

**COMM 3425: Media Management**  
**Fall 2014: Tues/Thurs 11:10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Journalism Building 216**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, you will examine the various media that we consume multiple times daily from a traditional public viewpoint, but also research what happens behind the scenes. How do newspapers, magazines, radio and TV broadcasters and online outlets decide what stories to report? How do they make money? Are they managed efficiently? What role do advertisers play in newsrooms? Is the audience more involved because of social media? Public ownership vs. private, does it matter? What are the ethics involved? Perhaps most importantly, what does the future hold?

To help answer these and other questions, you will read books and articles about media companies (including News Corp., Disney, Time Warner) and by media professionals and analysts. You also will hear from some local “media managers,” including executives from The Columbus Dispatch, Ohio State, The Associated Press and elsewhere.

**COURSE GOALS**

By the time this class is over, you will have researched print, broadcast and online media management and heard from a variety of professionals who are actually making these decisions on a daily basis. In short, you will know what it’s like to help manage a media organization, and you should have crafted a vision for ways to improve upon the current models.

There could be a news quiz in every class. Every class meeting should be considered a board meeting. These are great opportunities to bolster that participation grade, bounce ideas off your colleagues and get a feel for how media outlets are managed.

**REQUIRED READING**

A nonfiction book on media management, or by a media manager. These can be autobiographical or a broader examination of the subject. You will write a 2-3 page book review on this book after I approve it.

The online versions of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Columbus Dispatch*, CNBC and Fox Business. Other great journalism/media management resources include *The Poynter Institute* and *Columbia Journalism Review*. Read as much as you can from as many different sources as you can. The more you read, the better prepared you will be.

Other assignments will be available online.  
All readings should be done prior to the assigned class period.

### **RECOMMENDED READINGS**

Sylvie, George: Media Management, A Casebook Approach—4<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
ISBN: 978-0805861976, Routledge  
Warner, Charles: Media Management Review 978-0805817881 Routledge

### **GRADING CRITERIA**

30% Final paper  
20% Midterm  
20% Group Project  
10% Media manager presentation  
10% Book review  
10% News Quizzes/Participation

Letter Grades will be assigned on following point system:

A: 94-100  
A-: 90-93  
B+: 87-89  
B: 84-86  
B-: 80-83  
C+: 77-79  
C: 74-76  
C-: 70-73  
D+: 67-69  
D: 60-66  
E: below 50-59

### **MEDIA MANAGER PRESENTATION**

Each of you will pick a “media manager” and deliver a 5-minute lecture to the class about him/her. The goal of this assignment is for you to identify someone locally who is doing some of the things that we are discussing/studying in class. The presentations will begin in week 3 and continue through week 12. It is your responsibility to pick a suitable person. The dates will be chosen randomly. If you miss your scheduled presentation due to unexcused absence, you will receive a 0.

### **GROUP PROJECT**

Each group of 4-5 people will pick a major media company owner and present a roughly 30-minute presentation to the class. Possible companies include News Corp., Disney and Gannett. The project should provide a complete overview of the company, what it owns, managers and management style, successes and failures, and future prospects. Interviews with managers in these companies are strongly encouraged. A multimedia element of these projects is required. Each person will submit a 2-page paper explaining, in detail, your role in the group, what went well and what could have gone better behind the scenes.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

After I approve your book, you will write a 3-4 page review in the style of the New York Times. ( <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/books/review/index.html> ) That means taking a stance on the book, not simply regurgitating what you read. Was the author effective? What were the strengths and weaknesses? Attempting a short interview with the book's author(s) and/or subject(s) is strongly encouraged.

## **FINAL PAPERS**

All assignments should be typed, double-spaced and turned in to me at the beginning of class. The final paper should be 4-5 pages long, not including the bibliography. The paper will explore, citing specific examples from readings, research and lectures, your vision for how to best manage a multimedia news organization. Topics that should be covered include: platforms from print to the web; manager hierarchy; resource allocation; target audience; inherent weaknesses and ideas for improving them. Please keep a file of your work so that you can look back at your old assignments and get an idea of progress you're making and areas you need to improve. Please bring that portfolio of your work whenever you meet with me to discuss progress.

## **NEWS QUIZZES**

The news quizzes will be multiple choice and short answer, drawn from the news sources recommended. I STRONGLY urge you to at least skim those various news Web sites at least once a day, follow them on Twitter and other social media. News quizzes are necessary because you can't understand the media, and how to manage it, unless you are consuming it!

## **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Attendance and participation are required. To be successful in this class, you need to participate. That means asking questions, offering respectful opinions on ideas discussed in class, and suggesting helpful critiques in small groups and to the class as a whole. Points will be deducted for anyone making disrespectful comments about another person or idea. Don't surf the Internet, play computer games or send non-course e-mail during class. Points also will be deducted from your participation grade if you are observed doing these things.

**ALL STUDENTS MUST MEET WITH ME AT LEAST ONCE OUTSIDE OF CLASS TO DISCUSS YOUR PROGRESS, FEATURE PROJECTS OR ANYTHING ELSE ON YOUR MIND. IF OFFICE HOURS DON'T WORK, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SET UP A MEETING WITH ME AT ANOTHER TIME!** If you fail to meet with me at least once during office hours or by appointment as outlined above, your participation grade will be lowered by a full letter grade.

## **EXTRA CREDIT**

I LOVE EXTRA CREDIT because it requires EXTRA EFFORT. There will be ample opportunities for anyone who wants to do EC assignments.

## **HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS:**

Be on time.

Have your homework completed and ready to turn in.

Read news organizations' Web sites noted earlier. Listen to at least one news broadcast every day.

Follow me on Twitter: @dancatosu

Read the class blog.

Ask questions when you don't understand something.

Express yourself when you do understand something.

Bring all tools of the trade to every class; books, writing utensils, a notebook, etc.

Spell check.

Don't just spell check...PROOFREAD and SELF EDIT!

MEET YOUR DEADLINES!!

## **DEADLINES**

The importance of deadlines cannot be stressed enough. If the deadline for an assignment is Tuesday at 10 a.m., that means the copy must be filed by Tuesday at 10 a.m. Leave enough time to ruthlessly edit and proofread your work.

## **MISSED/LATE ASSIGNMENTS/STUDENT ABSENCES**

Excused absences are rare and include emergency situations beyond your control (i.e., an urgent medical condition). In the unusual case of an emergency, it is your responsibility to inform me prior to class or as soon as possible after class to let me know about your absence. You also will need to provide official written documentation for the absence (e.g., a note from a doctor). Non-emergency excused absences may include university-sponsored activities (e.g., required travel for sporting events). Excuses for these kinds of absences must be presented in advance of the absence. No excuses or documentation will be accepted more than one week after the absence.

In-class assignments, such as news quizzes, missed for an unexcused absence may not be made up and will mean an automatic 0 for those assignments. Homework assignments not submitted because of an unexcused absence may be turned in late, but will be marked down a minimum of one letter grade. Please contact me via e-mail, or by phone, as far in advance as possible if you know you will be late or absent. Unless I respond to you before that class starts, the absence will be considered unexcused. Nothing will be accepted more than one class late unless extreme circumstances are involved and documented, i.e. you are in the hospital.

## **Tentative Nature of this Syllabus**

This syllabus represents a contract in the works. Events that transpire over the quarter may require me to modify the administration of the course and therefore the syllabus. In the event that I need to modify the syllabus, I will announce the modification in class, via e-mail and/or on the class blog and my Twitter feed. It is your responsibility to keep up with any such modifications and be aware of current policies, deadlines, etc.

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Being honest and ethical is fundamental. Academic misconduct, such as plagiarism or fabrication, will not be tolerated. The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process," Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct at [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource\\_csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM). If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about this policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact the instructor or visit the COAM web page at <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html>.

**STATEMENT ABOUT DISABILITY SERVICES:** Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu>

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	WHAT'S DUE
1	R 8/28	Introduction to 3425. Review class policies	Review syllabus.	Send me a 300-word email explaining expectations for class and why you took it.
2	T 9/2	Overview of media	Columbia Journalism Review list of Who Owns What? <a href="http://www.cjr.org/resources/">http://www.cjr.org/resources/</a>	
	R 9/4	Print media	News quiz.	
3	T 9/9	Print media	Groups assigned, project subjects picked.	<b>Final paper ideas.</b>
	R 9/11	Print media	News quiz.	<b>Book review subjects approved.</b>
4	T 9/16	Print media—Possible guest	Online readings..TBD	Media manager presentations
	R 9/18	Print media	News quiz.	Media manager presentations
5	T 9/23	Broadcast media		Media manager presentations
	R 9/25	Broadcast media	Online readings..TBD	Media manager presentations
6	T 9/30	Broadcast media	News quiz.	Media manager presentations
	R 10/2	Broadcast media—Possible guest	Online readings..TBD	Media manager presentations
7	T 10/7	Online media	News quiz.	Media manager presentations
	R 10/9	Online media	Online readings..TBD	Media manager presentations. <b>Book reviews due.</b>
8	T 10/14	Online media	News quiz.	Media manager presentations
	R 10/16	Online media—Possible guest	Midterm review	Media manager presentations
9	T 10/21	Midterm	Midterm	Midterm
	R 10/23	Mergers, acquisitions and their influence.	Read coverage of recent media mergers.	Media manager presentations
10	T 10/28	Political influence of and by media managers: Possible guest.	Bios of Murdoch, Soros.	Media manager presentations
	R 10/30	Possible guest speaker; More politics.	Besides Murdoch, Soros, who else influenced last year's elections?	Media manager presentations. <b>Final paper ideas must be approved.</b>
11	T 11/4	Social media		Media manager presentations
	R 11/6	Social media		Media manager presentations
12	T 11/11	NO CLASS		NO CLASS
	R 11/13	Ethics and the law		Media manager presentations
13	T 11/18	Advertising		Group work
	R 11/20	Advertising		Group work
14	T 11/25	What does the future hold?		Group work
	R 11/27	HAPPY THANKSGIVING		
15	T 12/2	Groups start presenting		<b>GROUPS 1-2 presentations.</b>
	R 12/4			
16	T 12/9	Groups continue presenting		<b>GROUPS 3-4 presentations.</b>
	R 12/11			
Finals	M 12/9 10 a.m.	Finish group projects/ Turn in final papers		<b>GROUPS 5-6 presentations. Final papers due!</b>