



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

**DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION**

COMM 1500: Media & Society

University of Utah, Spring 2025, 3 Credits

January 6 - April 22

Media & Society

TuTh/10:45AM-12:05PM

BEH S 109

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Office Hours: By appointment

Note: This a face-to-face class held on campus. In-person (and on-time) attendance and participation is mandatory. (There are no hybrid or Zoom options for attending class.) Please arrive to class on time and ready to learn and engage with your instructor and classmates.

I reserve the right to modify information about the content of the course when necessary and with reasonable notice to students.

Course Description

This course addresses mediated communication as it enables - and affects - how people interact, pursue goals, and produce results. It emphasizes critical consumption of media messages and the implications of producing such messages. Students engage with technological, business, historical, legal, and ethical foundations of mediated communication to become more informed and responsible participants and citizens.

Learning Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes

This course meets the Humanities (HF) General Education requirement. Courses in the humanities focus on developing **a critical understanding** of human thought, culture, and society through the study of big questions, both contemporary and enduring.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Employ communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts
- Apply the 5-step critical process to critically examine mass media messages
- Apply ethical mass media communication principles and practices
- Evaluate the connection between communication and culture and how it incorporates a range of diverse perspectives.

Each module in the course includes specific learning objectives that will help you build knowledge and skills to meet the above learning outcomes.

Required Texts

- Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication, by Campbell, Martin, and Fabos, 13th Edition
 - The required textbook is being provided digitally to students through Canvas and paid for as a lower-cost course fee. You will not need to purchase or order the book because it has been automatically preloaded into the Canvas course under the “Bookshelf” tab. (If you prefer a hardcopy of the textbook, you may opt-out of the preloaded digital text by contacting the campus bookstore.)
- Accessing the textbook:
 - To get the eBooks, click on the “Bookshelf” tab in the left-hand Canvas menu. (Pop-up blockers may need to be removed to allow new tabs to open.) When your list of courses and titles pull up, you will see "Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication."

Click "read now" under the "Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication" book. The bookstore uses VitalSource to deliver the textbook. If you have not already set up a VitalSource account, you will need to create one using your Umail email. The title should then automatically pop up in your VitalSource bookshelf.

Assignments & Grading

Your performance in this course will be evaluated by:

- **In-Class Activity (15 points):** Weekly modules of coursework. Note that Coursework must be done by showing up to the class and participating in group activities. Students should inform the instructor about the reasonable absence. Otherwise, there will be a deduction for the coursework.
- **Weekly Quizzes (15 points):** Designed to assess comprehension of weekly reading assignments and module content. (I will drop your lowest quiz.)
- **Media Example Presentation (10 points):** During the semester, you will make a five-minute presentation. You need to select the date and topic (books, newspapers, magazines, movies, TV series, advertisements, music, radio, video games, etc.) on the sign-up sheet at the beginning of the semester. You need to introduce a media example, analyze and interpret it with the class content, and also reflect on the social and cultural significance of that media product.
- **Written Assignments (5 x 6 points):** 500-word (minimum) assignments that correlate with the week's chapter and module content. APA/MLA style scholarly sources, research, and proper citations are required on all written assignments.

- **5-Step Critical Process Analysis Paper (Midterm 12 points + Final 18 points):** Assignments that engage you with a specific media topic and get you to reflect on your own personal media consumption.

Extra Credit

There will be opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. I will let you know by Canvas email or announcement when assignments, projects or other opportunities for extra credit arise. Extra credit must be turned in by the deadline.

Note:

- You are responsible to read and respond to all posted material: all student work, all instructor postings, all questions raised, all assignments given, and so forth. No exceptions. Please do not register for this section if you are not comfortable with the class participation requirements of this course. You need not necessarily post a reply to every single discussion post by every single classmate, but you must engage with all the material.
- Do not underestimate the importance and the workload of the class participation portion of this class; this will compose a significant portion of your final course grade.

This table summarizes the course assignments and the allocation of points:

| Assignment Categories | Points per Assignment | Percentage of Grade |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| In-Class Activity | 15 points | 15% |
| Weekly Quizzes | 15 points | 15% |
| Media Example Presentation | 10 points | 10% |
| Written Assignments | 5 x 6 points | 30% |
| Midterm Paper | 12 points | 12% |
| Final Paper | 18 points | 18% |
| Total | | 100% |

Course grades will be determined by the following scale:

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|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A 94 - 100 | B 84 – 86.9 | C 74 – 76.9 | D 64 – 66.9 |
| A- 90 – 93.9 | B- 80 – 83.9 | C- 70 – 73.9 | D- 60 – 63.9 |
| B+ 87 – 89.9 | C+ 77 – 79.9 | D+ 67 – 69.9 | E 59.9 or below |

*Note: A **C grade or higher** is required if this course is needed for your major.*

Submission and Late Submission Policy

All assignments are to be submitted on Canvas by 11:59 PM MST on the scheduled due date. Assignments must be submitted in .doc, .docx, or .pdf (no .pages).

Written assignments must be submitted as a Word document (doc, docx, pdf) as other formats (like Google docs) can be difficult to access if permissions are not correctly set. The university offers free access to Microsoft Word through Office 365.

Late work will be accepted; however, for each day an assignment is submitted, 10% will be deducted from the assignment's final grade. If work is missed due to a university-approved absence, any assignments submitted late will not have points deducted from the final grade and will be due no more than one week after the student's return to class. For all unexcused late work, after five (5) days past the deadline, the assignment will no longer be accepted.

Disruptive Behavior

All students are expected to help the instructor in creating an environment in which we all feel welcome, safe, productively engaged, and constructively challenged as we learn. Any behavior that disrupts these principles will be susceptible to discussion and/or grade penalty at the instructor's discretion. Disruptive behaviors include, but are not limited to obscene or offensive language, excessive tardiness, and talking or using technology while other students or the instructor is presenting.

Grading (The 24/7 Rule)

I welcome you to advocate for yourself if you feel that a grade you receive is unjust. After a 24-hour waiting period, you may email me your appeal outlining the exact reasons you believe your grade should be reconsidered. I recommend citing this syllabus along with assignment descriptions and rubrics. After a seven-day period has passed, however, the instructor will no longer reconsider the grades given.

Email Policy

All email correspondence must be courteous and professional. You are expected to have done the research to your question before asking the instructor. The instructor will respond within 24-48 hours during business days, but do not expect an immediate response. If you do not receive a response in this timeframe, please reach out over email again. I typically will not reply to emails between the hours of 8 pm-7 am or over weekends. Please reach out to me via email instead of Canvas message.

Course Policy on Academic Integrity/(Dis)Honesty

It is assumed that all work submitted to your instructor is your own work. When you have used the ideas of others, you must properly indicate that you have done so.

- It is expected that students adhere to University of Utah policies regarding academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. **This includes the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools without citation, documentation, or authorization.** Students are expected to adhere to the prescribed professional and ethical standards of the profession/discipline for which they are preparing. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty or who violates the professional and ethical standards for their profession/discipline may be subject to academic sanctions as per the University of Utah's Student Code: <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-410.php>.
- Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on an individual assignment, and/or failure in the course. Academic misconduct, according to the University of Utah Student Code,
- *"...Includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct."*
- For details on plagiarism and other important course conduct issues, see the U's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Curriculum Accommodations

The values held most strongly by the University of Utah community are those of academic freedom and integrity. Students are expected to take courses that will challenge them intellectually and personally. Accommodations will not be made for course content, requirements, or expectations. Learn more at <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>

Religious Practice

To request an accommodation for religious practices, **contact your instructor at the beginning of the semester.**

Active-Duty Military

If you are a student on active duty with the military and experience issues that prevent you from participating in the course **because of deployment or service responsibilities, contact your instructor as soon as possible** to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Names and Pronouns

The class rosters I receive default to the “preferred first name” entered by the student in the Student Profile section of their CIS account (which can be updated at any time). I want to refer to you by whatever name and pronoun you choose, so please feel free to alert me of any name or pronoun changes at any time.

Disability and Access

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access (CDA), 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDA will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to CDA.

Campus Safety and Student Wellness

Your safety and mental health are top priorities. To report suspicious activity, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu. I know that personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, and the like can interfere with your ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (135 Park Building, 801-581-8365) or to the Office of the Dean of Students (270 Union Building, 801-581-7066). For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness (426 SSB, 801-581-7776). To report to the police, call the Department of Public Safety at 801-585-2677. Please note that university policy dictates that professors are “mandated reporters,” meaning that if you disclose instances of sexual misconduct to me I am required to report it to the university.

Course Calendar

This schedule is tentative. Any changes will be announced on Canvas.

| Spring 2025 Course Schedule | | |
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| Module/Dates | General Topic | Content and readings (reading should be done before the class) |
| Week 1 Course Orientation Jan. 7 & 9 | Course Introduction & What is Media Literacy? | Due: Syllabus Quiz (01/12) In-Class Activity |
| Week 2 Module 1 Jan. 14 & 16 | A Critical Approach to Media, Culture, and Communication | Read: Chapter 1 Due: Module 1 Quiz (01/19) In-Class Activity |
| Week 3 Module 8 Jan. 21 & 23 | Newspapers and the Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism | Read: Chapter 8 Due: Module 8 Quiz (01/26) In-Class Activity |
| Week 4 Module 9 Jan. 28 & 30 | Magazines in the Age of Specialization | Read: Chapter 9 Due: Module 9 Quiz (02/02) In-Class Activity Written Assignment 1 (02/02) |
| Week 5 Module 10 Feb. 4 & 6 | Books and the Power of Print | Read: Chapter 10 Due: Module 10 Quiz (02/09) In-Class Activity |
| Week 6 Module 4 Feb. 11 & 13 | Sound Recording and Popular Music | Read: Chapter 4 Due: Module 4 Quiz (02/16) In-Class Activity |
| Week 7 Module 5 Feb. 18 & 20 | Popular Radio and the Origins of Broadcasting | Read: Chapter 5 Due: Module 5 Quiz (02/23) In-Class Activity Written Assignment 2 (02/23) |
| Week 8 Module 6 Feb. 25 & 27 | From Television Broadcasting to Streaming | Read: Chapter 6 Due: Module 6 Quiz (03/02) In-Class Activity |
| Week 9 Module 15 Mar. 4 & 6 | Media Effects and Cultural Approaches to Research | Read: Chapter 14 Due: Module 14 Quiz (03/09) In-Class Activity Midterm: 5-Step Critical Process (Analysis 1) (03/16) |
| Week 10 Mar. 11 & 13 | NO CLASS SPRING BREAK | |
| Week 11 Module 7 | Movies and the Power of Images | Read: Chapter 7 Due: |

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| Mar. 18 & 20 | | Module 7 Quiz (03/23) In-Class Activity Written Assignment 3 (03/23) |
| Week 12 Module 2 Mar. 25 & 27 | The Internet and Digital Media | Read: Chapter 2 Due: Module 2 Quiz (03/30) In-Class Activity |
| Week 13 Module 3 Apr. 1 & 3 | Digital Gaming and the Media Playground | Read: Chapter 3 Due: Module 3 Quiz (04/06) In-Class Activity Written Assignment 4 (04/06) |
| Week 14 Module 11 Apr. 8 & 10 | Advertising and Commercial Culture | Read: Chapter 11 Due: Module 11 Quiz (04/13) In-Class Activity |
| Week 15 Module 12 Apr. 15 & 17 | Public Relations and Framing the Message | Read: Chapter 12 Due: Module 12 Quiz (04/20) In-Class Activity Written Assignment 5 (04/20) |
| Week 16 Module 13 Apr. 22 | Media Economics and the Global Marketplace | Read: Chapter 13 Due: Module 13 Quiz (04/27) In-Class Activity |
| | | Final: 5-Step Critical Process (Analysis 2) (04/30) |

Please note that your continued enrollment in this course constitutes an agreement to abide by the policies and procedures explained in this syllabus.