

**COMM 3440: Mass Communication & Society
Spring 2017**

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Prerequisites: There are no required classes in order to take this class. However, as this is an advanced level course a basic understanding of social scientific research methods is necessary.

Course Description: This course is designed to promote an understanding of basic mass communication practice. We will examine this from the receiving (how mass communication affects the individual and society as a whole) and production (how to design campaigns, theories of persuasion) ends, as well as discuss the state of various mass communication industries and media. This class will be taught from a social scientific perspective, with an emphasis on communication theory. As an advanced level course, it will require a combination of active discussion, well-researched writing, and rigorous examination.

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of basic mass communication theories.
2. Gain an understanding of the history and current state of mass communication industry.
3. Learn how media affects the individual and society.
4. Practice reading communication research articles and presenting this information creatively to your classmates.
5. Work to put theory into practice.

Required Text: *Fundamentals of Media Effects* by Bryant, 2nd ed. 2012. Additional readings posted on Carmen will supplement the textbook.

Grading System

The class consists of 7 formal assignments where you can earn points: 2 exams, class presentation, presentation participation, Carmen discussions, in-class assignments, and attendance. The extra credit points are then attached on to this total at the end of the class.

***Additionally, please note that your final grade is final. Do not ask me to reconsider your grade when the semester is over; applying subjective standards after the fact invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair to every student. I can only give you the grade you have earned in this course. Even when you are very close to the next higher grade, I cannot round your grade up.**

Late Assignments: Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. Late assignments will incur a letter-grade penalty for each day they are late. Assignments 3 or more days late will not be accepted.

Grading: Grading will consist of the following:

Exam 1	100 points	25%
Exam 2	100 points	25%
Class Presentation	100 points	25%
Presentation Participation	20 points	5%
Carmen Discussion	40 points	10%
In-class Assignments	20 points	5%
Attendance	20 points	5%
TOTAL	400 points	100%

Currently, I anticipate that grades will be assigned using the following percentage system:

>93% = A	>87% = B+	>77% = C+	>67% = D+	<63% = E
>90% = A-	>83% = B	>73% = C	>63% = D	
	>80% = B-	>70% = C-		

EXAMS. There will be 2 exams during the semester. Each exam is worth 25% of your final grade and will consist of multiple-choice and short answer items. Exams are not cumulative. The exams will draw on material discussed in lectures and offered in the assigned readings. Dates are listed in the course calendar (last page of the syllabus). * **Make a note of the exam dates as they are not flexible (so please plan accordingly).** The exams **MUST** be taken at the scheduled time. The dates are clearly identified on the schedule below; if you foresee a conflict with the exam time, you will need to reschedule your conflict or reconsider your enrollment in this class. Make-up exams will not be given except in cases of extreme, unforeseen, and convincingly documented emergencies (notification within 24 hours of the exam time is required) or official University related absences (instructor must be notified at least two weeks in advance). Your instructor reserves the right to determine what qualifies as extreme and what documentation is required. Unacceptable excuses include, but are not limited to: being out of town, oversleeping, having to work, not being able to find a parking space, car trouble, and flight delays or cancellations. **Additionally, you cannot begin the exam after the first person is finished, so DO NOT SHOW UP LATE.**

CLASS PRESENTATION. In groups of 5 to 7, you will be responsible for developing a 20-25 minute presentation for the class on a topic of mass communication research. Your group will need to read a *minimum* of 5 research articles/sources and summarize these for the class. Panel groups will be determined by sign-ups, available on Carmen. A more detailed assignment description is available on Carmen. The presentation is worth 25% of your grade.

CLASS PRESENTATION PARTICIPATION. When other groups are presenting, you are expected to attend class, be respectful, pay attention to their presentation, ask questions of the group, and participate in any activities planned by the group. Participation for each presentation is worth 2 points. Overall, participation is worth a total of 5% of your final grade.

CARMEN DISCUSSIONS. Five times throughout the semester, you will be asked to post your reactions to an article or a video to Carmen. Occasionally you will post in response to something we read/view in class, and other times you need to review something outside of class before you post. Overall, participation in Carmen discussions is worth a total of 10% of your final grade. Details about each discussion will be announced in class and/or posted on Carmen in the Announcements section prior to the start of the discussion and due date for posts/comments.

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS. Occasionally we will break into small groups to discuss course content. Your groups will be given small assignments designed to promote discussion of the material, and then as a class we will discuss your ideas. In-class assignments will be worth 5% of your overall grade.

ATTENDANCE: You are expected to attend lecture everyday as it's really hard to learn if you aren't coming to class. Thus, you will earn 1.25 points for each class you attend (excluding the review sessions and the exams) for a total of 20 points. There are more than 16 class sessions, so you'll have days you can miss for illness, oversleeping, and other engagements. Attendance sheets will be passed around at the beginning of class; it is your responsibility to make sure you sign the sheet. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will not receive a point for that day. Attendance is worth 5% of your overall grade.

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities *might* be offered during the semester, though I am not obligated to make it available. Specific point totals associated with each offering will be detailed to you when the opportunities are announced in class and on CARMEN. All points earned for extra credit will be added to your final grade point totals.

Academic Integrity: I take academic dishonesty very seriously. All students are subject to the student code of conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp), including the student code of academic integrity. Violations of the code will result in severe penalties in this course and all violations will be reported to the School of Communication and the Committee on Academic Misconduct. For this course, academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to):

- Use of someone else's ideas or expression (e.g., writing) without proper acknowledgment of the source. Proper acknowledgment (e.g., citation, quotation, footnote) should make clear both the extent and nature of the use. If you have used someone's exact words, you should use "quotation marks" as well as a (citation). If a large portion of your writing uses another person's ideas, argument structure, or narrative form then you should make clear where the "borrowing" begins and ends. Note that paraphrasing someone, summarizing their arguments, or using their ideas are all plagiarism if the source is not acknowledged. Plagiarism is more than just using someone else's exact words. Also, be aware that "someone else's ideas" here includes text books, articles, web pages, your professor's notes, your roommate's assignment from another class, and anything else other than your own ideas and your own writing. There is no outside source that it is OK to use without citing.
- Collaborating with other students on any assignment, homework, class project, etc., without the clear consent of the instructor is also academic dishonesty. If work is not

assigned as a group project, you must do it entirely on your own. Check with your instructor if in doubt.

- In most instances, taking your own work from one course and submitting it in a different course is also considered academic dishonesty. It is simply not appropriate to claim that work was done for one class when in fact it was written for a different class. Check with your instructor if in doubt.
- Exchanging information with another individual during a test, quiz, or examination is clearly academic dishonesty, as is the use of any materials not permitted for the exam.

It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty—ignorance is not a defense. When in doubt, consult your instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.

You should also read through the “Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity” available at <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html>. In this class, the penalty for academic dishonesty consists of a failing grade for the class; a report to the School of Communication and the Committee on Academic Misconduct; and other potential consequences, including expulsion from the University.

Disruptions: Disruptions and distractions (including talking during lecture; text messaging or other phone use; nonclass computer activity; or reading nonclass materials), threatening behavior, and negative participation (e.g., use of inappropriate language or derogatory speech) will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior may be asked to leave class, suffer grade penalties, and be reported to the Department Head, the Dean of Students, and/or University Police. Cell phones are considered a disruption.

Turn your cell phone off completely before the start of class. Not just the ringer—completely off. Any student who is observed consulting or using their phone or whose cell phone rings, beeps, or audibly vibrates during class will suffer grade penalties (1% of the overall class grade for each offense) and may be asked to leave class.

Disability Accommodations: If you anticipate the need for accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, please contact the Office for Disability Services, Pomerene Hall, Room 150, or phone (614) 292-3307. Students with documented disabilities can meet with me privately within the first three weeks of class to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

SPRING 2017 SEMESTER SCHEDULE*“BTF” refers to Bryant, Thompson & Finklea (2012) textbook*

Week	Date	Topic	Due
Week 1	1-10	Syllabus overview	
	1-12	Media & “Fake Love”	Klosterman ch. 1 (Carmen) RESPOND to discussion post
Week 2	1-17	Why study media effects?	Harris chapter 1 (Carmen)
	1-19	Why study media effects? continued	LISTEN to Radiolab “War of the Worlds” (link on Carmen) RESPOND to discussion post
Week 3	1-24	History of media effects	BTF ch. 2
	1-26	Scientific study of media effects	BTF ch. 3
Week 4	1-31	Social Cognitive Theory	BTF ch. 4
	2-2	Priming	BTF ch. 5
Week 5	2-7	Agenda setting	BTF ch. 6
	2-9	Framing	BTF ch. 7
Week 6	2-14	<i>Mickey Mouse Monopoly</i>	BTF ch 8, Pre-viewing questionnaire
	2-16	Cultivation	Ferris et al 2007 (Carmen) RESPOND to discussion post on <i>MMM</i>
Week 7	2-21	Exam 1 Review	Study guide definition & example
	2-23	Exam 1 during normal class time	
Week 8	2-28	Effects of stereotyping	BTF ch. 16
	3-2	Effects of media violence, third person effects	BTF ch. 11, Hoffner et al 2001 (Carmen)
Week 9	3-7	Effects of sexual content	BTF ch. 12
	3-9	Fright responses	BTF ch. 13
Week 10	3-14	NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK	
	3-16		
Week 11	3-21	<i>Natural Born Killers</i> screening	
	3-23	<i>Natural Born Killers</i> wrap-up and panel discussion	RESPOND to discussion post on <i>NBK</i>
Week 12	3-28	Uses and gratifications	BTF ch. 9
	3-30	Persuasion	BTF ch. 10
Week 13	4-4	Political communication	BTF ch. 14
	4-6	Health campaigns	BTF ch. 15
Week 14	4-11	Children’s programming	BTF ch. 17, Nathanson et al 2002 (Carmen)
	4-13	Computer and video games	BTF ch. 18
Week 15	4-18	Effects of the Internet and mobile communication	BTF ch. 19-20 RESPOND to discussion post
	4-20	Exam 2 Review	Study guide definition & example
FINAL EXAM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26 8:00 AM – 9:45 AM			