Spring 2025, Sections 5462 and 5976

Welcome to Media 4 Online!

You're starting on journey through Modules/Units to reach your goal of understanding our current media landscape. To do this, you need to navigate through tasks concentrating on several topics per week. Your knowledge builds as your experience increases.

This course provides an overview of mass communications, including its history, theories, and impact on society. Students will explore various forms of mass media, such as print, broadcast, digital, gaming and social media, and examine the role of mass communication in shaping public opinion, culture, and democratic processes. Through lectures, discussions, and hands-on activities, students will develop a foundational understanding of the field of mass communications and its relevance in today's rapidly evolving media landscape.

In addition, 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. For many of us, we greatly underestimate how entwined our lives are with mass communication.
Several topics/issues/themes weave throughout this semester's class material: *Artificial Intelligence, mis/dis/malinformation, ethics, social media changes, privacy, and technology*. In addition, I will be weaving in prescient contributions from media critics and observers. There have been accurate predictions about our media future.

Catalog Description:

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

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Evaluate the historical development of the print, electronic, and digital media.
2. Analyze the economic, social, technological, and aesthetic impacts of the media on culture.
3. Critically analyze the ways in which the media have influenced mass consciousness.
4. Gather, identify, and interpret mass media overt and covert messages.
5. Demonstrate a critical understanding of media's impact on their daily lives.

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should 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.
3. Demonstrate a general understanding of the legal responsibilities of the mass media.

Instructor Contact

Linda Schoen
lschoen@santarosa.edu or media4tchr@gmail.com (preferred – quickest response)
   Phone: (707) 486-2761

Office Hours: At your request via Zoom, phone, messaging

I respond to emails within 24 hours; most likely within 4 hours. In addition to email, I can be reached via the Pronto app within Canvas, messaging through Canvas, via text, and calling: (707) 486-2761. You will receive a reply to your question quickly, as I constantly check my messages during the semester.

I do not live in Sonoma County – I am in Nevada (Reno/Sparks). Right now, there aren't any face-to-face meetings I can arrange so we're limited to using Zoom or phone apps.

Class Meetings

All course content and delivery are asynchronous, with weekly deadlines. I previously scheduled a Zoom introductory meeting but have switched to a video presentation.

Course Web Site

Students will use the Canvas course web site for assignment instructions, submitting assignments, viewing classmate's work, sharing resources, and viewing grades.

Class Structure/Participation

Online asynchronous courses redefine attendance. You can "attend" class at 1am in the morning, traveling, or watching kids play outside. Attendance is simply participation within the class activities.

These are the guidelines for participation:
- check-in and interact in the course at least twice a week
- complete assignments (generally due Sunday nights)
- connect with the instructor beforehand if you are going to be disconnected from the course for more than 5 days

This course follows a weekly schedule. Each Module is also called a "Unit", all but one consisting of material from two text chapters, and completion of these Units lead not only to points toward your grade but also progress in the class. Each week you will interact with your peers in weekly discussions and complete a series of activities and assignments.

Feedback and rubric guidelines on discussions and journal posts helps you understand your scores and can offer more learning and growth, as well as corrections for improved future submissions.

Expectations and Goals

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.

Class Cross-Listing and FERPA Compliance

This course is taught in a format that combines multiple sections (5462 and 5976) into one online course environment. Please contact me if you have any issues or concerns.

Required Text: Sage Vantage Learning Platform

Filak, Vincent F. (2023) *Exploring Mass Communication: Connecting with the World of Media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN 9781071914083

Sage Vantage is an intuitive learning platform that integrates Sage textbook content with assignable multimedia activities and auto-graded assessments to drive student engagement and ensure accountability.

The online site includes the textbook reading with Canvas gradebook integrated activities. Each chapter is broken into parts, followed by either a video activity, knowledge check (a few questions about the reading), or a reading activity. At the beginning of each chapter's reading is a poll. Points vary, but about 10-16 assessment points are included for each chapter.

One chapter at a time can be downloaded and you can choose to read the material offline. Vantage has also just added the ability to listen to chapter content, increasing accessibility and portability.

Canvas Integrated Apps and Linked Apps

There are two apps used in this class: *GoReact* and *Padlet*. *Padlet* is used to post your Journals and links are included in the assignments. *You do not need to purchase access or register an account*. As of this semester, the app is integrated with Canvas. If you decide to register for a free account, that will not sync with our institution account. Instructions on using *Padlet* are included in the Getting Started Module and the following link: YouTube Tutorial

GoReact is used for Unit Discussions and is also integrated with Canvas. You can either record your video posts with the app or record using your preferred method and uploading to *GoReact*. Video presentations are required, unless audio submissions are prearranged with the instructor. You also have the choice of recording audio and using image/video presentations that enhance your topics. Instructions on using GoReact are also located in the Getting Started Module.

Required Software

You may need the following software for this course.
Adobe Reader
Open Office

Course Requirements Detail

You are encouraged to check your grades. Feedback is provided on Discussions, Journal submissions and other Assignments. If there are any issues with your submissions, comments will be included there. Rubrics offer information on requirements for submission scores. Please review the criteria within the Rubrics for information before you submit assignments.

Please make sure to read your submission comments and rubrics for feedback. To see them, click on the + within the grades screen.

There is also a tool that allows you to hypothetically enter scores to see if you can attain your goal ("*what if*"). Canvas will notify you when you have a graded assignment completed.

Readings: Online Text and Current Articles pages

These include the online textbook chapters in Vantage and additional "Current Articles" documents with important class material additions and current issues and terminology. Since text publication still takes about a year, these offer relevant and recent material about our media world.

Viewing: Online Lectures

Unit lectures offer additional information to the text.

Submission: "About us" Journal

Using *Padlet*, students submit answers to question prompts introducing themselves to the class during the first week of class. Responses are used to acquaint students with each other.

Submissions: Weekly Journal Entries

You need to create and enter journal entries each week into a *Padlet* board. Content instructions are included in the assignments. Prompts relate to the weekly class material and/or your personal observations/research of media around you. Your journal will include writing, videos, podcasts, memes, and any other media which resonate with you. Grades are based on the quality (not necessarily quantity) of your journal response. Some weeks you'll be posting to a class board; other weeks, you will have your own board. These are accessed by using the included link in the assignment.

Submissions: Discussions

Requirements for these discussions vary each Unit. They require recording your post. Recording time limits: 3-5 minutes, unless otherwise specified. Requirements include answering critical thinking or content questions, sharing experiences, watching and analyzing a video, or presenting researched information.

Submissions: Quizzes

Unit Quizzes consist of questions for each included text chapter. Occasionally, a subjective question is included and requires a short answer response; the vast majority of the questions are objective. Two attempts are allowed, and the highest score is recorded.

Bonus Points and Extra Credit

In addition to having the lowest score dropped for one unit discussion, one weekly journal, and one quiz, there are other opportunities for extra credit.

Badges are automatically awarded for successful completion of each Unit and the requirements are noted in each Module. Badges are indicative of achieving enough points to advance in the class and each badge earns Bonus Points. Five points are rewarded for successful completion of each Module/Unit Badge, including the "Getting Started" Module during the first week. There is a possibility of earning 45 extra credit points, which are added to your accumulated assignment scores and can compensate for missed work.

Most semesters, a **Fake News training** is offered by the SRJC library. If this is the case, extra credit points will be given for participation.

Syllabus - Important Dates

Day Class Begins: Monday, **January 13, 2025**
Day Class Ends: Friday, **May 16, 2025**
Last Day to Add without instructor's approval: Sunday, **January 19, 2025**
Last Day to Drop and be eligible for enrollment/course fee refund: Sunday, **January 26, 2025**
Last Day to Add with instructor's approval: Sunday, **February 2, 2025**
Last Day to Drop without a 'W' symbol: Sunday, **February 2, 2025**
Last Day to Drop with a 'W' symbol: Sunday, **April 20, 2025**
Last Day to Opt for Pass/No Pass: Friday, **May 16, 2025**

Dropping the Class

If you decide to discontinue this course, it is your responsibility to officially drop it to avoid getting no refund (after 10% of course length), a W symbol (after 20%), or a grade (after 60%). Also, for several consecutive, unexplained absences, the instructor may drop a student.

Pass-NoPass (P/NP)

You may take this class P/NP. You must decide before the deadline (which happens to be the last day of our class) and add the option online with TLC or file the P/NP form with Admissions and Records. With a grade of C or better, you will get P.

Once you decide to go for P/NP, you cannot change back to a letter grade. If you are taking this course as part of a certificate program, you can probably still take the class P/NP. Check with a counselor to be sure.

Attendance

Students who do not log-in to an online class after the second day of the semester can officially be dropped from the class. It is strongly advised that if you need to miss more than one class/homework deadline in a row that you contact me to avoid being dropped from the class.

Late Policy

All assignments are due by 11:59pm on the due date. You are allowed to submit some assignments up to three days late with a 30% maximum penalty (10% reduction per day), which allows for some flexibility but discourages procrastination, which is a significant problem for online classes. Each Unit requires reading & review (knowledge), quizzes (cognitive skill), discussions (interaction) and journal entries (analysis/interpretation).

Due Dates for Journals (Sundays at 11:59PM) are every week. Discussions have two separate due dates spanning two weeks, with the exception of the last Unit because it contains only one chapter.

If something has happened which prevents you from submitting work on time, please contact the instructor *as quickly as possible*. If contacted before due dates, arrangements are readily offered. No work is accepted after the published extended deadline without prior approval. No forgiveness of the late penalty will be given without prior approval.

Grading Policy

Visit the "Grades" in Canvas to keep track of your grades. Assignments are graded in the order they are received and are posted with feedback in the Canvas gradebook.

Assignments and Points

1 Introductory Online Meeting Video (Viewing): 10 points
1 Introductory Journal – "About Us": 20 points
15 Unit Journal submissions: 14 counted at 30 points each, for a total of 420 points
8 Unit Discussions: 7 counted at 45 points each, for a total of 315 points
8 Unit Quizzes: 7 counted at 30 points each, for a total of 210 points
15 Chapter Activities in Sage Vantage, for a total of 316 points
Course Total: 1291 points

Grade Points/Percentages

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90%	points or more
B	80%	to points
C	70%	to points

A	90%	points or more
D	60%	to points

If taking Pass/No Pass you need at least 70% of the total class points to pass the class.

Instructor Announcements

The instructor will post announcements on the "Instructor Announcements" page in Canvas throughout the semester, usually on Mondays. Canvas notifies students according to their preferred Notification Preferences as soon as the instructor creates an Announcement. The last two Announcements are located on the Home Page. Updates include clarifications, reminders, explanations, and additional information. *Please read these updates* – they are helpful to you and are a vital link between the instructor and students.

Other Important Policies and Practices

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity includes topic such as cheating, lying, collusion, and plagiarism. This is quite different from teamwork. Guidelines are in the student handbook – please review them. Plagiarism is of particular concern since this is an online class and Artificial Intelligence has added another technological temptation. It is very easy to copy and paste content. But I strenuously suggest that you don't. Remember: *it is just as easy for me to search online as it is for you*. There are now apps which detect AI, and there are other "tells". If plagiarism is detected, I will notify you in the assignment feedback.

Please, when I ask for examples, *use your own experience or those of friends or family*. When you are asked to define terms or concepts in responses, *use your own words*. I want to make sure you know the material. This applies to every assignment, particularly discussions and journals. I will check submissions that do not seem to be in your "voice". I also use an AI checker for any use of AI apps.

This does not, however, preclude you from including research information you have found (including Wikipedia, which is a good start in some cases). *Just cite the information and include the location of the information (reference) at the end of your work*. This is required for all college work, not just this class. Although most students have likely heard about plagiarism during their years of schooling, it still is prevalent- even in higher education. Recent public events have highlighted the fact that plagiarizing doesn't usually happen once. If I find more than one plagiarism violation, I will use the online reporting system.
The video below reviews what plagiarism is and how not to do it.

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[Plagiarism: How to avoid it](#)

Netiquette, or Why Is It Harder to Be Polite Online?

Netiquette refers to using common courtesy in online communication. All members of the class are expected to follow netiquette in all course communications. Use these guidelines:

- Use capital letters sparingly. THEY LOOK LIKE SHOUTING.
- Forward emails only with a writer's permission.
- Be considerate of others' feelings and use language carefully.
- Cite all quotations, references, and sources (otherwise, it is plagiarism).

- Use humor carefully. It is hard to "read" tone; sometimes humor can be misread as criticism or personal attack. Feel free to use emoticons like :) for a smiley face to let others know you are being humorous.
- Use complete sentences and standard English grammar to compose posts. Write in proper paragraphs. Review work before submitting it.
- Text speak, such as "ur" for "your" or "ru" for "are you" etc., is only acceptable when texting.

Special Needs

Students with disabilities who believe they need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Resources (707-527-4278), as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Please – communicate with me regarding any help you may need to continue your studies. I have references for aid, student mentors, online tutoring and help, and other resources. If you wait until the end of the class, I cannot help you.

Communication

You are encouraged to establish a rapport and contact with other students to support each other. While communication with the instructor is essential, some students prefer consulting other classmates. Using Pronto allows for questions to be addressed to individuals or the entire class; whichever works best for you.
Just as important is the establishment of rapport and contact with your instructor. Online classes offer flexibility, but they lack understanding and familiarity between students and instructors. If you have a question, please reach out through messaging, email, or phone calls. If you find an error in the class material, please contact me as soon as possible so it can be resolved.

Physical and Mental Health

Should you experience any physical or mental health issues, know that all of us at SRJC care about your well-being. SRJC's Student Health Services (SHS) has nurse practitioners and mental health therapists available. Confidential sessions are provided via secure Zoom or in-person. Sessions are free for SRJC students taking credit or non-credit classes, and some providers can converse with you in Spanish if you prefer. To start the process for any type of physical or mental health appointment contact Student Health at 707 527-4445 or email studenthealthservices@santarosa.edu. More information about all that Student Health Services provides is available at shs.santarosa.edu.

Diversity and Inclusion

All of us are aware of the challenges we face. These are not just academic; every aspect of our lives is affected, including educational adjustments. Please let me know if you have challenges, in or out of this class, as the online environment doesn't allow for observational insight.

This class presents many opportunities to explore some formidable issues and increase our understandings of different perspectives. We sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking and our listening, and we will need patience or courage or any number of qualities in combination to engage our own ideas and experiences. *Always, we will need respect for others.*

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be heard in this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit.

It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please

let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an "invisible disability" such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services.

Tech Support and Canvas Help

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*.

Padlet support is also offered and their response rate, based on experience, is quick and effective. Padlet WhatsApp number: 1-844-472-3538 and Padlet Knowledge Base and Support

Technical support is offered by Canvas 24/7. The phone number is *(844) 698-7484*. If you have questions about the website, please call this number first and foremost. I cannot view your screen or specific activity – but they can. In addition, there are websites with training and answers, such as: Canvas community forums