

**Introduction to Mass Communications**

COMM 1154

Spring 2005

Professor: Dr. Camilla Gant  
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Office Hours: Mondays 10:00am – Noon & 1:00 – 4:00pm  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30pm – 4:30pm  
By Appointment

**Overview**

COMM 1154 is an introductory, yet critical examination of the origin, development, and paramount economic, legal/policy, social, and effects issues facing print, telecommunication, and electronic media as well as advertising and public relations industries. It is hoped that this course will stimulate understanding and critical thinking about mass media's impact on society as well as society's impact on mass media. Particular attention will be given to implications of competition and convergence of traditional and newer mass media.

You should complete assigned readings prior to class and be prepared to participate in class discussions. Lectures will focus on central concepts in assigned text, and will occasionally draw on information from additional sources. You are responsible for learning all material presented in lectures and assigned readings. You are also encouraged to make use of office hours and WebCT to discuss lecture and reading material that is unclear to you.

**Learning Objectives**

- To demonstrate an understanding of the origin and development of mass media
- To demonstrate an understanding of paramount economic, legal/policy, social, and effects issues facing mass media
- To demonstrate an understanding of competition and convergence of traditional and newer mass media

**Text**

Biagi, Shirley. (2005). *Media Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*. Seventh Edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth.

**Attendance**

You are expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions. Class absence may compromise performance on exams given that exams will cover material presented in lectures and assigned readings. Class absence may also result in missed opportunities for extra credit. Arriving after class begins or leaving before class ends is discouraged as such behavior may distract the professor and fellow classmates.

**Exams**

You are expected to complete three exams (multiple-choice/true-false) based on lectures and assigned readings. To help you prepare for exams, study guides will be available at least one week prior to exams. You are also encouraged to use the *Media Review* sections at the end of each chapter to prepare for exams. If you arrive late for class when an exam is scheduled, 10 points will be deducted from your exam score, and you will be expected to complete the exam within the designated time. This penalty may be waived in cases of unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation.

Early or make-up exams will be permitted ONLY in cases of unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. Requests for early exams must be made at least 48 hours prior to the exam. Requests for make-up exams must be made within two hours of the exam. Make-up exams must be completed during the current semester at a time to be determined based on your situation. To request an early or make-up exam, contact me or leave a message and contact number at 678.839.4933.

**Exam Material**

You are responsible for bringing a No. 2 pencil and a scantron answer sheet to class on exam days. Purchase scantron form No. 229629 (pink/brown).

**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty will NOT tolerated. It will result in failure on assignment(s) as well as possible disciplinary sanction(s) as stipulated by university rules. The State University of West Georgia Student Conduct Code defines academic dishonesty as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating or allowing academic dishonesty in any academic exercise. The Code defines cheating as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids; fabrication as falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation; and plagiarism as representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged.

**Evaluation**

Grades will be weighted as follows.

|        |     |
|--------|-----|
| Exam 1 | 30% |
| Exam 2 | 35% |
| Exam 3 | 35% |

Exams and final grades will be based on the following scale.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| A | 90 – higher |
| B | 80 – 89     |
| C | 70 – 79     |
| D | 60 – 69     |
| F | 59 – lower  |

**Schedule**

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|   |              | <b>Lecture</b>   | <b>Reading</b>                                 |
|---|--------------|--|--|
| Week 1  | 1/11<br>1/13 | Syllabus Review<br>Communication Process<br>Mass Media Economics | ch 1<br>(exclude pp. 21-24)                    |
| Week 2  | 1/18<br>1/20 | International Media & the<br>Marketplace of Ideas                | ch 16  |
| Week 3  | 1/25<br>1/27 | Law, Regulation, & the<br>Marketplace of Ideas                   | ch 14<br>(exclude pp. 307-19)                  |
| Week 4  | 2/1<br>2/3   | Ethical Practices/Policies<br>& the Marketplace of Ideas         | ch 15  |
| Week 5  | 2/8<br>2/10  | Books<br><b>Exam 1</b>   | ch 2   |
| Week 6  | 2/15<br>2/17 | Newspapers<br>“ ”  | ch 3<br>pp. 243-46, 254-60                     |
| Week 7  | 2/22<br>2/24 | Magazines<br>“ ”   | ch 4   |
| Week 8  | 3/1<br>3/3   | Radio<br>“ ”   | ch 6, p. 2475                                  |
| <b>Last day to withdraw with a grade of W</b> |              |  |  |
| Week 9  | 3/8<br>3/10  | Recordings<br>Movies   | ch 5<br>ch 7                                   |
| Week 10                                       | 3/15<br>3/17 | Movies Con't<br><b>Exam 2</b>                                    |  |
| Week 11                                       | 3/22<br>3/24 | <b>No Class</b><br><b>Spring Break Week!!!</b>                   |  |
| Week 12                                       | 3/29<br>3/31 | Television<br>“ ”  | ch 8, pp. 246-52, 259-61<br>pp. 306-11, 313-16 |

|         |              |  |  |
|---------|--------------|--|--|
| Week 13 | 4/5<br>4/7   | Digital Communications<br>& the Web  | ch 9 , pp. 21-25, 252-54<br>pp. 260-61, 311-13, 316-17 |
| Week 14 | 4/12<br>4/14 | Advertising<br>“ “   | ch 10, pp. 317-19                                      |
| Week 15 | 4/19<br>4/21 | Public Relations<br>Social & Political Media Issues                                | ch 11<br>ch 13   |
| Week 16 | 4/26<br>4/28 | Social & Political Media Issues Con't<br><b>Exam 3</b><br><b>Last Day of Class</b> |  |

**The professor reserves the right to make modifications to this schedule.**