**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number:** Media and Society, BC 471

**Home Department:** Communication and Performance Studies

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information**: Dr. Jim Cantrill, 227-2061, jcantril@nmu.edu

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course**: Every Winter in the classroom and Summer online

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? **YES**

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

1. Overview of the course content

The course investigates the relationship between mass media and society and how the two influence one another. Scholarly theories and research are used to explore the role of media in social issues such as creating an informed society, political processes, the formation of public opinion, persuading mass audiences for public health or for commercial profit, and creating unhealthy attitudes and behaviors involving aggression toward people, sexual relationships, stereotypes, body image, eating, and perceptions of values, norms, and ideologies. Depending upon the instructor, these issues may be investigated through social scientific quantitative methods such as those used in psychology or qualitative methods such as those used in critical communication studies.

By nature, the issues involve ethical questions of whether media are having a good influence on society, and how people may want to actively work to restructure media consumption and production to provide more benefit to society. The research provides evidence for making ethical decisions, and students are prompted to use that evidence for making ethical decisions such as what types of people should be allowed to watch certain types of media content, or whether certain types of content should be censored or banned because of the harm it may cause.

A main goal of the course is to get students to think critically about the structure of media, the central role it plays in society, how the relationship between media and society has developed over the years, and how that relationship might be guided or changed to create healthier lives, more balanced power between social groups, and maximize the prosocial potential of media while minimizing its antisocial consequences.

1. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes

The overview of the course shows that the goals of the course align well with the three dimensions of the “Perspectives on Society” component as well as the three dimensions of the “Critical Thinking” component.

**Perspectives of Society**

The Perspectives on Society component has three learning outcomes: Analysis of Society, Ethical Issues, and Development and context of society.

Analysis of Social Issues – The heart of the entire course is an analysis of social issues and their relationship to mediated communication. See the sample list of issues in item “A” above. Social structures and processes are the main focus when examining issues. Typical examples include how the processes of mass communication create, reinforce, or reduce division between groups of people; the processes by which people consume various types of media and how it influences their relationships with other people; and the role and influence of media as a central component of democracy or other political processes.

Ethical Issues – The issues considered in class invariably have ethical dimensions. They are the driving motivation for studying the issues. If somebody says that current media practices are creating a society of ignorant people, is that true? What evidence or arguments are there to support or falsify the claim? If the claim is accurate? What should be done about it? If mediated violence causes an increase of aggression in society, is it wrong for networks to broadcast it? Is censorship and limitation of the First Amendment a greater harm? Frequently, the ethical decision can be debated, and students must make up their own minds. The course identifies the ethical issues and provides methods that should help students decide for themselves.

Development and context of society – The course examines how media, society, and individuals influence the development of the others. An example topic is the Cultivation Hypothesis, which considers how the economic structure of media within a particular culture influences the type of media content that is produced, which in turn, may reflect and promote certain values and ideals within individuals of that society. Additional issues include the role of media in the development of children, the formation of stereotypes, body image, and other issues such as those listed in item “A” above.

**Critical Thinking**

A primary goal for BC 471 is to teach students not merely cold facts about media, but how to identify issues, conduct research, evaluate claims, and pull evidence and theories together to synthesize their own questions, hypotheses, ethical decisions, and solutions to problems. This goal encompasses the three outcomes of the critical thinking component: Evidence, Integrate, and Evaluate. Students are required to find and summarize research to use in the formation of their own ideas. The quality of the research must be similar to that which would be accepted in scholarly or professional conferences and publications. They must also learn to critically evaluate the validity of scholarly research and popular opinions or claims about media and society.

1. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

The course targets juniors and seniors, although advanced individuals of lower standing should be able to successfully complete it, too. The course is applicable to all students who would like a better understanding of the role that media play in their lives. Students considering careers that may relate to media in some way would also benefit. These majors include art and design, business, communication studies, education, marketing, media production, multimedia journalism, political science, psychology, public relations, sociology, and theatre.

1. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

BC 471 is currently an elective for the following programs: Communication Studies Major, Communication Studies Minor, Media Production and New Technology Major, Public Relations Major.

1. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC

Three syllabi are attached at the end of this document.

1. BC 471 taught with a primarily Qualitative Critical approach (provided by Dr. Xie)
2. BC 471 taught with a primarily Quantitative Social Scientific approach (provided by Dr. Shevy)
3. BC 417 taught as an online course with the Quantitative approach (provided by Dr. Shevy)

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | *Task Type*: Exams, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: at least 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* Quality of information may be defined in terms of accuracy, relevance, or credibility in the context of an issue or situation being considered. Instructors can measure this in exams by analyzing whether students choose or provide the most correct information when answering a question. For example, a question may present a communication situation and ask students to select the most relevant theory for addressing the situation. In papers, presentations, discussions, and projects, instructors will assess whether students use information that is deemed accurate, relevant, and credible according to accepted standards in scholarly communication research.  |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | *Task Type*: Examinations, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* Instructors may assess students’ integration of insight with existing understanding through exams by asking questions that require students to integrate the course material. For example, a question may present students with two propositions and ask what the most expected outcome would be. An exam question may ask students to predict the effect of the internet on political communication, given the psychology and media theories of how people use media. Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects require students to integrate concepts from class with personal experiences, commonly debated issues, or other concepts from class to explain phenomena, predict outcomes, or find solutions to problems.  |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | *Task Type*: Examinations, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* Instructors may assess students’ evaluation abilities through exams by presenting questions that require students to evaluate the accuracy, relevance, or credibility of information in terms of established communication theory and research. For example, a question may present a statement about the role of media in society and require students to evaluate the accuracy of the statement by using a communication theory, methodology, or research findings. Likewise papers, presentations, discussions and projects allow assessment of students’ evaluation abilities through analysis of students’ use of concepts and the conclusions they reach. For example, students will need to evaluate whether research articles use valid and reliable research methods for addressing particular communication issues. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES
PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY**

*Attainment of the PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIETY Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Analysis of society**  | Analysis of social issues, structures and processes or events | Examinations, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* The same methodology rationales used for the critical thinking assessment apply. Students will use their critical thinking in exams, papers, presentations, discussions, and/or projects to analyze social issues, structures and processes or events. Instructors can use student responses in these measures to gauge how accurately and thoroughly students use communication theory and research to explain the role of media in social issues such as personal relationships, governmental policies, and equality; the structure global media industries and their relation to political and economic systems; and events such as the spread of media technology, breaking news, and occurrences of violence or protest. |
| **Ethical Issues** | Addressing ethical issues in society | *Task Type*: Group/Individual Multiple Choice/Essay Examinations, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* The same methodology rationales used for the critical thinking assessment apply. Exams and written and oral assignments may require students to identify ethical issues in the use and impact of media in relation to individuals and society. Furthermore, students may be required to show how theories and research may be used to support or invalidate particular ethical positions. Students may be required to use media theories and research to form and support their own ethical views. Instructors can use these responses to assess whether students have clearly identified the issue, and whether they logically apply communication theory and research in a manner to the issue.  |
| **Development and context of society** | Explore themes in the development of human society | *Task Type*: Group/Individual Multiple Choice/Essay Examinations, Papers, Presentations, Discussions, and/or Projects (subjected to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)*Frequency*: At Least Twice a Semester*Overall Grading Weight*: 30% *Expected Proficiency Rate*: As a 400-level course, BC 471 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.*How the assessment fits the dimension:* The same methodology rationales used for critical thinking apply. Communication theory and research considers the factors that influenced the development of media industries and the role of media in the development of societies. They also consider the role of media in the psychological development of individuals. A underlying theme throughout BC 471 is to show that media industries, societies, and individuals do not exist in a permanent state. Exams and written and oral assignments require students to identify and explain the mechanisms and processes that may have led to the current state of media, society, and individuals. Instructors may use these responses to assess whether students apply media/communication concepts, theories, and research to past, current, and possible future states of industry, society, and individuals in an accurate, relevant, logical manner. |

**Syllabi**

The following pages include three syllabi to further illustrate the type of content and assessment methods used in the course. The three syllabi are: 1) BC 471 taught with a qualitative critical emphasis, 2) BC 471 taught with a quantitative social scientific emphasis, and 3) BC 471 taught as an online course with a qualitative social scientific emphasis.

1. **BC 471 with Qualitative Methodology**

**BC 471 Mass Communication and Society**

**Fall 2014**

**Mondays and Wednesdays 4:00-5:40 pm**

**TFA 312**

Dr. Shuang Xie

211 Thomas Fine Arts Building

sxie@nmu.edu

227-1644

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am-2:00pm or by appointment

**Course Description, Objectives and Assessment Methods**

**Descriptions:**

This course brings together an appreciation of the media as business, cultural and political actors and the principal challenges they pose to policy-makers and regulators. The range of media considered is broad: from print, film and radio through broadcasting, cable and satellite television to the Internet, the social media, and the smartphone. You will be asked to evaluate media industries and media products (hardware, software, and content) both from the point of view of their relative performance in the market-place but also from the perspective of how well or poorly they contribute to the public good in general with respect, first, to the general quality of life for different ethnicities, genders, identities, nationalities, races, and social classes, and secondly, and even more importantly, the survival of our planet and of our species.

**Learning Objectives and Assessment Methods:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Critically assess the roles and functions of media with reference to a variety of cultural, economic, political and social contexts (assessment methods: class discussion, exams, and research projects)
2. Understand the business and political imperatives that help shape the evolution of media systems and media products (assessment methods: class discussion and research projects)
3. Understand different research approaches to the study of media, and to apply the distinction between market model and public sphere model to assessing media performance (assessment methods: class discussion and research projects)
4. Cite significant legislation affecting the operations of media industries, and understand the role of important federal and international regulatory agencies (assessment methods: class discussion and exams)
5. Understand how international, national and state regulations impact the business of media (assessment methods: class discussion, exams, and research projects)
6. Exemplify the differences between commercial, public and alternative media ( assessment methods: exams)

NOTE: I deliberately set the course objectives to make sure they are not only motivating students to learn, but also practical and reachable. I also carefully choose and design the class assignments to make sure they not only help students learning but also help myself to measure the course outcomes. After the final grades have been submitted, I will closely review students’ performance on each assignment use the following rubric to subjectively assess the outcomes of the class.

Course Appraisal

Student A Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student B Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student C Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student D Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

AVERAG Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

OVERALL AVERAGE

5 = Very Well: Demonstrates an exceptional performance in the category being assessed. Information is provided in a thorough manner and indicates a high level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to an ‘A’ in a course.

4 = Well: Demonstrates a good performance in the category being assessed that is clearly above average, but still has areas where there could be notable improvement. Information is provided in a comprehensible manner and indicates a reasonably good level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “B” in a course.

3 = Adequately: Demonstrates a minimally acceptable performance in the category being assessed, and has areas that would benefit from significant improvement. Information is provided in a manner that is sufficient and indicates a relatively basic level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “C” in a course.

2 = Inadequately: Demonstrates a performance that would not be minimally acceptable in the category being assessed. Information is provided in a manner that is not sufficient and indicates a lack of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “D” in a course.

**Required Textbook**

Croteau, D., Hoynes, W, & Milan, S. (2011). Media/society: Industries, images, and audience

(4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

**Handouts**

While there will be some class hand-outs, students are responsible for accessing most supplementary materials from EduCAT.

**Major Assignments**

***Media and Me:*** The purpose of this assignment is to help you understand how media have influenced on you and your lives. This assignment involves library research, self-reflection, and writing. In this paper, you are supposed to reflect on your use of media and how media have influenced on various aspects of you lives. Suggested topics include but are not limited to: “My media life: A short history,” “Media and Education,” “Social Media’s Influences on My Reading Abilities,” “iPhone and my love life.” “TV and My Driving.” You are also supposed to present your research and reflections in class for 10-15 minutes.

***Final project*:** The purpose of this assignment is to find out the social influences of media. This is a written group (2 students) report of 15-20 pages, and class presentation of between 20-25 minutes in which you will identify a specific problem related to any media operation of your choice, and a proposed course of action to remedy that problem, including possible regulatory action. The report must identify:

A specific problem – whether it be related to some failure of market strategy (e.g. low rate of market penetration; fall-off in consumer interest), some defect of design, some feature of the market structure (e.g. media monopoly) some public concern (e.g. issues of public decency, or political balance) – and a justification, with evidence (including relevant evidence from scholarly research) , as to why there is a problem and how the problem is manifested

Any regulatory issues to which the problem is related (e.g. regulations governing market share, or public decency)

Ways in which the problem might be resolved or ameliorated and that would have a likely chance of success, and why.

***Two Exams***: The exams are mostly non-cumulative; however some themes that run throughout the semester may be covered in a cumulative manner. The exams will cover material from the readings and class meetings. Answers will require thorough understanding both of the texts and of materials and issues discussed in class.

If you have a university-sanctioned excuse for missing an exam or requiring other exceptions, let me know before the exam, and provide documentation. Exam make-ups will not be allowed unless I give permission ahead of time. If you show up late for an exam or quiz, you may complete as much of it as you can in the remaining time allotted IF nobody has already completed the exam and left the room.

**Please notice (very important and strict):**

**The consequence of not being able to complete the above assignments /exams on the due dates may be 50% percent off what you earn.**

**Grading**

Each Assignment earns up to the following total number of points:

Attendance and participation: 40 points (20 points for class attendance and participation + 20 points for EduCat discussion)

Media and Me: 40 points

In-class presentation of Media and Me: 20 points

Final group project: 50 points

In-class presentation of final project: 20 points

Exams: 40 pointsx2=80 points

Total: 250

Letter Grades Ranges

90% or above of the total A

87.5—89.5% of the total A-

85%--87% of the total B+

80% -- 84.5% of the total B

77.5%--79.5% of the total B-

75%--77% of the total C+

70% -- 74.5% of the total C

65% -- 69.5% of the total C-

60%--64.5% of the total D

59% and below F

**The Instructor’s Expectations**

1. Attendance and Participation

You should attend all classes, and arrive promptly at the start of each class. Students who are absent on more than two occasions during the semester, or who are persistently late to class, will lose marks progressively unless they can show very strong cause. 6 or more unexplained or insufficiently justified absences will likely lead to a Fail grade. Talking in class other than in the context of task-related discussions and activities that I have initiated will be similarly penalized. Cell phones must be turned off. Laptops are not permitted unless at my request.

Papers or similar assignments are normally due by 5:00pm on the due date. Hardcopies are always better than Electronic ones.

You are responsible for keeping up with the reading, as shown in this syllabus. You are recommended to read *ahead*, also, so that you may find material that is likely to be of relevance to your final group project. You must be fully prepared for class assignments such as student-led discussions and project presentations.

1. Other Expectations

Academic Misconduct Cheating in any form compromises your grade and lowers the quality of your diploma. As a college student, it is your responsibility to know what constitutes cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty (See the NMU Student Handbook http://dso.nmu.edu/handbook). To clarify, using someone’s work without giving that person proper credit (e.g., properly citing them) or passing other people’s work off as your own is considered plagiarism regardless of whether you got the material from a book, the Web, a video or your best friend. Academic dishonesty may result in anything from a zero on an assignment to expulsion from the university. If you are ever in doubt as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, talk to me!

***Privacy***

No recordings (video or audio) produced in this class may be distributed (including Internet posting) outside of this class without the permission of the people in the recording. Doing this will result in a lowered or failing class grade and possible legal prosecution.

***Email***

Email is the best way to communicate with me outside of the classroom. I try to reply to students as soon as possible provided I am not stuck by a major task. But I usually do not reply emails which inform me reasons or excuses of absence. Also, I usually do not check emails on weekends. So, please do not expect a reply if you just email me to ask for a leave, and please do not expect an immediate reply if you email me on weekends.

 A very import note: when writing an email to me, please note on the subject line with “BC 471.”

***Laptops, Cell phones, etc.***

Laptops are not allowed in class unless I request.

Cell phones MUST be turned off.

***Disability Services***

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock (227-1700). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Schedule**

**Note: You are supposed to read the relevant book chapter *before* we discuss it in class.**

Week 1

8/25 Introduction of the course and people Media and Ownership

8/27 Reading: chapter 2 The Economic of Media Industry

Week 2:

9/1 labor day observance – no class

9/3 Political Influence on Media

Reading: Chapter 3 Political Influence on Media

Week 3:

9/8 Video: Black Mirror Episode 1

9/10 Reading: Chapter 7 Media Influence and Political World

Week 4:

9/15 New Media’s impact on Media professional

Reading: Chapter 4 Media Organizations and Professionals

9/17 Media Power and Control

Reading: Chapter 5 Media Ideology

Week 5:

Media Users

9/22 Reading: chapter 8 Active Audience and Construction Meaning

and handouts

9/24 Reading: handout

Week 6: Media Tech and Social Influence

9/29 Reading: Chapter 9 Media Technology

10/1 Video: Black Mirror

Week 7:

10/6 study guide for Exam #1

10/8 Exam #1

Week 8:

10/13 Media and Me paper due

10/13 & 10/15 Presentation of Media and Me

Week 9:

Commercialization of Media

10/20 Reading: handout

10/22 Reading: handout

Week 10

Media and Culture

10/27 Reading: Chapter 6 Social Inequality and Media Representations (topic due)

10/29 movie (final project proposal due)

Week 11

Media and Globalization

11/3 Reading: Chapter 10 Media in a Changing Global Culture

11/5 Reading: handout

 Week 12 evaluate the social influences of Social media and Smartphones

11/10 handouts and videos

11/12 handouts and videos

Week 13

11/17 library research for the final projects

11/19 TBA

Week 14

Turkey-day week (Why the school give us the whole week this semester?)!

Week 15

12/1 the final paper due

12/1 & 12/3 presentation

Final week

Final Exam

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or sent to NMU email accounts.

1. **Syllabus for Quantitative Social Scientific Approach**

BC471 Mass Communication & Society Winter 2015

**Instructor:** Dr. Mark Shevy **Office:** 212 Thomas Fine Arts

**E-mail:** mshevy@nmu.edu

|  |
| --- |
| **Office Hours:** Mon. & Wed. 10-1:30, 4-5; Tue. & Thur. 10:30-11:30  |

**Credits:** 4 credits

**Course site:** <https://educat.nmu.edu/>

# Course Information

It is often observed that we live in a media-saturated world, which raises numerous questions of what impact mass media have. To provide a means of addressing these questions and their related issues, this course examines the uses and effects of mass communication for individuals and societies. It will cover research and theory regarding such questions as who is affected, what effects occur and how much, what different media content is involved, and what situations make effects more or less likely. It uses primarily a social scientific approach and involves numbers, charts, tables and other statistical presentations. Students do not need a previous knowledge of statistics nor will they need to do any advanced math in the class.

**Course Objectives**

If you make the most of this course, you will be better-equipped to make informed decisions and contribute to discussions regarding media use, policy, and production. The learning objectives within the context of scientific research and media effects are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Assessment Method** |
| ***Critical Thinking: Evidence*** Assess quality of information that may be integrated into an argument. | Discussion, Research article summary, Exam questions |
| ***Critical Thinking: Integrate***Integrate insight and/or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding. | Discussion, Media Effects analysis assignment,Term paper, Exam questions |
| ***Critical Thinking: Evaluate***Evaluate information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines. | Discussion, Media Effects analysis assignment,Term paper, Exam questions |
| ***Perspectives on Society: Analysis of Society***Analysis of social issues, structures and processes, or events | Discussion, Term paper, Exam questions |
| ***Perspectives on Society: Ethical Issues***Addressing ethical issues in society | Discussion, Term paper, Exam questions |
| ***Perspectives on Society: Development and content of society***Explore themes in the development of human society | Discussion, Term paper, Exam questions |

**Text:** Bryant, J., Thompson, S., & Finklea, B. (2013). *Fundamentals of Media Effects (Second Edition).* Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Additional readings may be assigned during the semester.

**Grading:** Exam 1 15%

 Exam 2 15%

 Exam 3 15%

 Term paper 15%

 Lead class discussion 15%

 Short assignments/Class projects 15%

 Participation 10%

**Conduct:** Courtesy, responsibility, and honesty are assumed requirements for this course, as they should be for any course. Contribute questions that will help raise useful discussions and clarify course concepts and readings. Complete assignments on time. Submitting work that is not your original work (e.g., sentences, paragraphs, concepts, exam answers, etc.) without proper citation is academic dishonesty. If we have group projects, do your share of the work. Participate in discussions, but don’t dominate every opportunity – give others a chance, to speak, too. Obviously this is not an exhaustive list; the goal is to create an environment where we can all learn. Failure to conduct yourself in the appropriate manner will result in lower grades, and possibly failing the course and further university disciplinary action. Be familiar with the student code at <https://www.nmu.edu/dso/studenthandbook>.

*Note: I have recently had to give failing grades to students who copied and pasted information from other sources into exams and assignments*. If you do not properly cite where you get the information or ideas, it is cheating and plagiarism. Also, the purpose of submitting written assignments is so that I can tell whether you understand the concepts in your own words. Copy and pasting doesn’t help you understand the material better, and it gives me nothing I can use for grading. It wastes our time and makes us both sad in the end.

Assignments, additional readings, schedule changes, and other timely information may come to you via EduCat. It is your responsibility to stay in regular contact with these channels of information.

Study groups are a good way to learn the material and prepare for exams. You can form them online under the “Course Content Questions” forum, or ask me to create a separate forum. You can also ask about academic support provided by NMU such as tutoring services at <http://www.nmu.edu/tutoring/node/1>.

**Exams:** Exams will be primarily multiple choice and online. They will be timed (probably around an hour, maybe a little longer). This means you'll be able to look at the textbook and printed notes for a few questions, but you'll need to answer most of them by memory if you want to finish in time.

**Term Paper:** Students will show that they are able to find scholarly research on media effects, understand it, and use it to synthesize new concepts in a short term paper.

**Lead Class Discussion:** Each student will lead the class in discussing the readings for that day.

**Short Assignments & Participation:** There are six short assignments listed in the schedule below. Two are small projects you'll submit to through EduCat. The other four are Educat discussion forum postings where you'll post a question or comment responding to the readings. These are worth five points each. The discussions are graded as follows:

0 pts. = You didn't post

1 pt. = You posted something, but it wasn't relevant or didn't show that you did the readings.

2 pt. = You merely summarized something from the readings.

3 pt. = You showed how a theory, concept, or research in the readings can apply to a situation.

4 pt. = You showed how two or more theories, concepts, or research articles relate to each other in addition to explaining why it's relevant to a situation.

To get full points, you must post this by 7 p.m. the day it's due (the due dates are all Fridays, but you can post earlier, if you like). Then, after the Friday deadline, come back and reply to someone else's posting. You'll get a fifth point if you give a *thoughtful* reply by the following Monday at 6 p.m.

*Writing standards:* Written assignments must have proper grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, clear organization, and accuracy. This applies to discussion forums, but especially to any essay or research papers. If you are assigned to do a research paper, it must be typed (obviously), double-spaced, have 1-1.5 inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font. They should also have your name on them (See, your kindergarten teacher was right!). The must also properly cite the information sources you used, according to the details in the specific assignment.

**Graduate Students:** The material in this course can be adapted to suit students working toward a graduate degree. Graduate students will make arrangements with the instructor to determine how the course will be adapted. Possibilities include writing one or more research papers and/or participation in developing a research project.

**Schedule:** Class discussions will require you to do readings *before* the class. Lectures will often provide additional information beyond the reading, under the assumption that you have knowledge of readings. The amount of reading is moderate, but you will often need to read and re-read carefully and analytically -- going for comprehension and explanation rather than memorization of detail. The following schedule of topics and readings is subject to change. Additional readings and activities may be added as the semester progresses. Any changes will be announced in class or online. To stay on top of your work, feel free to do readings and assignments ahead of schedule.

**INTRODUCTION**

#### Week 1

## 1/12 & 1/14 Course Introduction, Variety of Media Ideas, Nature of Effects

Reading: Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea (BTF) Ch. 1-2

**Week 2**

1/19 Martin Luther King Day

## 1/21 How We Know, 6AME model, Scientific History, Stats

 Reading: BTF Ch. 3

\*Assignment 1 (Media Effects Classification) Due 1/21

**Theories and Concepts**

**Week 3**

1/26 & 1/28 Learning – Social Cognitive Theory, FX of Medium, Knowledge Structures, Priming

Reading: BTF Ch. 4, 5

\*Discussion 1 Due online 1/30

**Week 4**

2/2 & 2/4 Agenda Setting & Framing

Reading BTF Ch. 6, 7

\*Assignment 2 (Article Summary) Due

**Week 5**

2/9 & 2/11 Cultivation & Uses and Gratifications

Reading: BTF Ch. 8, 9

\*Discussion 2 Due online 2/20

**Week 6**

2/16 First Midterm Exam

2/18 Persuasion

Reading: BTF Ch. 10

**Key Areas of Research**

**Week 7**

2/23 & 2/25 Media Violence

Reading: BTF Ch. 11

**Week X**

3/2 & 3/4 Midsemester Break

**Week 8**

3/9 & 3/11 Sexual Content

Reading: BTF Ch. 12

\*Discussion 3 Due 3/13

**Week 9**

3/16 & 3/18 Political Communication

Reading: BTF Ch. 14

**Week 10**

3/23 & 3/25 Socialization and Health

Reading: BTF Ch. 15, 16

**Week 11**

3/30 Frightening Content

4/1 Exam 2

Reading: BTF Ch. 13

**Week 12**

4/6 & 4/8 Term Paper meetings

**Week 13**

4/13 & 4/15 Children & Video Games

Reading: BTF Ch. 17, 18

\*Discussion 4 Due online 4/18

**Week 14**

4/20 & 4/22 Selection, Attention & Cognition or TBA

\*Short Term Paper Due

**Fit this somewhere…**

Effects of the Internet & Mobile Communication

Reading: BTF Ch. 19, 20

**Final Exam Monday, 4/27, 6 p.m.**

1. **Syllabus for online version of the Quantitative Social Scientific emphasis**

BC471 Mass Communication & Society Summer 2014 Web Course

**Instructor:** Dr. Mark Shevy **Office:** Online chat

**E-mail:** mshevy@nmu.edu **Office Hours:** By appt.

**Credits:** 4 credits **Semester:** May 19 - June 27

**Meeting site:** <https://educat.nmu.edu/>

# Course Information

It is often observed that we live in a media-saturated society, which raises numerous questions of what impact mass media have. To provide a means of addressing these questions and their related issues, this course examines the uses and effects of mass communication for individuals and societies. It will cover research and theory regarding such questions as who is affected, what effects occur and how much, what different media content is involved, and what situations make effects more or less likely. It uses primarily a social scientific approach and involves numbers, charts, tables and other statistical presentations. However, students do not need a previous knowledge of statistics nor will they need to do any advanced math in the class.

**Course Objectives**

If you make the most of this course, you will be better-equipped to make informed decisions and contribute to discussions regarding media use, policy, and production. The learning objectives are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Assessment Method** |
| Show understanding of models of media and the nature of their effects | Written assign., Discussion, Exam |
| Show understanding of objective vs. subjective perception, empiricism, and scientific method | Discussion, Exam |
| Demonstrate the ability to find and summarize credible scholarly media research publications | Written assign. |
| Show understanding of theories and research pertaining to: ∙ audiences and their use of media ∙intentional effects of media ∙unintended effects of media ∙psychological processes of media use | Written assign., Discussion, Exam |
| Use the aforementioned understandings to:. critically analyze media research ∙synthesize connections between media theory, research, and effects∙ ask original questions that could improve our understanding of media’s relation to people and society.∙relate the course material to issues of personal and societal value | Discussion, Exam |

**Text:** Perse, Elizabeth. (2001). *Media effects and society.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Additional readings may be assigned during the semester.

**Grading:** Exam 1 20%

 Exam 2 20%

 Exam 3 20%

 Assignments/Participation 40%

**Conduct:** Courtesy, responsibility, and honesty are assumed requirements for this course, as they should be for any course. Contribute questions that will help raise useful discussions and clarify course concepts and readings. Complete assignments on time. Submitting work that is not your original work (e.g., sentences, paragraphs, concepts, exam answers, etc.) without proper citation is academic dishonesty. If we have group projects, do your share of the work. Participate in discussions, but don’t dominate every opportunity – give others a chance, to speak, too. Obviously this is not an exhaustive list; the goal is to create an environment where we can all learn. Failure to conduct yourself in the appropriate manner will result in lower grades, and possibly failing the course and further university disciplinary action. Be familiar with the student code at <https://www.nmu.edu/dso/studenthandbook>.

*Note: I have recently had to give failing grades to students who copied and pasted information from other sources into exams and assignments*. If you do not properly cite where you get the information or ideas, it is cheating and plagiarism. Also, the purpose of submitting written assignments is so that I can tell whether you understand the concepts in your own words. Copy and pasting doesn’t help you understand the material better, and it gives me nothing I can use for grading. It wastes our time and makes us both sad in the end.

Assignments, additional readings, schedule changes, and other timely information may come to you via EduCat. It is your responsibility to stay in regular contact with these channels of information.

**Special Web Course Considerations**

*Space:* Members of our class are spread out geographically, so we will not depend on doing anything in the same physical space; all our meetings, discussions, and exams will be through the Internet. Our central meeting place will be EduCat. To find Educat, go to <https://educat.nmu.edu/>. Before logging in, take some time to get familiar with Educat by looking at the instructional documentation in the “Student Resources” section. Take some time to get familiar with how to access a course in EduCat, work with assignments, participate in EduCat forums (discussion boards), and taking quizzes in Educat These are all activities you’ll need to do. If you have questions, ask sooner rather than later.

Once you log into EduCat and go to our course, you’ll find a welcome video link near the top of the page that will introduce you to the instructor and the particular organization of our site.

*Time:* A benefit of this online course is asynchronous communication. That is, we don’t have to be online at the same time; you can watch lectures any time of day. Yet, there may be times when you want to interact in real time, such as having an office-hours type conversation. If we need to do something like that, we can arrange a video conference at a time that fits our individual schedules.

Speaking of schedules, one of the biggest problems for online courses is the tendency to fall behind. This problem is especially acute during the condensed 6-week summer session, where we move at fast pace. When you don’t have a definite class time, it’s easy to put off your work. To help us stay on track, we’ll have well-defined deadlines for posting comments on the EduCat discussion forums, exams, and additional assignments.

*Technology:* Much of the material in this course will be in the form of video lectures. You will need a reliable computer and Internet connection for viewing/hearing these. Additionally, we’ll have timed online exams, so you’ll also need a time & place where you can think clearly when those come up. If you have technological problems, please let me know quickly; the longer they go unaddressed, the further behind you’ll get. Also realize that if the technology fails, there’s no guarantee that we’ll be able to resolve it. If the problem is too great, you may need to consider withdrawing from the course. If you are using an NMU-issued laptop, the NMU computing help desk may be able to help you troubleshoot, even long-distance. You can look up their contact information at <http://it.nmu.edu/helpdesk>. Their phone number is (906) 227-2468. If they cannot help, you will need to find some other form of technical support on your own.

*Interaction:* Since we won’t meet in person, we’ll develop an online community. I’ll provide video lectures, but you won’t experience the best part of the course unless you respond to the material and each other. There will be required discussion assignments to help get this going, but we’ll also have additional discussion forums where you can interact further. Two to consider are at the top of the EduCat site: “Course Procedure Questions” and “Course Content Questions.” In the ‘course procedures’ forum, you can ask about things like grading, assignment instructions, due dates, etc. In the ‘content’ forum, you can ask for clarifications on ideas mentioned in the readings and lectures. If you like, we can even set up times where we can video chat or IM in real time.

Since I can’t tell you updates in a classroom, it’s important that you *check your email and EduCat often* to keep up with assignments, due dates, new information, exams, etc. I check my email most weekdays, but it may take a day to hear a response from me, so do not wait until the last minute before asking important questions.

Study groups are a good way to learn the material and prepare for exams. You can form them online under the “Course Content Questions” forum, or ask me to create a separate forum. You can also ask about academic support provided by NMU such as tutoring services at <http://www.nmu.edu/tutoring/node/1>. Often tutoring is done in person on campus, but it may be worth contacting them to see whether they can set up something long-distance.

**Exams:** Exams will be primarily multiple choice and online. They will be timed (probably around an hour, maybe a little longer). This means you'll be able to look at the textbook and printed notes for a few questions, but you'll need to answer most of them by memory if you want to finish in time. I will make each exam available for a two-day period, and you must take it during that time. Find a quiet location with good Internet access ahead of time, so you can concentrate during the exam.

**Assignments & Participation:** There are six assignments listed in the schedule below. Two are small projects you'll submit to through EduCat. The other four are discussion forum postings where you'll post a question or comment responding to the readings. These are worth five points each. The discussions are graded as follows:

0 pts. = You didn't post

1 pt. = You posted something, but it wasn't relevant or didn't show that you did the readings.

2 pt. = You merely summarized something from the readings.

3 pt. = You showed how a theory, concept, or research in the readings can apply to a situation.

4 pt. = You showed how two or more theories, concepts, or research articles relate to each other in addition to explaining why it's relevant to a situation.

To get full points, you must post this by 7 p.m. the day it's due (the due dates are all Fridays, but you can post earlier, if you like). Then, after the Friday deadline, come back and reply to someone else's posting. You'll get a fifth point if you give a *thoughtful* reply by the following Monday at 7 p.m.

Other exercises will be presented during the video lectures or via email. These will be graded merely as pass/fail - either you participated or you didn't. Note that the first exercise is due on the second day of class. See Educat for details.

*Writing standards:* Written assignments must have proper grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, clear organization, and accuracy. This applies to discussion forums, but especially to any essay or research papers. If you are assigned to do a research paper, it must be typed (obviously), double-spaced, have 1-1.5 inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font. They should also have your name on them (See, your kindergarten teacher was right!). The must also properly cite the information sources you used, according to the details in the specific assignment.

**Graduate Students:** The material in this course can be adapted to suit students working toward a graduate degree. Graduate students will make arrangements with the instructor to determine how the course will be adapted. Possibilities include writing one or more research papers and/or participation in developing a research project.

 **Schedule:** Lectures and readings will often complement each other, rather than being redundant, so do the readings regularly. Lectures will *assume* knowledge of readings. The amount of reading is moderate, but you will often need to read and re-read carefully and analytically -- going for comprehension and explanation rather than memorization of detail. The following schedule of topics and readings is subject to change. Additional readings and activities may be added as the semester progresses. Any changes will be announced online. To stay on top of the class, you can do readings and assignments ahead of schedule.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Week 1: Mon., 5/19**

## Course Introduction, Variety of Media Ideas, Nature of Effects, How We Know

Reading: Perse, chs. 1 & 2 (don’t worry about the “d” and “r” numbers pp 6-7 – just read the explanations).

*Assignment 1, due Tue, 5/20: Introduce yourself in the discussion forum.*

**Week 1: Tue. – Wed., 5/20 – 5/21**

Audiences & New Technology

Reading: Perse Afterword (pp. 251-259)

**INTENDED EFFECTS**

**Week 1: Thur. 5/22**

Learning & News

Reading: Perse, ch. 3

*Assignment 2, due Fri., 5/23: Submit the 7 dimensions of media effects assignment in EduCat drop box.*

*Assignment 3, due Fri., 5/23 & Mon., 5/26: Discussion forum response (see separate assignment sheet for details).*

*Exercise 1: Try the practice exam to make sure your system will work for the real one next week.*

**Week 2: Mon., 5/26**

Memorial Day: Take a break, catch up, or get ahead

**Tue., 5/27**

Persuasion & Advertising

Reading: Electronic reserve, Advertising pdf

**Week 2: Wed., 5/28 Study Day, ask questions online**

**Week 2: Thur., 5/29 –Fri., 5/30, EXAM 1 (must be completed on one of these days)**

**Week 3: Mon., 6/2**

Campaigns

Reading: Perse, pp. 159-162 (knowledge gaps); Electronic reserve, Communication campaigns pdf

**Week 3: Tue., 6/3 – Thur., 6/5**

Political Communication

Reading: Perse, pp. 113-120, 123-129.

Public Opinion

Reading: Perse: Rest of ch. 4 (pp. 83-113, 120-123)

*Assignment 4, due Fri, 6/6 & Mon., 6/9: Discussion forum response (see separate assignment sheet for details).*

**UNINTENDED EFFECTS**

**Week 4 : Mon., 6/9 & Tue., 6/10**

Effects of Televised Violence

Reading: Perse, pp. 190-195, ch. 7 but not pp. 215-218

**Week 4: Wed., 6/11 Study Day, post questions online**

**Week 4: Thur., 6/12 – Fri., 6/13 Exam 2 (must be completed on one of these days)**

**Week 5: Mon., 6/16 -Thur., 6/19**

Effects of Media Sexual Content

Reading: Perse ch. 8

Socialization

Reading: Perse, pp. 164 - 190.

Social Reality

Reading: Perse, pp. 215-218

*Assignment 5, due Fri., 6/20 – Article Summary, submit in EduCat.*

*Assignment 6, due Fri., 6/20 & Mon., 6/23: Discussion forum response (see separate assignment sheet for details).*

**PROCESSES – HOW EFFECTS HAPPEN**

**Week 6: Mon., 6/23 & 6/24**

Selection, Attention & Cognition

Reading: Perse, pp. 131-151, 162-163.

**Week 6: Wed., 6/25, Study Day**

**Week 6: Thur., 6/26 – Fri., 6/27 Exam 3 (must be completed on one of these days)**