

# Communication 190 Syllabus: Evolution of Media

Fall 2015

Lecture: Mondays 8:00-9:50am in CAC 333

Discussions: Wednesdays 8-8:50am; 9-9:50am; 10-10:50am in CAC 239

Course website: D2L

Instructor: Alex Ingersoll - alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: (CAC 309) 12:30-1:30pm Mo/We/Th

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

*"All media work us over completely"*  
-Marshall McLuhan

This course examines the growth, regulations, and ramifications of communication media in the United States. Over the course of the semester we will investigate several key issues in media studies including the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts in which mediated images, sounds, and texts are produced, distributed, and consumed. Discussions and projects will position media as both *within* and *as* the context for our own and other people's lives. We will analyze how media help establish and maintain "the *status quo*" in both the past and present and we will question why media are at the same time routinely celebrated as agents or conduits of change. The course, in seeking to explain the many aspects of communication in society, concentrates on its developmental history, its technologies and practices, its methods of regulation, professional practices and social responsibility. By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Identify aesthetic, historical, political, economic, and social dimensions of media technologies, content and practices, methods of media regulation, professional practices, and social responsibility and public engagement
- Demonstrate an understanding of communication and media content and technologies as dynamic activities by exploring and critiquing the aesthetic, historical, political, economic, and social forces that influence creative expression and everyday life
- Express and integrate distinct ideas from the readings and discussions in order to explain and analyze critical aspects of media industries, technologies, content, and the mediation of everyday life in the past, present, and future

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## Required Texts

- Text Rental: Richard Campbell, Christopher R. Martin, and Bettina Fabos, *Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication, 8th Edition*. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2013.
- Other course readings available on D2L or handed out in class.

## Evaluation

Your final grade in this course is a composite of the different assignments listed below. Detailed explanations of each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate times.

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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.

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Due</u>
4 Debates	24%	9/30 - 10/14 - 11/18 - 12/9
4 Quizzes	24%	9/21 - 10/12 - 11/9 - 11/23
Midterm Exam	22%	10/26
Final Exam	30%	12/16 12:30pm

## 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 overall 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 unexcused absence will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your total quiz grade. Your third will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your overall 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 five unexcused absences from EITHER lecture or discussion, 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.

## General Requirements

There are a number of expectations that are common to each class at UWSP but I want to emphasize:

1. **If you plagiarize the work of others, you will fail the course.** Please be aware of what plagiarism entails (<http://www.plagiarism.org>). Proper citation is REQUIRED for ALL sources, including information you use from Internet publications and sites. Also, remember that you CANNOT legally use someone else's music or art work UNLESS you get written permission from the copyright holder, or unless you purchase a license allowing you to use specific music or images. The only exception is if the work in question is in the public domain or explicitly states that you may use it free of charge. Any student caught plagiarizing will receive a grade of "F" for the class.
2. All cell phones must be turned off before class, **no excuses**. You may use your computer for class but you cannot be using it for leisure purposes. Any time the room is dark, you may not create any light.
3. 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). **The material presented in class may challenge you 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. All reactions will be welcomed in class and respected, and they will be received in the spirit of extending discussion rather than forestalling it.
4. Late assignments are highly discouraged. **I will not accept any assignment, quiz, or other class material past the due date.** Please don't come to class without homework due to technical difficulties (my computer crashed, printer ran out of ink, not enough batteries, etc.). Don't wait until the last minute to do your work. If you do, you will be rushed, your work will suffer and you won't have time to deal with the *inevitable* computer issues.

## **Communicating with Me**

The best way to talk to me is during my office 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.

## **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 succeed, 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. Read more here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

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: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

## **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: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

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: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

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## **Advice From Students in Previous Versions of the Course**

*At the end of every semester I ask my students to reflect on what they learned in the course and to give advice to students who will take this course in the future. Here is a small sample of the most common replies:*

"Drink coffee before class."

"Take notes in class regularly and read/review them..."

"Don't skip the readings!!! Very useful for studying."

"My advice would be to keep up with the readings and try to make connections with lecture."

"Pay attention to the key terms at the end of the chapters. If you know them, you'll do well on the quizzes and exams."

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## Course Schedule

### Week 0 - Introduction

9/2 - Discussion	Introduction and course overview
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### Week 1 - Just What the Heck *ARE* Media?

9/9 - Discussion	Mini-Lecture on Media
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### Week 2 - Mass Media and Culture

9/14 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 1 & 2, Media & Culture <i>-What are the relationships among culture, communication, and media?</i> <i>-Why is the critical process important?</i> <i>-How does technological convergence influence everyday life?</i>
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9/16 - Discussion	Outline the discussion debate assignments
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### Week 3 - Sound Recording and Popular Music

9/21 - Lecture	<b>Quiz #1</b> Reading: Chapter 3, Media & Culture <i>-How can we explore the influence of sound recording and popular music?</i> <i>-How has the the Internet changed music technology and culture?</i>
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9/23 - Discussion	Introduce Debate 01: The Powerful Influence of Music
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### Week 4 - Radio and Broadcasting

9/28 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 4, Media & Culture <i>-What's the status of radio as a media format and how has it been influenced by politics, economics, and culture over time?</i>
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9/30 - Discussion	In Class Debate 01: The Powerful Influence of Music
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### Week 5 - Television and Movies

10/5 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 5 & 6, Media & Culture <i>-Why has television's role changed over time?</i> <i>-How have film technologies and economics shaped culture and politics?</i>
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10/7 - Discussion	Introduce Debate 02: TV Aesthetics
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### Week 6 - Newspapers and Magazines

10/12 - Lecture	<b>Quiz #2</b> Reading: Chapter 7 & 8, Media & Culture <i>-What is journalism's role in a democracy? Has this changed with evolving formats?</i> <i>-How have magazines become so popular and how has their influence changed?</i>
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10/14 - Discussion	In Class Debate 02: TV Aesthetics
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### Week 7 - Books

10/19 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 9, Media & Culture <i>-What's the big deal about the printing press and literacy?</i>
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10/21 - Discussion	<b>In class review session for midterm</b>
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**Week 8 - Mid-Term Exam**

10/26 - Lecture	<b>Midterm Examination</b>
10/28 - Discussion	No Class

**Week 9 - Advertising and Commercial Culture**

11/2 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 10, Media & Culture <i>-What role does advertising play in a democratic society?</i> <i>-Why should we be interested in commercial speech and the regulation of advertising?</i>
11/4 - Discussion	Screening: <i>Generation Like</i> , (2014; dir: Douglas Rushkoff)

**Week 10 - Public Relations and Framed Messages**

11/9 - Lecture	<b>Quiz #3</b> Reading: Chapter 11, Media & Culture <i>-How do public relations representatives communicate with multiple publics?</i> <i>-What tensions exist between public relations and journalism?</i>
11/11 - Discussion	Introduce Debate 03: Commercial TV and Public Interest

**Week 11 - Media Economics and Global Marketplace**

11/16 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 12, Media & Culture <i>-How do global markets influence the new media economy?</i> <i>-What are the differences between freedom of consumer choice and consumer control?</i>
11/18 - Discussion	In Class Debate 03: Commercial TV and Public Interest

**Week 12 - The Value and Ethics of Journalism in a Democracy**

11/23 - Lecture	<b>Quiz #4</b> Reading: Chapter 13, Media & Culture <i>-What is news?</i> <i>-In what ways has the Internet influenced traditional forms of journalism?</i>
11/25 - Discussion	<i>No Class - Thanksgiving Break</i>

**Week 13 - Media Effects and Cultural Studies**

11/30 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 14, Media & Culture <i>-What are some of the main focus areas for media research?</i> <i>-How/when does media criticism contribute to public debate?</i>
12/2 - Discussion	Introduce Debate 04: Audience Power

**Week 14 - Legal Controls and Freedom of Expression©**

12/7 - Lecture	Reading: Chapter 15, Media & Culture <i>-What is so important about free expression and a free press?</i> <i>-What major legal cases have affected your rights for expression and communication?</i>
12/9 - Discussion	In Class Debate 04: Audience Power

**Week 14 - Final Review**

12/14 - Lecture	<b>In class review session for final</b>
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**Final Exam**

12/16 - 12:30pm	<b>Final Examination</b> in room CAC 333
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