

## Comm 2010: Mass Communication and Society Short Syllabus

This is a short version of the syllabus. Please access the longer version of the syllabus that contains the course reading and assignment schedule on the course web page at:

<http://research.uvsc.edu/Albrecht-crane/Comm2010/main.htm>

### Instructor Information:

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### Required Texts:

- John Ryan & William Wentworth. *Media and Society: The Production of Culture in the Mass Media*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999. ISBN: 0205174000.
- Robert McChesney. *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. Monthly Review Press, 2004.

### Course Description:

This course explores the relationship between mass communication and society by offering a deeper understanding of how the media industry operates as well as emphasizing how students can become better informed media consumers and participants. In order to better understand and evaluate the media, the course focuses on the following areas:

- impact of mass media use on daily living and society
- media as source of news and information
- audience response to media messages
- media ownership, regulations, and ethics
- relationship among advertisers, media content, and popular culture
- television's rapid rise as the major mass communication tool
- role and effects of digital media
- role of technology, law, and the market in media developments
- impact of mass communication on democratic processes

Classroom activities include in-depth discussions of assigned readings, exercises, lecture, and collaborative student work. Written assignments and tests are designed to assist students in the learning process and to offer them an opportunity to synthesize readings and think critically about issues regarding media and society. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings, to come to class prepared to discuss them, and to engage actively in their learning process--via class participation and involved writing.

### Attendance:

It is required. Students may miss three class periods, but each additional absence will affect the course grade. Anyone with more than seven absences will not pass the course. It is the students'

responsibility to find out what material was covered if they miss class. I do not accept late work. Please make arrangements ahead of time with me regarding any interference with regular attendance and paper submission.

### **Participation:**

In this course students are expected to be active learners and to take responsibility for their work. I expect that students (1) come to class on a regular basis, (2) do the required readings before class, and (3) are prepared to discuss what they've read. I do not tolerate "fluff" contributions and disruptions. Participation/attendance counts as 15% of the final course grade (see below). Be advised that this component of the course is quite important and that I take it very seriously. I strongly discourage "fluff" contributions and disruptions. I reserve the right to penalize students who, in my judgment, make repeated and obvious efforts to undermine quality discussion and/or to bolster their participation score with irrelevant comments.

### **Grading**

If, at the end of this semester, you have earned a *C* in this class, it means you did what was minimally expected of you: you came to all classes and did all the work. If you want a *B* or an *A*, you must not only come to all the classes and do all the work, but you must do the work with shining effort and attention.

Participation	15%
Reading Quizzes	15%
Critical Responses	25%
Mid-term take-home exam	20%
End-of-term take-home exam	20%
Final exam in class	5%

### **Classroom Etiquette**

Cell phones, beepers, pagers, etc. are to be TURNED OFF before you come to class. Refrain from using your cell phone for text messages at all times while you're in class. I also insist that during class time students do not check and respond to personal email and/or instant messaging services on class computers. Class members should treat each other with respect and a productive attitude.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you have any disability impairing your ability to successfully complete this course, please contact the Accessibility Services Department (room BU-145). Academic Accommodations are granted for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the Accessibility Services Department.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to maintain academic ethics and avoid dishonesty in all its forms such as cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of unethical behavior (including any form of copying and/or plagiarizing from Internet sources). I report any form of academic dishonesty to Student Services. If you have any questions about what counts as plagiarism and what does not, please raise those questions in class so we can all talk about them.