**DESCRIPTION**
This course has two primary goals. First, the course will introduce you to the various types and forms of mass communication in our society. Second, the course will challenge you to question your assumptions and acceptance of the role played by mass communication in our daily lives and in shaping our culture. Media institutions are examined in terms of the information they distribute, the entertainment they provide, and the influence they bring. The course allows you to use your own experiences with the media to understand how the media industry and media content influence you personally and our society as a whole. It also requires you to research what scholars and others say about the influence of media on society. This course requires you to actively participate in class discussions of the assigned readings and other media materials during the quarter.

**OBJECTIVES**
As a result of completing the course readings, assignments, class discussions and activities you will

1. be able to define media literacy.
2. be able to explain the role of the mass media in shaping culture.
3. be able to explain the role of culture in creating and managing the mass media.
4. increase your knowledge and understanding of the mass communication process.
5. understand how you interact with the media.
6. recognize how your interaction with the media affects how you create meaning and make sense of your world.
7. become a more skilled and knowledgeable consumer of media content.
8. recognize the various types/forms of mass communications.
9. develop skills and knowledge to do upper-division course work in the major.

**TEXT**

**POLICIES**

**Etiquette:** Several courtesy considerations will enhance the class environment. These include:

- **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Equipment:** Turn off in class and remove from the desk. Messages can be checked at the end of class. No texting in class, please. If I notice texting taking place, I will stop class and ask you to leave the classroom. You will then be counted as absent.

- **Respect for Diversity and Diverse Opinions:** A college community is a place in which ALL should feel respected and valued, whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. Tolerance and respect in class and on campus are vital to the educational mission of the university.
Respect for Others: Being on time and being prepared for class reflect a respect for the time and efforts of others. In addition, arriving late and leaving early from class is disruptive and suggests a lack of concern and consideration for others. If you are going to be late, please consider whether you should attend the class. If you must leave early, please consider whether you should attend the class. **NOTE: Regular late arrival or early departure from class and missed classes will result in the lowering of your final grade for the course.**

Use of computers in class. The ONLY reason you should be using a computer in class is to take notes during lectures or to complete in-class assignments or if assigned by the professor. I WILL ask you to shut down your computer if you are not using it for taking notes during class and may request that you not bring it to class.

**Readings:** You are expected to complete the assigned readings PRIOR to class to be prepared for class discussions. Also, please note: We will NOT cover everything included in the Tests during class so it is important to keep up on your reading assignments.

**Attendance:** Attendance is expected and required. I consider more than 3 absences as excessive. After 3 absences, I will deduct a half grade per class missed from your final grade for the course (so a B becomes a B- if you have missed 4 classes. Additionally, consistently late arrival to class (more than 2 times in the quarter) or consistently early departure before the end of class (more than 2 times in the quarter) will result in the lowering of your final grade for the class by a full grade. **NOTE:** You are responsible for course information provided in class, even if you are not in class. If you have to miss a class, check with a classmate to find out if there are any announcements / changes you should be aware of and/or look for announcements on Blackboard. The ITV technicians provide a streamed version of each class and you will get a password sent by me to you in Blackboard, so if you miss a class, you can watch the lecture, the embedded PowerPoints and any films shown in class. **NOTE:** If you miss more than 6 classes (the 3 allowed + 3 = 2 weeks of class), you will receive an F for the course, even if you turn in all assignments and attend the rest of the classes.

**Late Papers/Assignments:** Grades for late papers/assignments will be lowered by ½ a grade for each calendar day the assignment (only #1 and #2) is late. Late FINAL papers will not be accepted under ANY circumstances. Your final paper may be submitted inside Blackboard before midnight or in person before 2 p.m. the day it is due. (At AV, it has to be turned in to the AV ITV technician before 2, to get to me via courier.)

**Test policies:** Students who arrive 15 minutes after the test has started should not enter the classroom and will receive a zero for the test.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** The CSUB catalog states “the principles of truth and integrity are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars.” By becoming a student at CSUB you enter this community. Two ways you can weaken and hurt this community are ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (CHEATING) and PLAGIARISM. The catalog defines cheating as “fraud and deception to improve a grade or obtain course credit.” Plagiarism is copying others’ work and/or using their ideas or language and claiming it as your own intentionally or unintentionally. Plagiarism is using word-for-word language from a book or web site or other source without using quotation marks (if in a written document) and giving credit to the original author or making changes to the wording without giving credit to the original author. Whenever you use the original ideas of others without giving them credit, both verbally and in writing, you are plagiarizing. Plagiarism is also taking material from the internet or using papers other people have written as one’s own work. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment, perhaps failing the class, and can result in dismissal from the university. **It is YOUR responsibility to read and abide by the university policy on Academic Integrity. Please read this section in the university catalog carefully. It protects the integrity of the university and the integrity of your education.**
Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities (including invisible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, and head injuries) are encouraged to notify me of their condition within the first two weeks of the quarter. The university and your instructor will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) as soon as possible. Call (661) 654-3360 or (661) 654-6288 (TDD). In Antelope Valley, please contact (661) 952-5061 or TDD: (661) 953-5120. You must have an accommodations letter from the SSD office documenting that you have a disability; present the letter to me during my office hours as soon as possible or in the first class period so we can discuss the specific accommodations that you might need in this class.

Safe Zone: CSUB has been training faculty and staff under the Safe Zone project, to support GLBTQ individuals, so look for Safe Zone decals outside professors’ and staff member’s doors if you wish to stop and chat or wish assistance. The Safe Zone is coordinated by the CSUB Counseling Center, which offers assistance to students free of charge.

NOTE: This course is designed partially as a “hybrid,” meaning that students 1) attend in-class lectures on the days designated in this syllabus only, and 2) must complete an online component in lieu of attending class on other designated days for the entire quarter.

Technology Help Desk: Blackboard help (E Learning Services) can be found at 661-654-2315 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). For software support, call 661-654-2307. You MUST download the free software, Quicktime, to see any film clips I use in this class, within Blackboard 9.

Work outside class time: the CSUB catalog states that for each unit of course credit, you will expect to spend 2-3 hours outside of class time studying/working on the course.

STUDENT PORTFOLIO / SENIOR PROJECT
Communications majors must take a senior seminar (Comm. 490). Communication majors may put together a portfolio of their work in the major that shows they have developed competency in communications and/or may use their previous course work for their senior project. You should save your graded papers, assignments, and tests from this course and your other communication courses in case you are required to use them in your senior portfolio project.

GRADING
To determine points for each assignment and the final grade for the course, I use the following percentage scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>64-67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-79%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>61-63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-74%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>68-71%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Grade for the Course. (300 points possible)
The final grade in the course is based on number of points earned in the class. There are 300 points possible for this course. Following is a chart showing total points and grades for points for the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>288-300</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>270-287</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>261-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>249-260</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>240-248</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>222-239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>213-221</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>204-212</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>192-203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>183-191</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>180-182</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>179 or below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSIGNMENTS / REQUIREMENTS
Descriptions and Instructions for assignments 1, 2, and 3 are posted on Blackboard.

1. **Case Study: Video Games & Storytelling** (30 points). Due Monday, April 16 in Blackboard.

2. **Media Use Journal and Reflection Paper**. (30 points)
   You are to keep a journal of your media use for the week beginning Sunday, May 6 through Saturday, May 12. After you complete your journal, you are to write a paper reflecting on what you learned about when, what, and how you use mass media. **You must turn in your journal and paper to get credit for this assignment.** See assignment instructions on Blackboard. Due May 25 in Blackboard.

   You will write a 6-page paper on a communication topic and use a media artifact to illustrate the communication topic. This is a research/scholarly paper for which you are required to use library databases and other resources. **You MUST have 5 properly-cited academic articles. You MUST use the WSL Communication and Mass Media Complete database to locate these appropriate articles for your paper.** We will go over the use of this online database in class. You will turn in your final paper on the last day of the course. See Blackboard for detailed instructions for the paper.

4. **Tests**. (150 points – Depending on # of chapters covered, tests have different point totals and different time requirements)
   You will take 5 tests during the quarter. See table below for days/dates. The tests can include multiple choice, matching, and/or true/false questions and are to be taken on Blackboard on the days designated for each test. Class will be held on test days, but will be shortened by the length of the scheduled test. **Tests will be available from 12:30 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on the days designated. NOTE: If you do not take each test on Blackboard during the time and on the day designated, you will not be able to take it and will receive a 0 for that test.**

   - Test 1 (20 pts) – Chs 1-2 – 30 minutes
   - Test 2 (40 pts) – Chs 3-7 – 60 minutes
   - Test 3 (30 pts) – Chs 8-10 – 40 minutes
   - Test 4 (30 pts) – Chs 11-13 – 40 minutes
   - Test 5 (30 pts) – Chs 14-15 – 40 minutes

5. **Three online discussions** (3 postings minimum) = 30 points.

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**Monday, April 2** – Introduction to course, review of syllabus, overview of Blackboard. If there are no questions, I presume this will serve as the acceptance of the syllabus, which is your contract with me.

**Chapter 1.**

**Wednesday, April 4** – More on Chapter 1.

**Friday, April 6** – Chapter 2. Media convergence. **Test one.**

**Monday, April 9** - Last Day to Add Classes. Chapter 3, sound recordings.

**Wednesday, April 11** – More on sound recordings with some samples.

**Friday, April 13** – Chapter 4, radio.

**Monday, April 16** – online day. Discussion #1 in Blackboard. THREE succinct postings needed from each student for a grade. Due before midnight, April 19.

**Wednesday, April 18** – Chapter 5, TV and cable.

**Friday, April 20** - online day, Census Day. Discussion #2 in Blackboard. THREE succinct postings needed from each student for a grade. Due before midnight, April 23.

**Monday, April 23** – Chapter 6, movies.

**Wednesday, April 25** – Chapter 7, newspapers.

**Friday, April 27** – More on newspapers. **Test two.**
Monday, April 30 – Chapter 8, magazines.
Wednesday, May 2 – More on Chapter 8.
Friday, May 4 – Chapter 9, books.
Monday, May 7 – online day, Discussion #3 in Blackboard. Academic Advising for Continuing Students.
Wednesday, May 9 – More on books.
Friday, May 11 – Chapter 10, mass media as a business.
Monday, May 14 - Registration for Continuing Students (for Fall Quarter). More on Chapter 10. Test 3.
Wednesday, May 16 – online day, Discussion #4 in Blackboard. THREE succinct postings each needed. Due before midnight, May 19. (EXTRA credit = 10 points)
Friday, May 18 – Public relations, Chapter 11.
Monday, May 21 – More on PR.
Wednesday, May 23 - Chapter 12, the global marketplace.
Friday, May 25 – more on Chapter 12. Media journal assignment due.
Monday, May 28 – HOLIDAY, campus closed.
Wednesday, May 30 – Chapter 13, journalism in a new environment, ethics and values. Test 4.
Friday, June 1 – Chapter 14, media effects.
Monday, June 4 – More on media research.
Wednesday, June 6 – Chapter 15, legal controls, freedom of expression.
Friday, June 8 - Test 5. More on the First Amendment.
Monday, June 11 – LAST DAY OF CLASSES. Overview of course. Final papers due in person before class or online, in Blackboard, before midnight. No late papers accepted, no exceptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th>Test 2</th>
<th>Test 3</th>
<th>Test 4</th>
<th>Test 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, April 6</td>
<td>Friday, April 27</td>
<td>Monday, May 14</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 30</td>
<td>Friday, June 8</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion 1</th>
<th>Discussion 2</th>
<th>Discussion 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 16-19</td>
<td>April 20-23</td>
<td>May 7-10</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper 1</th>
<th>Paper 2</th>
<th>Paper 3 FINAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>June 11</td>
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</table>

The textbook is NOT to be used as a source in any of the papers, nor is a dictionary (online or hard copy), an encyclopedia, Encarta, a Bible, or a Who's Who. STUDENTS WHO CITE WIKIPEDIA (or those noted above) WILL BE PENALIZED BY A HALF-POINT DROP IN GRADE ON THAT PAPER. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source, as it is unreliable. None of these are valid sources for a research paper.

Grading Criteria: Assignments are graded using the following criteria (adapted from the English Dept., CSUB.)

An “A" paper—unusually competent
1. Avoids the obvious and thus gains insights on an analytical level that are illuminating and stimulating to an educated reader.
2. Develops ideas effectively and purposefully with appropriate evidence, examples, and illustrations.
3. Progresses by clearly ordered and necessary stages with paragraphs that are coherent and unified.
4. Uses a variety of punctuation conventionally and purposefully.
5. Has sentences which are skillfully constructed, concise, forceful, effective, and varied.
6. Demonstrates a concern with the right words and a willingness to be inventive with words and
structures in order to produce a clearly identifiable style, even though at times the efforts may be too
deliberate or fall short of the writer’s intentions.

A “B” paper—demonstrably competent
1. Usually avoids the obvious and offers interesting interpretations, but lacks the imaginative insights of
the A paper.
2. Develops an idea with a clear and effective sense of order.
3. Progresses by ordered stages with paragraphs that are coherent and unified.
4. Uses mechanics and punctuation to help communicate the meaning and effect of the prose.
5. Has sentences which are correctly constructed with efficient use of coordination and subordination;
demonstrates an understanding of variety.
6. Draws upon words adequate to express the writer’s own thoughts and feelings and demonstrates an
understanding of alternate ways of expression as a means of making stylistic choices possible.

A “C” paper—competent
1. Functions on the literal level, often depending on the self-evident.
2. Develops ideas minimally, often leaving the reader with unanswered questions.
3. Has a discernible, if mechanical organization.
4. Conforms to conventional grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.
5. Has sentences which are correctly constructed, though perhaps tending toward repetitious patterns
with minimal or mechanical use of coordination and subordination.
6. Works with a limited range of words and thus becomes dependent on the clichés and colloquialisms
most available; is also generally unaware of choices that affect style and thus is unable to control the
effects a writer may seek.

A “D” paper—lacking competence
1. Exploits the obvious either because of a lack of understanding, an inability to read, a failure to
grapple with a topic, or, in many cases, a lack of interest.
2. Wanders aimlessly because of a lack of overall conception or, in some instances, has a semblance
of form without the development that makes the parts a whole.
3. Has a plan or method that is characterized by irrelevancy, redundancy, or inconsistency.
4. Frequently lacks careful mechanical and grammatical distinctions although some papers contain
correct (if simple) sentences.
5. Has sentences which are not correctly constructed or which are monotonous or repetitious.
6. Is characterized by convoluted sentences that are close to the rapid associations of thought or by
“safe” words (ones the writer ordinarily speaks or can spell) and by excessively simple sentence
structures.

An “F” paper—incompetent
1. Doesn’t fulfill the assignment; is unclear overall.
2. Lacks specific development; tends to wander aimlessly
3. Lacks logical and coherent progression.
4. Consistently lacks conventional grammar and mechanics so that communication is unclear.

How to write an academic paper in this class:
Structure
1. Does my introductory paragraph state the purpose of my paper (thesis statement) and how this purpose will be accomplished?
2. Have I developed the body of my paper according to my claim in the introductory paragraph?
3. Is every claim made supported by evidence (reading, example, lecture)?
4. Does my paper accomplish the objective stated in the introductory paragraph? (Is the evidence presented in the paper strong enough to support my claim?)
5. Does my conclusion reiterate the thesis and summarize how the objective was accomplished?
6. Does my paper include all points required by the assignment?

Style
1. Does each paragraph have an opening topic sentence and a central thought that is further developed in the paragraph?
2. Does each paragraph tie to the previous and following paragraphs? (Smooth transitions.)
3. Is every reference in my paper cited in my reference list?
4. Have I been consistent in use of verb tenses?
5. Have I used specific and concrete action verbs rather than vague or passive ones?
6. Have I minimized personal references? (Reduced use of “I” and “we”.)
7. Have I checked my spelling and grammar?

(Thanks to Professor Laura L. Jansma, UC Santa Barbara, for the above paper-writing hints)