



COMM245: Media and Society

Credits: 3

Instructor Information

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor name: Lydia Timmins

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About the Instructor: My interest in the intersection of media and society began in high school, where I wrote for the school newspaper. After sampling several majors in college, I settled on telecommunications. That led me to TV news, where I spent 22 years working as a producer, reporter, photographer, editor, director... everything except anchor! I spent most of my career in Philadelphia at NBC10, where I covered a variety of news--good and bad. My experiences sparked an interest in why I was doing what I was doing, and what did it mean to the millions of people who watched and listened to my work. While at NBC10, I went to grad school at Temple University and earned a Master's in Journalism and a PhD in Media and Communication. I came to UD in 2010. I teach journalism and video production, as well as communication classes to help students understand the impact that media has on you and how you help create the media environment you experience.

Course Description:

This course explores the relationship between media and society. Specifically, we will examine the history, functions, and industries of mass communication-- print, broadcast and digital. Students will acquire a broad understanding of how the mass media affect and interact with individuals and society and how, in turn, they shape media to their own purposes. The course is presented in an online, asynchronous environment.

Course Delivery + Expectations:

This is an asynchronous online course, delivered through the Canvas Learning Management System.

Class Expectations: Students should expect to spend approximately 5 hours per week interacting with the modules and completing the assignments. It might take you longer, especially if you are bouncing back and

forth between other activities. It may take you less time if you do it all at one sitting. I recommend treating it like you would an in-person class. We would have 3 lectures per week, with 1-2 hours of reading and work outside class.

But the beauty and benefit of an online, asynchronous class is that you can work at your pace. Some weeks may flow better than others. That's OK. If you run into trouble, please email me (lydiat@udel.edu) or our Grad TA or our undergrad TA. We can help, providing we know you need help. There's no shame in asking for clarification, and better to ask early than wait and be completely up the river with no paddle.

Course Content

Unit 1: Who Invented Media? (and what were they thinking??)

Unit 2: So 20th century (print begets broadcast which begets digital)

Unit 3: Finally, the 21st century! (my brain hurts)

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will analyze the process by which mass media is produced and distributed.
 2. Students will locate the original creators of any media, and evaluate the motives of those creators.
 3. Students will relate the history of mass media to the current state of media.
 4. Students will analyze the media messages they consume and relate them to their lives and the larger society.
 5. Students will communicate their ideas effectively and in ways that open them up to new ideas and experiences.
5. Learning Assessment

Breakdown

The final course grade will be calculated using the following components:

Course Component	Percentage of Total
Find your own example (Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3)	40
Weekly Quizzes	30
Discussion Groups	30

Assessment Component 1 Find Your Own Example

This assignment will challenge you to find a media example of the topic we are studying in the unit. You will also write a 2-3 page paper that explains how the example relates to the unit. You will submit this in Canvas. Questions to answer in the paper include: Where did you find your example? What is the primary source--that is, , is the place you saw it the place it originated? If it was shared, you need to locate the original place it was first published. Who created the example? What do you think their motivation was for creating that example? How does your example make you feel? (Informed, angry, happy, motivated...) and why? Who do you think is

the intended audience for this piece of media? Why did it appeal to you? You will share your example in your discussion group. There are three of these to complete, and the points they are worth increases for each. There is a rubric you can view to see how we will grade this assignment.

Assessment Component 2 Weekly Quizzes

These are found on the Canvas site. They will open for you to begin at 8am every Thursday and will close at 11:59pm Friday. The quizzes will cover the information discussed in the previous week. They are open book and notes. The **THREE** lowest quiz grades are dropped from the total score. What that means for you is if you miss taking a quiz because life happened, you don't have to make it up, it will count as one of your lowest scores to be dropped. Of course, if you miss more than three, that will impact your grade--so as long as you keep on top of them, you have some room for challenges that come up.

Assessment Component 2 Discussion Groups

You will receive a grade for actively participating in assigned discussion groups. To receive full credit, you must create a thread about the topic AND you must make substantive comments on two other threads posted by your classmates. Substantive is not "yeah, I agree" or "that's wrong". You should state what about the comment you agree/disagree with and why.

Your original thread must be submitted by midnight on Wednesdays. You then have until Sunday at midnight to respond to two other threads. Your instructors will monitor the discussion groups.

All groups will be expected to maintain a high level of respect for all members. Discussion and dissent is allowed, but comments that are racist, abelist, sexist or otherwise insensitive to a member will not be tolerated. Civil discourse is the mark of a civilized society.