

COMM 200 **Course Syllabus**

Chris Shofner
cshofner@uwsp.edu

Course Description:

Introduction to contemporary communication theories. Application of theories to communication problems.

As readers of--and participants in--culture, we attempt to sort out what the media give us. We interpret, we make meaning, we examine, we question. We evaluate and express our evaluation. This is the process of understanding our world and there is no better way to understand our world than to look at the role of the media using theories of media in society to guide us. Looking at and understanding such theories is what this class is about.

Course Objectives:

1. to demonstrate a comprehension of media and mass communication theories.
2. to critically explore the media that we consume and that consume us.

Required Textbooks:

McQuail's Mass Communication Theory, 6th Edition

Denis McQuail, Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage Publications, 2010

--available through Textbook Purchase

About This Class:

This is an online class that does not meet. I expect that you are familiar with D2L. If you are not, you need to work through the D2L Resources Guide, in the Student Resources section on the D2L home site which you can reach through the D2L link in the academic portion on your MyPoint page. I expect that you have access to D2L during the interim summer session when the class is offered (May 27th through June 13th). If you are ever in doubt about due dates and time deadlines, please refer to the class schedule below.

Instructor's policies:

Preparedness: Class participation is vital. If are not prepared, you'll just be bored and/or confused. If you haven't done the readings, you'll just be bored and/or confused. AND if you are bored and/or confused, you'll end up wondering why you aren't learning anything from the course. IN THE END, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR EDUCATION.

Deadlines. All deadlines must be met. **I will not accept late work.**

Academic dishonesty: Using material from another source (book, journal, internet site, a faculty member, another student, etc.) without proper acknowledgment is not acceptable. Period. The University has policies that govern academic dishonesty. You should be familiar with them.

Course Requirements and Grading:

There are two (2) areas where your performance will be evaluated to determine final grades for this course. There are several **sets of questions**--corresponding to the units and chapters--that you need to answer. Combined, these account for roughly 90% of the final course grade. The remaining 10% of the final grade is determined by your work on **two engagement activities**.

About the Assignments:

1. Sets of questions: There are 6 sets of questions corresponding to the assigned readings, by chapter. The questions are posted to the content area of D2L. You are to answer these questions, save them as a PDF file and deposit that file Dropbox by the date and by the time assigned. You are responsible for knowing due dates and time deadlines. Late work will not be accepted. Each question is worth 5 points. Please look ahead—you will notice that Unit 2 has questions covering five chapters. Most of the units have questions from only two chapters. Plan your time accordingly.

2. Engagement Activity Assignments: During this class, you are to conduct two engagement activities. In the content area of D2L, there is document that lists options for you to choose from. The option you choose from Engagement Activity #1 must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11pm on Wednesday June 4th. The option you choose from Engagement Activity #2 must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11pm on Friday, June 13th. Each activity assignment is worth 15 points.

Point Totals:

Questions (48 @ 5)	240 points
Activity Assignments (2 @15)	30
Total Points Possible:	270

Point Totals and Grading Scale

95%+	=	A	256-270
94%	=	A-	254-255
93%	=	B+	251-253
87%-92%	=	B	235-250

86%	=	B-	232-234
85%	=	C+	229-231
77%-84%	=	C	208-228
76%	=	C-	205-207
75%	=	D+	202-204
71%-74%	=	D	192-201
0%-70%	=	F	0-191

Assigned Chapter Readings and Questions by Unit:

Unit 1:	Rise of Media	Chapters 1, 2
Unit 2:	Theories	Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Unit 3:	Organizations	Chapters 11, 12
Unit 4:	Content	Chapters 13, 14
Unit 5:	Audiences	Chapters 15, 16
Unit 6:	Effects	Chapters 17, 18, 19

*****Course Schedule***:**

Wednesday, May 27:	Read through everything on D2L: Start with READ ME FIRST and then Unit 1
Thursday, May 28:	Unit 1 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Friday, May 29:	Readings – Unit 2
Monday, June 1:	Unit 2 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Tuesday, June 2:	Readings – Unit 3
Wednesday, June 3	Unit 3 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Thursday, June 4:	Engagement Activity #1 (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11pm), Readings – Unit 4
Friday, June 5:	Unit 4 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Monday, June 8:	Readings – Unit 5
Tuesday, June 9:	Unit 5 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Wednesday, June 10:	Readings – Unit 6
Thursday, June 11:	Unit 6 Questions Set Due (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11PM)
Friday, June 12:	Engagement Activity #2 (must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to the Dropbox by 11pm)

Plagiarism:

A major problem facing both professors and students is the practice of plagiarism, which is defined as "the deliberate or accidental use of ideas, research, or words of another person without fully attributing them to their original sources." As a student in this course, it is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism. A student who plagiarizes work in my

class will receive a failing grade for that assignment, possibly for the course and may be subject to additional academic misconduct sanctions.

The following paragraph offers advice on paraphrasing, a major aspect of plagiarism: Clearly attribute ideas that you have paraphrased to their authors, both directly in your text and by providing reference citations. Do not try to paraphrase by changing just a few of the author's words (that's plagiarizing): paraphrasing involves substantial change in the order of words and ideas, usually to condense them. Paraphrasing, in other words, involves putting someone else's thoughts into your own words, not just rearranging the words and ideas or combining, but shortening, someone else's sentences. To avoid unintentionally writing a plagiaristic paraphrase, carefully mark the notes that you take on your references where you use exact, or nearly exact, words of the source.

The following guidelines are offered as additional hints on what plagiarism is:

Every paper or report submitted for credit is accepted as the student's own work. It may not, therefore, have been composed, wholly or partially, by another person.

The wording of a student's paper is taken as his or her own. Thus he or she may not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper or another student's paper or notebook, or any other written or printed source (including speeches, WWW sites, news reports, etc.). Direct quotes or ideas from outside sources may be used, but they must be properly cited. Thus, do not simply change a few words within a sentence from a source, put it in your paper, and drop a footnote by it without using quotation marks. Doing so represents the sentence as your own, when it is not, and this is plagiarism!

As a student, you may incorporate in your paper ideas that have arisen from discussion or lectures when you incorporated these ideas into your own thinking. However, be careful to either cite properly the source of the ideas or cite other sources that reinforce the ideas you are using.

You may, as a part of the good writing process, give your work to someone else for suggestions. However, having someone else totally correct and revise your work constitutes that person's work, not your own, and thus constitutes plagiarism.

You may of course submit a paper to be typed by another person, provided that typist has not sought to change the wording, ideas, organization, or any significant aspect of the paper in any way. If you submit such a paper, be sure to proofread carefully.

No paper may be submitted for credit that has been or is being used to fulfill the requirements of another course, in whatever department, unless permission to coordinate work has been granted by both professors.

Students in my courses are expected to utilize the APA or MLA stylebook, which provides guidelines for proper citation.