

Syllabus
Mass Communication and Society
MMC 6660, Section 8611
Spring 2017

Professor: Dr. Michael Leslie

Email: mleslie@jou.ufl.edu (emergencies only: otherwise use E-learning course email.)

Course Website: <http://lss.at.ufl.edu>

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to explore issues in the interaction between mass media, culture and society. The course is intended to help you develop a critical perspective on mass media as you consider the interplay between media institutions, media content, culture, audiences and social institutions and practices.

Course Objectives

By the time you complete this course, you should have:

1. learned multiple perspectives for evaluating competing claims regarding the interaction between media, culture and society;
2. acquired the ability to critically analyze and evaluate the content of media products;
3. completed a scholarly research paper that critically examines a media institution, product, audience or trend in mass communication.

Course Structure

The course requires you to compile resources (readings, data, statistics, and other evidence) and engage in debate and discussion on media, culture and society. This will require that you review and synthesize the various arguments and evidence related to the topics discussed in each module of the course. This activity will help expand your knowledge and enlarge your perspectives on each issue. You will also have the opportunity to view and discuss related texts, videos and other media with your classmates.

The class will rely on E-learning/Sakai courseware and email for course assignments, discussions, assignment submission, assessments, etc. You **MUST** have daily access to a computer and the Internet in order to function successfully in this course.

Technology Support:

We will be exploring the use of Google Hangouts and other conferencing technologies to support this course, as needed.

Required Reading:

The required textbook for this course is **Media/Society: Industries, Images and Audiences** by David Croteau and William Hoynes (Pine Forge, Thousand Oaks, CA). The following textbooks will assist you greatly in doing your research for this course: **Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords**, edited by Durham and Kellner (Blackwell, Malden, MA); **Gender, Race and Class in Media: A Critical Reader**, by Dines and Humez (Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA); and **Media/Cultural Studies: Critical Approaches**, by Rhonda Hammer and Douglas Kellner (Eds.) (Peter Lang, New York). All of these can be obtained inexpensively on Amazon.com or www.half.com

You may also find the following of value:

Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Mass Media and Society, Alison Alexander and Jarice Hanson, (Eds.); **Questioning the Media: A Critical Introduction** by John D.H. Downing, Ali Mohammadi and Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi **Controversies in Media Ethics** by A. David Gordon and John Michael Kittross. I will suggest additional readings for you from time to time.

My Teaching Philosophy

I am your 'guide on the side' for this course. I will point you to relevant materials and give you critical feedback on your assignments, but it is your responsibility to find, read, discuss and evaluate those materials.

Course Assignments

1. Weekly Reflection on Assigned Reading: Each student will contribute a one-page single-spaced reflection on the assigned reading, commenting on some significant issue raised by the reading. This reflection will be evaluated based on your success in giving thoughtful consideration to the implications of what you have read for critical thinking about the relationship between media, culture and society, logically, coherently and with proper APA citation style. **A properly-cited reference to a source beyond the assigned chapter is required.**

2. Online Discussions: Student involvement is vital to the success of this course and you are expected to play an active part in shaping this course and keeping it focused on its broad objectives. Obviously, this means you are expected to complete the assigned readings, to do your weekly reflection on the readings, to contribute to identifying other relevant readings and resources and to participate meaningfully in online discussions. If you are assigned to be a discussion leader, your performance in stimulating this discussion by enlarging or focusing it will be included in your discussion grade.

Again, discussion is **critical** to the success of this course. You are expected to read ALL assigned materials by the established deadline. One of the purposes of discussions is to reveal multiple perspectives on and understandings of module topics. You are expected to show professional courtesy to all other students at all times during the course. Differences of opinion are expected, and critiques of others' statements and reasoning may occur and are encouraged. **If you cannot gracefully accept having your opinions thoughtfully challenged, you should not be in this course!**

One way you can contribute to class discussions is to post or upload links to relevant articles, photographs, websites, or videos you find that relate to course topics.

3. **Quizzes:** You will have an opportunity to demonstrate your essential grasp of the fundamental issues for critical thinking about media and society via multiple choice -quizzes for each module.
4. **Course Wiki:** As part of a knowledge community, you will be asked each week to locate and review information available on line, abstract its content for the rest of the class, and upload it to the course Wiki. Please cite in full the source of the information and include at least a full paragraph explaining its utility for us as students of mass communication and society.
5. **Research Paper:** You will write a 12-15 page single-spaced paper discussing some aspect of the media, culture, and society nexus.

Course Communications: Please use E-learning email to communicate with me and other members of the course. DO NOT use my ufl.edu address except in emergencies. General questions should be posted to the Q & A Discussion board. Normally, email will be answered within 24 hours.

Assignment Weights

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

Wiki Contributions	20%
Weekly Reflections	20%
Discussions	20%
Quizzes	20 %
Research Paper	20%

Final grades will be awarded according to the current grading policies established by the Graduate School.

Course Schedule

The Reading and Assignment Schedule is Posted in E-learning

Late Assignment Policy

**Class assignments should not be turned in late.
They may be turned in early.
Your grade will be adjusted downward for any late assignments.**

PLEASE PLAN AHEAD!

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

For the communications professional, there hardly exists a graver crime than plagiarizing another writer's work. In short, it is YOUR responsibility to make certain you understand what constitutes plagiarism and to ensure that you give proper credit anytime you draw on someone else's writing or work. If you're not certain you understand what's acceptable and what isn't, check out this website:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

If you read these materials and still aren't certain what's acceptable, ASK ME! Do not assume that any other student or professor can tell you what will be acceptable in my class. Be especially careful about the use of information you find on the Internet. It is all too easy to copy and paste background information into your papers, but unless you enclose such information in quotation marks and clearly cite the website from which it came, this constitutes plagiarism. Even if you paraphrase, you must include a clear reference to any written materials on which you've drawn.

Be aware that if I suspect, for whatever reason, that material in one of your submissions is plagiarized, I will submit it to a web-based plagiarism checking program. Relatively minor and *clearly unintentional* instances of plagiarism will result in your being required to re-write and re-submit your work. More extensive plagiarism, even if unintended, and ANY instance I believe represents an intentional attempt to pass off someone else's work as your own will result in a failing grade for that submission, at the least. If the plagiarism is severe enough (for example, if a substantial portion of your submission has been copied from others' work), you will receive a failing grade for the class and I will report the incident to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs as academic dishonesty.

Another no-no is recycling your own work for this class. Let's make the policy clear and simple: **You will NOT turn in to me ANY work you previously have submitted to another instructor or that you plan to submit for any other class at UF or any other institution.** If you want to write on a topic you've worked on before, that may well be acceptable IF you discuss it with me and get permission IN ADVANCE.

In accordance with UF policy, I'm also including in this syllabus the definitions of the types of academic dishonesty that seem most likely to be potential problems for students in this class. If a situation ever arises in which you think something you're contemplating MIGHT constitute one of these types of academic dishonesty, ASK BEFORE YOU DO IT. Apologies after the fact are extremely unlikely to resolve the problem for anyone.

**From the Office of Student Judicial Affairs website:
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/Academichonestyfaculty.html>**

Plagiarism. The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

Misrepresentation. Any act or omission with intent to deceive a teacher for academic advantage. Misrepresentation includes taking another's work and handing it in as your own; lying to a teacher to increase your grade and lying or misrepresenting facts when confronted with an allegation of academic honesty.

Fabrication. The use of invented or fabricated information, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive for academic or professional advantage.

UF Policies:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

****Netiquette: Communication Courtesy:** All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. [Describe what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior] <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Getting Help:

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2

- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up. Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.