

Angelina College - Fine Arts Division
COMM 1307 - Introduction to Mass Communication
Instructional Syllabus

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

- A. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An introductory overview of all the mass media industries, including newspapers, radio, television, magazines, books, recordings, films, the Internet, video games and the supporting industry, advertising, and a look at how all of these industries have affected each other as well as their audiences and our culture in general.
- B. INTENDED AUDIENCE:** This course targets mass communication majors (media practitioners) as well as the general public (media consumers). It is designed for students who wish to go into the fields of broadcast or print journalism, public relations, advertising, or speech communication, or students from any other discipline who would like to know more about the media industries and their part in shaping our culture.
- C. INSTRUCTOR:** Libby Stapleton
Office Location: Hudgins Hall, Room 102D
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 11 a.m.- 12:45 and 2:45-4 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
Fridays 9 a.m.-4 p.m. by appointment
Phone: 936-633-5288
E-mail address: lstapleton@angelina.edu

II. INTENDED STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- A. Core Objectives – (Interim)**
1. **Critical Thinking Skills** – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
 2. **Communications Skills** – to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
 3. **Social Responsibility** – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- B. Course Learning Outcomes for all sections –**
1. To understand how mass communication industries are the storytellers for our culture
 2. To identify basic concepts of the mass media industries and its supporting industry, advertising
 3. To become aware of the social and cultural influences of mass media
 4. To become aware of the increasing convergence of the mass media industries and how that convergence is affecting our culture

III. ASSESSMENT MEASURES OF INTENDED STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- A. Assessments for the Core Objectives –**
1. **Critical Thinking:** Students will be asked to discuss analysis questions at the end of each chapter in the textbook. Also, students will be asked analysis questions on each of the three tests given during the semester. The students will also evaluate the oral presentations made by their classmates.
 2. **Communication:** Students will write three reports during the semester chosen from a list of topics related to the reading assignments. Students will also be asked to participate in the discussions of the critical thinking questions at the end of each chapter.
 3. **Social Responsibility:** Students will write an essay analyzing a television show of their choice, explaining the meaning of the message; cultural value(s) and/or stereotypes that are perpetuated, endorsed, proposed or underscored in the show; and explaining the comment that the show makes on society or the various groups it is targeting or portraying.

- B. Assessments for the Course Learning Outcomes –**
- 1. and 2.** Students will be tested on the basic concepts of the media industries, advertising and public relations on the three tests given during the semester.
 - 3. and 4.** Students will be asked critical thinking essay questions on each of the tests.
 - 3.** Students will write an essay analyzing the cultural values and/or stereotypes perpetuated, endorsed, proposed or underscored in a television show of their choosing.

IV. INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES:

1. Lectures on the designated chapters from the textbook
2. Discussion of the reading assignments and critical thinking questions about them
3. Visual representations in the form of DVDs and/or examples

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES:

- A. Required textbooks, materials, and equipment –** The textbook for this course is titled *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture* by Stanley J. Baran, Ninth Edition. No other materials are required.
- B. Assignments –** Students are responsible for reading all assigned chapters in the textbook and for studying for the three major tests and three quizzes during the semester. Also, three written essays will be assigned on topics from selected chapters in the textbook. The instructor may assign other written or oral projects. (*See Course Schedule for more detail*)
- C. Course Policies – (This course conforms to the policies of Angelina College as stated in the *Angelina College Handbook*.)**
- 1. Academic Assistance –** If you have a disability (as cited in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) that may affect his or her participation in this class, you should see Sellestine Hunt, associate dean of Student Services, Room 200 of the Student Center. At a post-secondary institution, you must self-identify as a person with a disability; Mrs. Hunt will assist you with the necessary information to do so.
Angelina College admits students without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age. To report any complaints of discrimination related to disability, contact the Mr. Steve Hudman, dean of Student Affairs, Room 101 in the Student Center, or call 936-633-5292, or by email at shudman@angelina.edu.
 - 2. Attendance and Tardiness –** Students are expected to attend all classes and be on time. Any student with three (3) consecutive absences or four (4) cumulative or random absences may be dropped from the class. Do not assume that non-attendance in class will always result in an instructor drop. **A student must officially drop a class or risk receiving an F in that class.** If a student does not drop or accumulates four (4) random absences after the drop date, the student's final grade will be lowered by one grade. Three times of being tardy to class will equal one absence.
 - 3. Leaving class during class time –** Students are expected to stay in class for the whole time until the instructor says they may leave. If any student just needs a quick bathroom break, please feel free to leave the class at any time. However, leaving class early for any other reason is rude and disruptive to the instructor and fellow students. If it is imperative that a student leave class early, please get permission before the class starts; otherwise, that student will be counted absent.
 - 4. Cell Phones – PLEASE TURN OFF OR SILENCE ALL CELL PHONES DURING CLASS TIME TO BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON THE COURSE.** If a cell phone rings during class or a student is caught texting during class, that student will be asked to leave class and will receive an absence for that day.
 - 5. Computers –** Computers may be brought to class for taking notes for this class only. If a student is caught doing anything other than taking notes for the class, he or she will be asked to leave the computer at home.
 - 6. Tests –** Students are expected to take the three major tests on the days they are given. If an extreme emergency makes this impossible or the student has obtained permission from the instructor in advance to miss the test, the student should schedule a makeup test before the tests are returned to the other students and discussed in class. **No makeups will be allowed for the three quizzes.**

VI. COURSE CONTENT:

This course is designed for all communication majors as well as non-majors in other disciplines. The content is designed to acquaint students with many aspects of mass media and to familiarize them with how the media work from the practitioner's and the consumer's points of view. We will look at the effects of mass media on each other and on our society to determine implications for the future.

VII. EVALUATION AND GRADING:

A. Grading Criteria –

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| 1. | Quizzes (3 @ 25 points each) | 75 points |
| 2. | Two written reports (50 points each) | 100 points |
| 3. | Test #1 (Chapters 1-4) | 120 points |
| 4. | Test #2 (Chapters 5-8) | 100 points |
| 5. | TV show analysis essay | 100 points |
| 6. | Test #3 - Final Exam (Chapters 9, 10, 12, 13, and 15) – Thursday, Dec. 14 – 8-10 a.m. | 110 points |

TOTAL POINTS 605 points

B. Determination of Grade –

- A = 605-545
- B = 544-484
- C = 483-424
- D = 423-363
- F = 362-0

VIII. SYLLABUS MODIFICATION:

The instructor may modify the provisions of the syllabus to meet individual class needs by informing the class in advance as to the changes being made.