

Media 4: Introduction to Mass Communication

Gina Baleria
gbaleria@santarosa.edu
415-370-8945

Office: (online or by phone - by appt.)
Class begins: 1/17/2018 Class ends: 5/18/18 Final Exam: 5/18/18

Welcome to Media 4 online. This class is designed to provoke critical thinking about the structure, content, and effects of mass communication. In other words, we learn a lot about what we do every day – use, consume, and create media.

In addition to the reading (which includes the textbook, the online lectures and current articles), exposure to several media sources, whether print, broadcast, or web, is essential for understanding current issues & topics. You need to read current news stories through traditional media sources, as well as, social media. **Yes, the consumption of media is required.**

Catalog Description

Overview of the history, structure, function, and influence of print, electronic, and digital media and their support industries.

Course Overview

This course provides a survey of the growth and development of mass media in America from historical and analytical perspectives. The course summarizes the principles of the mass communication process and illustrates how that process affects the average consumer of the media. Students will be exposed to mass media problems of the past and present as well as trends that shape the 21st century. The course challenges students to think about the tremendous impact the media have on the political, economic, social, and cultural fabric of their lives. In addition, students, in their role as citizens of a democracy, will examine the relationship of media to government, the fine balance between freedom and controls, the role of media as watchdog, and the need to balance the First Amendment and other rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

Recommended Preparation

- Eligibility for ENGL 1A or equivalent.
- Be realistic about your skill levels and seek help when you need it.
- Feel free to send drafts of your work to me and come to office hours for consultation.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain the history, structure, and influence of the major American media industries.
2. Critically evaluate the impact of overt and covert media messages on their lives and the culture at large.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the successful student will be able to:

1. Distinguish between interpersonal and mass communication theory.
2. Analyze the historical development of print, electronic, and digital media as well as the attendant economic, social, technological, and aesthetic impacts of mass media on culture.
3. Critically analyze the ways in which the media have influenced mass consciousness.
4. Gather, identify, and interpret overt and covert mass media messages.
5. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the media's impact on one's daily life.

Required Readings

- *Understanding Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*
Retrieved from: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/BookDetail.aspx?bookId=143#Reviews>
(Links to an external site).University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing (2016)
- Content from various news outlets
- Articles and other materials as assigned on Canvas

LATE WORK POLICY

Late work is **NOT** accepted. **NO EXCEPTIONS**, except with a valid doctor's note. (NOTE: If you face a trauma or catastrophic event in your life, communicate with the instructor ASAP).

Class Format

This class has been structured to accommodate both experienced online class participants and novices. You must be familiar with the basic functions of a computer, word processing, presentation software, and internet access. You also need to have software to view and complete your work.

Do get to know the Canvas environment and your course - try all the links! Check out the settings! Personalize and customize, so that the setup is as effective for you as possible. You can set notification preferences. The navigation and completion is up to you. **Remember: online learning offers convenience, but requires time management *and* self-motivation.**

*****IMPORTANT***** Discussion submissions, readings, and the lecture are the only things due every week. *All other work for each of the four Modules is due at the end of each Module*, including tests, projects, and extra credit. **There are no make-ups.**

Class Structure

Modules

This class is split into **four modules**. The modules and time frames are:

- Module 1: Mass Media Theories & Media Literacy (January 17 - February 4)
- Module 2: The Development & Evolution of Mass Media (February 5 - April 1)
- Module 3: Legal & Ethical Issues in Mass Media (April 2 - April 22)
- Module 4: The Business & Politics of Mass Media (April 23 - May 18)

Within the modules are weekly topics, accompanied by a weekly lecture, weekly readings, and weekly discussions.

Discussions

You are required to complete *online discussions each week*. Topics are provided and the discussion submissions require thought and research. Posts should be substantive (at least three (3) comprehensive sentences each).

Initial discussion posts are due **EVERY FRIDAY AT 11:59PM.**

You must then respond to at least one classmates.

Classmate Responses are due **EVERY SUNDAY AT 11:59PM.**

*****NOTE: YOU MUST POST WITHIN THE WEEK THAT THE DISCUSSIONS ARE DUE.
LATE DISCUSSION POSTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. *****

The purpose of the discussion boards is to respectfully discuss issues, topics, events, using research. They are similar to short papers. The requirements are detailed in each forum link. Possible points for each discussion post: 25, and possible points for each response is 15.

Please abide by these guidelines:

- Use informative subject lines/titles
- Stick to the required topic and use pertinent examples
- Think, plan and research before you post
- Do not forward someone else's messages without permission

*NOTE: I will drop **one** discussion post and **one** discussion response from the final point scores (they need not be the same topic weeks). So, you are able to miss one week with no penalty.*

Projects

At the end of each module is a project related to the content from that module. Projects are to be submitted online in Canvas.

You must submit **TWO projects (out of four)**. **If you prefer, you may submit a total of three assignments, with one dropped score.** They are worth 40 points each. These projects vary and the details are included in each project description. You may access the info in assignments or modules.

Tests

At the end of each module, you will need to complete a test. Each test contains randomly selected matching, fill-ins (terminology & concepts), timelines, multiple choice, and essay questions from question banks.

You will have up to 4 hours to submit your test unless you begin the test less than 4 hours before the deadline. *The timer starts the moment you open the test and continues to run even if you take a break or lose connection and have to re-open.*

If you have provided an accommodation letter that allows you extra time to take the test, you must also start the test long enough before the deadline to use that time - the software cannot extend the deadline for you.

*****As with all work, late submissions will not be accepted.*****

Each test is worth 50 points. *None of the test scores are dropped*, so missing a deadline greatly damages your grade. As with all other work, you can take the tests anytime within the module dates. You *may NOT make up a missed test* (the only exception is when a student has an unforeseen pivotal event and contacts me before the deadline).

Extra Credit

There are four *extra credit news quizzes* - *one at the end of each module*, each worth 10 points (for a possible total of 40 points of EC). You are encouraged to read/view the news frequently during this class. These news quizzes measure your awareness of notable national and international events – they do not include gossip, which is unfortunately more well-known (but they can sometimes include cultural or sports events).

Weekly Instructor Announcements

Every week there will be an instructor announcement sent to you via email and also posted online in the Announcements link (usually on Mondays). Updates include clarifications, reminders, explanations, and additional information (as well as an extra credit opportunity). ***Please read these updates – they are very important.***

Grading

14 weekly discussion posts & responses (Posts=25pts; Responses=15pts; TOTAL: 40 points ea.)	560
FOUR Module tests (4 x 50 points)	200
TWO Module assignments (out of four) (2 counted x 100 points)	200
Introductory Survey & related activities	40
Total:	1000

How to Succeed in an Online Class (or at least this one)

Online classes allow students to work at their convenience. However, that freedom can lead to procrastination, and it is easy to fall behind schedule. Due dates are NOT flexible. You may complete the class in advance, but you cannot work behind schedule. Otherwise, the class material becomes unmanageable. Late work without previous permission is not accepted for reduced credit - it is just not accepted. *All work for the Module will be available to complete at the beginning of each Module.*

Here are some tips:

- Treat this class as you would one that takes place in a classroom – ***schedule a time to “attend” at least once each week and devote at least two hours of your time and concentration each visit.*** Deciding to work on the class in your “free” time doesn’t work.
- Configure Canvas settings to *accept* updates to your phone so you get reminders and alarms of work that is due.
- Contact the instructor immediately if anything urgent occurs and you need accommodations – without face-to-face interaction, I have no indication of personal issues.

Please refer to the schedule often. You are encouraged to complete the work well before the due date so you can:

- reduce stress
- avoid panics when technology breaks down
- meet important deadlines

Contact Information & Best Practices

Because this class is taught entirely online, it is necessary for you to communicate. While I am responsive and want to engage with you, I cannot individually contact each of you.

If you have issues, **contact me** (and not just in the last weeks). Your **ONLY** chance to extend any deadline is to contact me **BEFORE** that deadline to explain your situation. There are no make-ups, however.

I live in San Francisco, so if you would like to meet face-to-face, we will need to arrange something, so that I can get to Santa Rosa to meet with you.

Questions/Problems/Concerns

In online classes, it is normal to have questions, such as clarification about assignments and other required elements. If you have a question for the instructor, please post them in the “Q&A about this course” board. Answers will be posted within 48 hours. It is advisable to check the contents occasionally – the answers may be helpful to you. Questions and answers are also included in weekly class updates, if they are of interest to the entire class.

I want you to do your best in this class and earn the highest grade you possibly can. If you have an accommodation letter please submit it to me as soon as possible. If there is any other factor that could affect your class performance, contact me as soon as possible. It is always better to ask permission than forgiveness.

Technical support is offered by Canvas 24/7. The phone number is (844) 698-7484. In addition, there are websites with training and answers, such as: <https://community.canvaslms.com/welcome> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Reasonable Accommodation Statement

If you need disability related accommodation for this class, such as a note taker, test-taking services, special furniture, etc., please provide the Authorization for Academic Accommodations (AAA letter) from the Disability Resources Department (DRD) to the instructor as soon as possible. You may also speak with the instructor privately during office hours about your accommodations. If you have not received authorization from DRD, it is recommended that you contact them directly.

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic dishonesty is regarded as any act of deception, benign or malicious nature, in the completion of any academic exercise. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism, impersonation, misrepresentation of idea or fact for the purpose of defrauding, use of unauthorized aids or devices, falsifying attendance records, violation of testing protocol, inappropriate course assignment collaboration, and any other acts that are prohibited by the instructor of record. Guidelines are in the student handbook – please review them.

A student who plagiarizes an assignment, in part or in full, will receive no credit for the assignment. A second offense will result in failure of the course. Plagiarism – from the Latin word for “kidnap” – involves using another’s work without giving proper credit, whether done accidentally or on purpose. This includes not only words and ideas, but also graphs, artwork, music, maps, statistics, diagrams, scientific data, software, films, videos, and the like. To avoid problems, students should cite all sources and check with the instructor before submitting an assignment or project. Students are always responsible for any plagiarism in their work. **(When citing, DO NOT USE WIKIPEDIA!)**

Plagiarism is of particular concern, since this is an online class. It is very easy to copy & paste content from other websites, and even my lectures. **DO NOT DO THIS.** When I ask for examples, use your own experience or those of friends or family. When you are asked to define terms or concepts, use your own words. Finding passages and pasting text does not demonstrate you have learned or understand, the concepts. This applies to discussions, too. I will check submissions that do not seem to be in your “voice”.