COMM 1154-03: INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATIONS (CRN 10878)
Spring 2014  T-Th 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM  HUM 312 (Humanities Bldg.)

INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Renaud
Office Hours: M-T-W-Th 1 - 4 PM and by appointment  Office: HUM 143
Contact: crenaud@westga.edu (preferred – not D2L)  Phone: 678-839-4929

REQUIRED MATERIALS
Also available as an electronic jump-book at reduced cost. See http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/
You may also use the earlier Eighth edition or the new Ninth edition, but the chapter numbers will be different.
Online resources via D2L-CourseDen

COURSE OVERVIEW
COMM 1154 is an introductory survey and critical examination of Mass Communications, of the
origns and development of paramount economic, legal/policy, ethical, political, and social effects
issues facing print, telecommunications, and electronic media, as well as advertising and public
relations support industries. The course is designed to 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 digital
mass media.

Simply put, we want to understand the historical development of the media-rich lives we live: how
we got to where we are, where we’re going – and our relationship as individuals and a culture to
both of those things.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course satisfies Mass Communications Learning Objective I. Students will demonstrate awareness of
paramount economic, ethical, legal/policy, theory/research, social, and technological issues facing
convergence journalism, film and media arts, and public relations industries, as well as the role of principle
personalities and stakeholders within the context of freedom of speech, freedom of press, media
competition, media convergence, diversity, and social responsibility.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Students will be able to understand critically the origin, development and paramount economic, legal/policy,
   social and effects issues of mass media.
2. Students will be able to understand critically the structure(s) and process(es) of mass media industries within
economic, legal, and ethical considerations.
3. Students will develop the ability to write mass media messages with accuracy, clarity, and brevity on deadline
   and within varying style, ethical, and legal considerations.
4. Students will develop proficient use of technology to produce visual and audio messages for mass media
   within varying aesthetic, style, technical, ethical, and legal considerations.
5. Students will be able to gain practical experiences to apply and test knowledge and skills, and to network with
   professionals.
6. Students will be encouraged to engage in interdisciplinary scholarship.
7. Students will be provided a foundation for graduate study in communication.
GRADE ALLOCATION
You earn your grade, by earning points on assignments and exams. This begins with a zero. You must build your grade up from there. Your grade is not a reflection of how much I like you or how good of a person you are. Grades are evaluations of your performance on exams and assignments.

A = 90 - 100%   B = 80 – 89%   C = 70 – 79%   D = 60 – 69%   F = 59% or below

Mass Communications Majors/Minors:
You must earn a "C" in this course to graduate with a degree in Mass Communications, and for this class to qualify as a pre-requisite for other Mass Communications classes.

ASSIGNMENTS
We will use a 100 point scale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Notes (2 x 5 points)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 x 20 points)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes (3 x 5 points)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Diary Assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry News Snapshot</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
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Our Readings and Lectures
Taking notes on the reading and in class, and remaining focused in class, is crucial to your success. For better or worse, I have observed that where you choose to sit, whether you allow yourself to be distracted by your mobile device or by conversation with those around you, and whether you attend class correlates closely with your performance on tests. Sit close, stay focused, speak up in class and do the reading – these all correlate with good grades.

Each week you will be assigned a reading from our course text (Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication). The basic expectation is that you will read this entire chapter by the date shown on the schedule. The readings are not difficult, but there is a lot of information. We have selected this textbook for its balance of current information and lively storytelling. The lectures are designed to supplement and contextualize the material, but not replace, these readings. You have to do the reading AND attend lecture to pass the course.

So how do you decide what information is most important? What information will be on the tests? At the end of each chapter are KEY TERMS, COMMON THREADS and REVIEW QUESTIONS. You should read these before or after you read the material. Many students find that scanning through these sections before reading is helpful in retaining the material.

Reading Notes (2 x 5% = 10%)
To provide you with a model for success in the class, you will be asked to turn in your reading notes twice early in the semester. See the schedule. Ultimately you will decide what is the best strategy for you, but this assignment is intended to show you a method to help you retain information. Generally, you need to encounter information at least three times to retain it, here are four opportunities: Read the chapter. Take notes. Participate in the lecture. Review your notes and our PowerPoints before the exam.

Your notes should be clearly written or typed with your name one them. Points are awarded for thoroughness. Whether you do this for all the chapters is up to you, but this focused note-taking will help you decide what the most important information is.
Notes for this assignment should cover the following things.
(This is essentially what you will be tested on, in multiple choice form.)

**Key Terms** = What is the vocabulary specific to this medium? See the KEY TERMS section at the end of the chapter. Define all of them, summarizing in your own words

**The Story of the Medium** = How was it invented? What other inventions was it based upon? How did it develop into maturity? What caused it to change?

**The Actors** = What people were key to its invention, development and history? (who were the inventors, drivers of change, prominent figures)

**The Drama** = Who has tried to control the medium? From within or from outside? What has been the intention of laws to regulate the medium, and acts and forces of competition within or between industries.

**The Timeline** = What else is happening in other media and in world history at various stages of the medium’s development?

**Exams (3 x 20% = 60%)**
All three exams will consist primarily of multiple choice and true-false drawn from our course readings, lectures, and discussions. Additionally, there is usually a bonus section of fill in the blank questions that let you recoup missed points. It is recommended that you answer as many of these as you can, as the extra points will help you without penalizing you. **You are responsible for bringing a No. 2 pencil and a scantron answer sheet to class on exam days. Purchase scantron form No. 229629 (small, pink/brown).** No notes of any kind will be allowed.

**Study Guides:** I don’t provide a separate study guide for course exams or quizzes, but I do place our PowerPoint slides I on D2L-CourseDen throughout the semester. I recommend that you print these before class and use them as the basis for your in-class note-taking.

Please arrive on time. We’ll begin within the first few minutes of class. **If you arrive after any student has completed the exam and left the room, you will not be able to take the exam, or make it up later.** Official documentation will be required if a scheduled exam conflicts with a scheduled required university event, and those arrangements will be made. Barring the most extreme and documented circumstances, make-up exams are not offered.

**FINAL EXAM (Exam #3 - Comprehensive)**
Tuesday, April 22nd, 11:00-1:30 pm

**Quizzes (3 x 5% = 15%)**
There will be three short quizzes; multiple choice and true-false. These occur mid-unit and frequently preview material that will be found on the exams.

**Media Diary/Essay (10%)**
Media are part of our everyday lives. We are saturated in media. This two-part assignment, due towards the end of the semester, will ask you to 1) track, in detail, all of your media usage over a 24-hour period, and 2) write a 2-3 essay reflecting on that usage in connection with our readings. A more detailed handout will be given later.
MY ROLE
I will endeavor to help guide your study of the course material, to summarize basic concepts, to provide interesting examples and context, and to facilitate and direct lively in-class discussions. I am committed to helping you understand the material. Ours can seem like a large class, but we’ll aim for something as relaxed and conversational as you and I can make it. For that to happen, I need something from you.

YOUR PARTICIPATION
On its surface this may seem to be a simple lecture-survey course. We can do better. I guarantee you will find it far more stimulating if you actively reflect on your own experience as consumers and/or content-creators of the various media we’ll be studying. Seeing the past in our present; identifying similarities and trends; examining and questioning your own experience: I believe this is the most meaningful way to approach this material.

Said another way, I expect you to not simply be passive receivers of information, but to engage with your peers and myself in discussion about media: offering examples and recent experiences, speaking about yourself as a member of a media-saturated society. I want you to ask questions: of me, of the material, and the world around you. Please come prepared to respectfully engage in a vibrant discussion of the material. Regular attendance is crucial.

As we become more consumed with individual media experiences, it’s worth mentioning that real-world human participation is not just key to your success, but to the success of a culture. Please remain “present” in this space and keep your mobile devices put away in class.

I look forward to working with you this semester.

The last day to Drop/Add this class with a refund is January 12th at midnight. This may impact your ability to receive financial aid. After Feb 26th you may only withdraw, with a “W” for the course. See the Registrar’s site (http://www.westga.edu/registrar/802.php) for more information.
UNIVERSITY AND OTHER COURSE POLICIES
The University of West Georgia provides common language for all syllabi regarding policies, and those apply to this course. Please see the following link for more information:
http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

Americans With Disabilities Statement
If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans With Disabilities Act and requires assistance or support services, first please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services. A CDS Counselor will coordinate those services, and provide you with the necessary documentation to give to me. Students who need accommodations for learning or who have particular needs should then share these concerns or requests with me early in the term (no later than week 3 of the course). See the above link.

Mobile Devices
Please note that activity on your laptop or device that does not involve note-taking is disruptive and completely obvious to your neighbors and to myself. No social-networking or texting in class. Please be respectful and contribute to maintaining a focused classroom environment. Obviously, you will not be allowed to use this device during any exam or quiz. This, I’m sure, will be a topic of discussion during the semester.

Late work
I do not accept late work. Assignments turned in after deadline will receive no credit (0). If you anticipate having to miss a deadline, please turn the assignment in to me before it is due. Deadlines are not negotiable in this course.

Classroom Etiquette
Exercising personal freedom is an appealing part of college life. In order to create an atmosphere where individual expression and social interchange are respected please observe the following guidelines:
(1) address each other with respect; (2) contribute to discussions, without dominating them; (3) stay focused on the topic being discussed. Do not engage in side-chatter; instead, share that energy with the class. Disruptive behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated.

Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated in this or any other UWG course. It will result in failure on assignment(s) as well as possible disciplinary sanction(s) as stipulated by university rules. See the link above.

Equal Opportunity Statement
No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by The University of West Georgia.

Affirmative Action Statement
The University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.

Contacting You
You are expected to have access to your westga.edu account for all communication regarding the course. While you may find myself or other students through D2L-CourseDen, I will reply to your regular westga account, not D2L.

Contacting Me
If you have questions, don’t hesitate to ask them in class. Chances are other students will have the same question or concern. With a class of this size, it’s best if you ask your peers before e-mailing questions about assignments. If you need to contact me, do not use D2L. E-mail me from your westga account at crenaud@westga.edu.