



College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of Communication and Journalism

COM 205 Intro to Mass Media

OnLine

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Purpose Statement: This course is designed to give you the opportunity to explore the history and evolution of the mass communication and media in the United States. We will also delve into the basics of mass communication theory and look at how the digital age has changed the role of media in our society. Topics of discussion will include digital media and convergence; print media; electronic media; media economics and the global market and the culture of journalism – values, ethics and democracy. This is a lecture course but with your help, we will make it entertaining and informative.

Text:

Mass Communication: Living in a Media World, 7th Edition; Ralph E. Hanson. (Sage Publications, 2019)
ISBN-13: 978-1544332345, ISBN-10: 1544332343. **REQUIRED**

Determination of final grade: Grades are determined using a 100% weighted scale.

Media Diary	5%	50 points
Short Essays	30%	300 points
Exams	20%	200 points
Newspaper Project	15%	150 points
Final Project	20%	200 points
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>100 points</u>
TOTAL	100%	1000 points

Course Goals: COM 205 Intro to Mass Media

1. Students will be able to list and describe the events surrounding the important dates and developments of analog and digital media. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of this history through essays, exams and on-line discussion.
2. Through the completion of their digital media diary, the student will gain an appreciation of the role media plays in their lives and be able to express that role in an on-line discussion.
3. Students will identify and explain the basics and differences of analog and digital radio and television production and distribution.
4. The students will describe and explain the changes that have taken place in the music and movie industries as a result of the digital age.
5. Students will explain in detail the role of the Internet and digital media on media convergence.
6. Students will describe and explain the role of advertising and media economics in the global marketplace.
7. The students will demonstrate an understanding of government regulation, licensing and expectations of ethical behavior associated with digital media.
8. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the material discussed and read in the textbook by completing three course exams, which offer a variety of assessment from multiple choice and true and false to short answer and essay questions.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Media Diary- Keep a media diary for seven days and then write a 500-word analysis of your digital media usage habits.
2. Project 1. History paper- Go to your local library and locate an issue of the daily newspaper published the day you were born. Carefully review the entire edition (helpful hint: take notes covering specific aspects of major stories, including headlines and action details; types of products/services advertised and their prices; movies showing; and so on). Write a report covering those events, happenings, ads, and other content that intrigue you, but make sure you also discuss how that earlier issue compares with a recent issue of the same newspaper (if it is not being published any longer, use a comparable current daily newspaper). Must be at least 1,500 words, typed, and double-spaced using 12-point type.
3. Project 2. Choose one of the two options listed below: (These options all include a paper that is at least 2000 words in length, typed, and double-spaced using 12 point type **and** a PPT of the project to present to the class online.)

Option A — Radio or TV

Compare two Missouri radio or television stations in the same market (same listening/viewing area, which usually means the same city but could go beyond that to somewhat nearby cities).

You should use the following Web sites to locate information about your stations:

1 <http://www.officialusa.com/stateguides/media/radiostations/missouri.html>

1 <http://www.officialusa.com/stateguides/media/television/index.html>

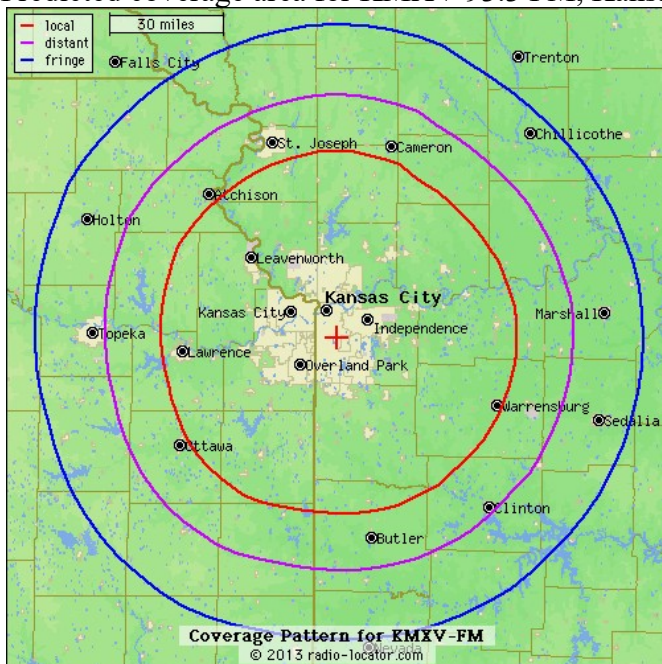
1 <http://www.radio-locator.com/cgi-bin/finder?sr=Y&s=T&state=MO>

In your report, which must be a narrative, not just a listing, cover the following for each of your two stations:

1. Market (city or area)
2. Call letters and frequency/Channel
3. Station slogan/signature
4. Coverage area(s), including if these are different for day/night. Get this info at the Radio Locator Web site above, click on the Info icon: . Include the coverage maps (Radio only, see example below).
5. Owner(s) and location of business offices
6. Signal wattage
7. What does the station's Web site emphasize?
8. Format (radio - be specific, including sample content), Local programming Television be specific, including sample content)
9. Given the station's location, its format/programming, and its "signature," suggest the likely listeners that it has and how that may compare with the other station you chose.

Sample:

Predicted coverage area for KMXV 93.3 FM, Kansas City, MO



Option B — Cable

For this report you will propose a new cable channel! This new channel must do the following:

- 1) Define clearly your channel's unique market niche (target audience).
- 2) Explain the following:
 - a) How your channel will appeal to advertisers who want to reach that target audience.
 - b) The kind of advertiser who might run commercials on your channel.
 - c) Name 10-15 likely major advertisers (real companies).
- 3) Review the [List of Cable Channels](#) (yes I know this is a Wikipedia page but it is largely correct and up to date.)
 - (1) to make sure someone else hasn't already created your "dream channel." You'll note that some links are "dead," suggesting that either the Web URL is outdated or the channel is no longer operating (remember that only 10-15 percent of new cable channels are successful). Your report needs to explain what similar channels already exist, based on your review, and how your channel is unique by comparison.
- 4) List a sampling of 10-15 programs that you believe would be appropriate for your channel, including the following:
 - a) Program titles
 - b) Program contents
 - c) Program length and frequency
- 5) Finish with a clear, convincing argument for why your "dream channel" will be successful in today's very competitive market.

4. Tests. There will be one midterm and a final exam with a number of essays required during the semester. The exams will cover the text and include notes from our discussions. They will include short answer and listing questions.

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COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK	Topic	Reading
WEEK 1	Discuss the syllabus. Living in the Media World The	Chapter 1
WEEK 2	Media Business	Chapter 3
WEEK 3&4	Print Media: Books & Magazines	Chapter 4 & 5
WEEK 5&6	Newspapers, the News and Journalism	Chapter 6
WEEK 7	Audio: Music and Talk Across Media	Chapter 7
WEEK 8	Movies: Mass Producing Entertainment	Chapter 8
WEEK 9	Television: Broadcast and Beyond	Chapter 9
WEEK 10	Online Media: Internet, Social Media & Video Games	Chapter 10
WEEK 11	Advertising: Selling a Message	Chapter 11
WEEK 12	Public Relations	Chapter 12
WEEK 13	Media Law: Free Speech and Fairness	Chapter 13
WEEK 14	Ethics	Chapter 14
WEEK 15	Final Project Due	
	Final Exam Due	

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COURSE POLICIES

The following policies have been drawn up for the benefit of everyone involved in this course. By enrolling in this course, you have agreed to follow them. You can be assured that I will make NO EXCEPTIONS to these policies. Read them carefully. Understand them fully. Ask questions if you are unclear on any part of this document.

1. ATTENDANCE:

While attendance is not taken during an on-line course, you should make an effort and will be getting credit for participating in on-line discussions. Failure to participate will negatively impact your overall grade.

2. MISSED WORK:

You are responsible for all missed material. It is not my responsibility to track you down to bring you up to date. On-line assignments cannot be “made-up”. If you miss an assignment, a zero will be recorded.

3. DUE DATES AND LATE WORK:

The professional world revolves around deadlines. Meeting deadlines is one of the best ways to impress a superior or client. In this class, due dates are of the utmost importance. **THEY ARE NOT SUGGESTIONS!** All assignments must be ready to download by 5pm on the due date. I will NOT accept late work. I will not accept excuses. Expect computers and software to fail. Plan accordingly. Begin when the assignment is given. Plan for disasters. Scheduling problems are something all of us in the digital media world deal with on a daily basis. You will be no exception. Murphy’s Law will prevail! Contingency planning will assure that your projects will be completed on time.

4. INSTRUCTIONS:

A great deal of time and thought has been put into developing the instructions for course assignments. They will be added to Canvas just prior to being assigned. Follow them to the letter. Disregard of instructions will seriously affect your grade. Be sure you fully understand each assignment. If you are unclear on any part of an assignment, do not rely on hearsay provided by other students. Email me to clarify any questions you might have about an assignment.

5. READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading assignments are to be completed before the day of class. Questions should be prepared for discussion during the class week. Check the course Canvas if you think you have missed something.

6. WRITTEN WORK:

It is assumed that you have completed several English courses. For this reason, grammar and spelling count toward your grade. **PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD!** All work must be attached as a file on the assignment page. This assures that the assignment will be added to the grade book with an indication that it has been turned in.

7. ONLINE SUBMISSIONS

As a requirement of an online course you have to turn in project and assignments **online** through Canvas. Please label all assignments with your **last name and the name of the assignment** as the file name (NULPHPROJECT#1). Failure to do so may result in a loss of points.

8. STUDENTS REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students seeking accommodations must first provide documentation of needed accommodations to the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) located in Eder Hall, Suite 203. Once the ARC has approved accommodations, students are responsible for notifying their instructors of those accommodations. This should be done within the first week of class. Accommodations are not retroactive.

9. ACADEMIC HONESTY

A. PLAGIARISM

From the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, copyright 1977: ...plagiarism is defined by Alexander Lindley as “the false assumption of authorship: The wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own” (Plagiarism and Originality [New York: Harper, 1952], p. 2). Plagiarism may take the form of repeating another’s sentences as your own, adopting a particular apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else’s argument as your own, or even presenting someone else’s line of thinking in the development of a thesis as though it were your own. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from another. Although a writer may use other persons’ words and thoughts, they must be acknowledged as such.

Scholastic integrity lies at the heart of Missouri Western State University. Plagiarism, collusion and other forms of cheating or scholastic dishonesty are incompatible with the principles of the University. Students engaging in such activities are subject to loss of credit and expulsion from the University. For more information, please refer to the University Academic Honesty Policy:

<https://ppm.missouriwestern.edu/dotNet/documents/default.aspx?docid=344&public=true>

B. CHEATING:

Be aware of the following college policy: “Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another’s work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent classroom activity.” If caught cheating on a test or assignment, you will receive a point total of 0 for the assignment or test, which will adversely affect your final grade.

10. GRADE APPEAL COMMITTEE PROCEDURE:

Please refer to pages 40 of the MWSU Student Handbook

<https://www.missouriwestern.edu/studentaffairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/292/2014/02/handbook.pdf>

Please Note: By continuing enrollment in this course, you have contracted to abide by these policies as well as the attached syllabus.