you with the necessary skills to accomplish your final project goals.

#### •OPTION 1: PRODUCTION TRACK

Develop and/or revise up to 15 minutes of original content (talk to me if your proposed format pushes back against this requirement). The content must have a cohesive theme (can be a single production). The content may be fiction, nonfiction, or experimental.

#### •OPTION 2: WRITING/JOURNALISM TRACK

Develop between 15-20 pages writing (feature, pilot, hard news, scholarly, etc.) that follows a cohesive theme. It may also have an online distribution component (website, blog, etc.).

#### •OPTION 3: OTHER

If you have a different well-developed idea that doesn't quite fit into the above two categories we can discuss it as an alternative possibility.

### Pitch

You will be required to pitch a project to me, then refine that pitch into a 1 to 3-minute presentation, and then present that pitch to the rest of the class. We will discuss best practices for pitching in class, but all pitches should answer these basic questions:

1. Is this a completely new work, old work, or a combination?
2. Describe the project and what you'd like to accomplish.
3. What are the barriers to success?
4. How do you anticipate addressing these barriers?

### Production Schedule/Plan

You will be required to submit to me a schedule and/or production plan, depending on the type of project you choose to pursue. For example, if you choose to write a feature screenplay, your production plan might be a treatment or step-outline. If you choose to write a scholarly paper, your production plan will likely be a prospectus with an annotated bibliography. We will decide on an individual basis what form your production schedule/plan should take in order for you to complete your final project successfully.

### Extra Credit

In the spirit of collaboration, you have the chance to earn extra credit in this class by assisting someone else with their project. This might mean acting, acting as crew, helping edit someone else's writing, providing feedback... there are a million different ways to be a good neighbor. At the end of the class, I will ask each individual or pair who helped them in a substantive way, and boost grades accordingly.

### **Final Presentation**

During the last couple of weeks of class, you will be required to give a focused, 7-10—minute presentation on your final project, complete with visual aids, and also turn in your written materials for preparing that presentation. Your presentation may or may not involve a screening of a completed work in its entirety; it might draw upon excerpts instead. We will discuss how to prepare for your final presentations in class, but initial ideas include:

1. What is the work about?
2. How does the work relate to contemporary and historical practices?
3. What was your process?
4. What are your plans for the work (publication, exhibition, etc.)?

### **Paper Requirements**

Unless I indicate that papers can be put on Canvas, assume that I want a hard copy, typed, in 12 point font, double-spaced, and stapled, with the pages numbered. I reserve the right to deduct points for violations of these requirements.

### **Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to success, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>

### **Assistive Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/hr/Pages/ADA-Resources.aspx>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <https://www.uwsp.edu/datc/Pages/default.aspx>

## Course Schedule

### Week 1

Tue. 1/21	Introduction & course overview	
Thur. 1/23	Brainstorming	Full Class Discussion

### Week 2

Tue. 1/28	Project Pitch	Full Class Discussion
Thur. 1/30	Symposium	Full Class Discussion

### Week 3

Tue. 2/4	Pitch Sketch & Share	Full Class Meeting
Thur. 2/6	Working Group Development	Full Class Meeting

### Week 4

Tue. 2/11	Work Day - Working Group Update 1	Informal Meetings
Thur. 2/13	Work Day - Working Group Feedback 1	Informal Meetings

### Week 5

Tue. 2/18	Class Pitch	Full Class Meeting
Thur. 2/20	Class Pitch	Full Class Meeting

### Week 6

Tue. 2/25	<b>Production Plan/Schedule DUE</b> Work Day	Informal Meetings
Thur. 2/27	Work Day - Working Group Update 2	Informal Meetings

### Week 7

Tue. 3/3	Work Day	Informal Meetings
Thur. 3/5	Work Day - Working Group Feedback 2	Informal Meetings

### Week 8

Tue. 3/10	Your Brand & Professional Identity	Full Class Discussion
Thur. 3/12	Your Brand & Professional Identity	Full Class Discussion

### Week 9

Tue. 3/23	Work Day - Working Group Update 3	Informal Meetings
Thur. 3/26	<b>Work in Progress Report DUE</b> Work Day	Informal Meetings

### Week 10

Tue. 3/31	Work Day - Working Group Feedback 3	Informal Meetings
Thur. 4/2	Your Symposium Presentation	Full Class Discussion

**Week 11**

Tue. 4/7	<b>Scholarly Presentation Report DUE</b> Work Day	Informal Meetings
Thur. 4/9	Work Day	Informal Meetings

**Week 12**

Tue. 4/14	Work Day - Working Group Update 4	Informal Meetings
Thur. 4/16	Work Day	Informal Meetings

**Week 13**

Tue. 4/21	Work Day - Working Group Feedback 4	Informal Meetings
Thur. 4/23	Work Day	Informal Meetings

**Week 14**

Tue. 4/28	Work Day	Informal Meetings
Thur. 4/30	Final Presentations	Day 1

**Week 15**

Tue. 5/5	Final Presentations	Day 2
Thur. 5/7	Final Presentations <b>Body of Work DUE</b>	Day 3

**Week 16**

Tues. 5/12	8:00am - Final Presentations	Day 4
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