

COMM 4455 Critical Issues in Mass Communications

100% online course / June 6- July 26

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor	Soo Jung Moon
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Office Hours	By appointment. Virtual office hours through campus mail (Gmail) chatting
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TEXT

1. Thinking Clearly : Cases in Journalistic decision-making/Tom Rosenstiel and Amy Mitchell/ Columbia University press
2. Mightier than Sword: How the news media have shaped American history / Rodger Streitmatter/ Westview press
3. Additional readings will be assigned

COURSE OVERVIEW

The news media and profession of journalism are in a state of upheaval. This course tracks many of the changes underway, particularly for those thinking of careers in this area. But beyond that, this is a good time to think about what we want journalism to do in a society, what people interested in something like journalism will be doing, and where will they be doing it. No one yet has all of these answers, but we can still pose some of the key questions and principles.

Thus, the course is designed to not be just a description of the current news media and their history but an analysis of our underlying normative expectations of those media, through cases in which they have met those hopes and in those where they have not. In the process, I hope you will strengthen your own intellectual autonomy, both as a citizen and as a future professional in this area.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course is designed to help you:

- understand the crucial value of journalism and the news media in a democratic society (awareness of key historical, legal, and economic context of journalism)
- be able to evaluate the extent to which journalism has performed up to our expectations (comparing performance against normative standards)
- understand how news professionals approach the issues that confront them in their work (ability to distinguish between individual level and organizational/institutional factors)
- develop your own personal and professional judgment as you sharpen your critical thinking skills (e.g., in case studies, distinguishing between facts, values, and underlying issues)
- become aware of the professional opportunities in the journalism field

Key questions for journalism and journalists explored through case studies:

- ✓ What's the truth?
- ✓ How do we know what we know?
- ✓ What's fair?
- ✓ What's the right thing to do?

GRADING POLICY

Grading	Quizzes	48 points
	Case Presentation	10 points
	Film essay. Good night, and good luck	10 points
	Final Paper	10 points
	Discussions/Introduction	22 points
		Total 100 points

Grading Scale	A = 90-100
	B = 80-89.99
	C = 70-79.99
	D = 60-69.99
	F = below 60 points

If you do not understand something about your grade, please see me within one week of receiving your grade. No grade changes will be considered after this deadline.

Make-ups, Late and Missed Deadlines Turn in all assignments on the day they are due at the beginning of class, in class. Late assignments and those turned in late will result in a penalty of 20% per day.

You will not be allowed to make up assignments for deadlines you miss. The only exceptions to the no-make-ups rule are death in your immediate family, incapacitating illness, and approved special curricular requirements.

COMMUNICATIONS

You are encouraged to use campus e-mail (smoon@westga.edu) for all class related correspondence. I will try to respond within 24 hours, though messages sent during weekends (or Friday afternoons) may not receive such a prompt response.

QUIZZES

Regular quizzes There will be quizzes based on lectures, students' presentations, and assigned readings and viewings at the end of each module. You need to read text books and materials thoroughly. Keep in mind: You cannot revisit the questions once you submit answers. - Please read the instruction carefully. Once you start the quiz, you need to finish it in a limited time. You have **one and half minutes for each question**.

There will be no make-up quizzes offered unless (1) arrangements are made **before** the quiz period begins to take it early, (2) instructor-approved documentation of extenuating circumstances can be provided, or (3) documentation of irresolvable technical problems with CourseDen (not your computer or internet connection) is provided/confirmed by Distance Education on the day you attempted the exam.

Quizzes will open at 12:01 am on scheduled Saturdays and close at 11:59 pm on scheduled Sundays. If the CourseDen is under maintenance, you can access quizzes from 7:01 am on Saturday. Please see syllabus for exact dates of each exam. You will not be able to revisit questions.

News Quizzes Mass communication students are expected to stay abreast of local, regional, state, national and world events by reading a local daily each day. To ensure that students maintain broad news awareness and develop a world perspective, the instructor will give occasional quizzes based on the week's news.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Your assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced. Do not write more than the length requested—if you write long it means you need to edit your work. Use 1-inch margins and 12-pt. type. Put your name and the date at the top of each page.

Don't just include phrases. Write in complete sentences; you will be judged on clarity and content, as well as grammar. Use a Spellcheck, but also review your work carefully for errors.

Answer the question in your own words. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The bottom line is you should identify where you got your information, such that someone else can locate it. The more neatly you layout the information, the more likely we will be able to see you have responded to all the questions and give you full credit.

DISCUSSIONS

Each discussion board will be kept open through the scheduled days (**Tuesday to Thursday**) of the chapter. Each discussion has 4 points.

DISTANCE LEARNING: TECHNOLOGY and CULTURE

It is recommended that students have access to the newest edition of Microsoft Office. This program is available for free from UWG IT. You also need access to a computer with Adobe Flash installed. You will need a headset with microphone for a multimedia presentation.

Culture of the Class

This course will be conducted as a professional learning forum and each of us should conduct ourselves accordingly in all our interactions. Many of you may be very familiar with norms and culture of online learning; then again, this may be your first experience. Please put your best foot forward by:

- Maintaining a positive online presence.
- Reviewing each post for grammatical and spelling errors.

In order for us to build a vibrant and effective online community, your presence is needed. You are expected to log in to the online portion of the class a **minimum of 5 days per week** and I strongly recommend checking in at least every 48 hours. This will help keep you up to date with any announcements and peer responses and ongoing discussions.

Selecting Sources:

You must use the most reliable and valid sources available. You may begin your research on the Internet using Google, Yahoo or a similar search engine. Keep in mind, however, that much of what is available on the Internet is unsuitable for scholarly use. You may use

- anything found through the standard search tools available through the library; and
- any material published electronically or in hard copy by a reputable publisher (*The New York Times*, the University of Michigan Press, etc.).

Otherwise, you must assess all Web sites for accuracy, reliability, fairness, and the like.

You may not, under any circumstances, use Wikipedia, Conservapedia, or any similar sites. Doing so will result in a penalty for each use.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The penalties for academic dishonesty range from receiving 0 points on the exam or the assignment to receiving an “F” grade in the course.

All the work you do must be your own. Do not present the work of another as if it were your own. Use quotation marks to indicate the exact words of someone else, and cite the source. Cite sources of ideas that are not your own, even if you did not use their exact words. Summarizing OK – it is considered paraphrasing, but do not just rearrange a sentence or change some of the words. Still, each time a source is paraphrased, a credit for the source needs to be included in the text.

Cheating	Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids
Fabrication	Falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation
Plagiarism	Representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged

COMMON LANGUAGE FOR COURSE SYLLABI

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

CRITICAL ISSUES/ SUMMER 2016

<i>COMM 4455 Class Schedule</i>		
The class schedule and assignments are subject to change in order to reinforce course material and maintain some flexibility. Additional reading and viewing/listening assignments will be made throughout the semester.		
Week / Date	Activities/ Reading	Due (@ 11:59 p.m.)
Module 0 - Orientation		
June 6-8	Orientation module	Introduce yourself
Module 1- Journalism as profession		
WEEK 1 / June 9-12	-Sowing the seeds of revolution, MTS(Mightier than the Sword) Ch. 1 -Attacking municipal corruption, MTS 4 -Muckraking, MTS 6 - Sociology of news: Intro and Ch.1 (pdf) - What do we expect of journalism?	-Quiz 1(Sat-Sun)
You can check out DVD " good night, and good luck " for three hours reserved at the library (Note. Library use only). See the handouts for the detailed information.		
Module 2 - Representing diversity		
WEEK 2 / June 13-19 Media and race	- Abolition, MTS 2 - Defying the Ku Klux Klan, MTS 7 - Pushing the civil rights movement onto the national agenda, MTS 11 -Electing an African-American President (pdf)	
Gender issues	-Slowing the momentum for women's rights, MTS 3/ -Creating "Rosie the riveter," MTS 9 Case 1: New Orleans Times-Picayune Series on racism	-Discussion1 (Tue-Thu) -Quiz 2 (Sat-Sun)
Module 3 - News in the local community		
WEEK 3 / June 20-26	Case 2: Minnesota basketball cheating Case 3: Columbine school shooting	-Discussion 2 (Tue-Thu) -Quiz 3 (Sat-Sun)
Module 4- Technology, citizens and journalism		
WEEK 4 / June 27-July 3	Case 4: Internet journalism and the Starr investigation Watch the posted video clips	-Discussion 3 (Tue-Thu) -Quiz4 (Sat-Sun) - Film Essay
Module 5- News and politics; Politics of news		
WEEK 5 / July 4-10	Rush Limbaugh, MTS 14 Case 5: McCarthyism, 1950-1954 Exposing Joe McCarthy, MTS 10	
WEEK 6 / July 11-17	Case 6: Watergate Watergate forces the President to his knees, MTS 13	-Discussion 4 (Tue-Thu) -Quiz5 (Sat-Sun)
Module 6 - War and national security		
WEEK 7 / July 18-24	Case 7: The massacre in El Mozote / Journalism as Warmonger, MTS 5 Vietnam War, MTS 12	-Discussion 5 (Tue-Thu) -Quiz 6 (Sat-Sun)
July 25-26	Final Case Quiz. The quiz is based on students' presentations	
July 27	Final paper	

* I wish to acknowledge Dr. Stephen Reese for allowing me to use parts of his syllabus to design this one. His material and advice are greatly appreciated.