

**Fayetteville State University**  
**College of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Performing and Fine Arts**  
**SPEE 332-1: Problems in Media Communication**  
**FALL / 2009**

**I. Locator Information:**

Instructor: Mr. Joseph C. Ross  
Course # and Name: SPEE 332-1: Problems in Media Comm. Office Location: 209 Telecomm. Center  
Semester Credit Hours: 3 credit hour Office hours: MWF 11 -10, 2 -4 TR 10 - 11  
Day and Time Class Meets: MWF 12:00 – 12:50 Office Phone: 672-2030  
Total Contact Hours for Class: 3  
Email address: jross@uncfsu.edu

**The following statement should appear on the first page of each course syllabus:**

**FSU Policy on Electronic Mail:** Fayetteville State University provides to each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account ([username@uncfsu.edu](mailto:username@uncfsu.edu)) that is easily accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries and requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail.

Rules and regulations governing the use of FSU email may be found at  
<http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf>

**II. Course Description:**

This course will examine contemporary problems of mediated communication, including gatekeeping, propaganda, agenda setting, cultural transmission, regulation and censorship, and commercialization. Students will examine the discursive implications of newspaper, radio, television, film, computer, polling, and advertising technologies. Students will assume a rhetorical perspective to evaluate the role of these technologies in shaping public opinion and our perceptions of reality. Prerequisite: SPEE200

**III. Disabled Student Services:** In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1<sup>st</sup> Floor); 910-672-1203.

**IV. Textbook:**

Alexander, Alison and Hanson, Jarice (2007). *Taking Sides*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, Boston: McGraw-Hill

**V. Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to have an understanding of the practical areas of communication and speech. Students will be able to:

- To develop an understanding and awareness of the total process of communication.
- To build critical thinking skills that will help students analyze the larger role of mediated technologies in public communication.
- To better understand the subjective processes that guide mediated forms of persuasion.
- To understand the major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry and ways of knowing that are central to the discipline.

**VI. Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria -**

Success in this course will be based upon several factors including:

- Possessing textbook
- Attending classes regularly and punctually.
- Participating in class discussion
- Performing satisfactorily on quizzes and exams.
- All assignments must be typed (double spaced).

- Grade Distribution:

Annotated Bibliography	150 points
Book Review	150 points
Film Analysis	200 points
Research Paper Draft	150 points
Research Paper	300 points
Participation	50 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

Grading Scale (in points):

A = 920 – 1000, B = 830 – 910, C = 730 – 820, D = 640 – 720, F = 0- 630, I - Incomplete

If Students assignments are evaluated using letter grades, the following conversion will be used.

A+ = 99	A = 96	A- = 93
B+ = 91	B = 88	B- = 84
C+ = 81	C = 78	C- = 74
D+ 71	D = 68	D- =64

**Student Behavior Expectations:** -The instructor will respect all students and will make every effort to maintain a classroom climate that promotes learning for all students. Students must accept their responsibility for maintaining a positive classroom environment by abiding by the following rules:

1. Students are expected to arrive to class on time, remain in class until dismissed by the instructor, and refrain from preparing to leave class until it is dismissed.
2. Student/teacher relationships, as well as relationships among peers, must be respectful at all times.
- 3 Students are not permitted to wear headphones or other paraphernalia that may be distracting to the classroom environment.
4. Students must refrain from any activity that will disrupt the class; this includes turning off cell phones and pagers.
5. Students are not permitted to use profanity in the classroom.
6. Students will not pass notes or carry on private conversations while class is being conducted.

**Consequences for Failing to Meet Behavioral Expectations:** The first time a student violates one of these rules, the instructor will warn him or her privately, either after class or before the next class. (Faculty members reserve the right to warn students publicly if needed.) The second time a student violates the guidelines, the instructor may deduct as many as twenty points from the student’s next exam grade. If a student violates the guidelines three times, the instructor will report the student to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action according to the FSU Code of Student Conduct.

**VII. Academic Support Resources –**

Chestnut Library  
 FSU Computer Lab  
 Telecommunication Center Radio and (CCTV)

**VIII. Course Outline and Assignment Schedule**

<b>Week One</b>	Introduction to the class and syllabus ( <b>Introduction</b> )
<b>Week Two</b>	Following
<b>Week Three</b>	Chapter Two – Global Communication
<b>Week Four</b>	Chapter Three – Global
<b>Week Five</b>	Chapter Four – The Trans
<b>Week Six</b>	(Annotated Bibliography Due) Presentation of Bibliography
<b>Week Seven</b>	Chapters Five & Six

<b>Week Eight</b>	Chapter Seven - -----Law
<b>Week Nine</b>	Chapter Eight -
<b>Week Ten</b>	(Book Review Due; Film Analysis Due) Presentation of Book and Film
<b>Week Eleven</b>	Chapter Nine-
<b>Week Twelve</b>	(Research Paper Draft Due) Oral Presentation of Paper
<b>Week Thirteen</b>	Chapter Ten & Eleven
<b>Week Fourteen</b>	Chapter Twelve
<b>Week Fifteen</b>	Chapter Thirteen
<b>Final Exam</b>	(Final Research Paper Due)

#### **IX. Teaching Strategies**

The Problems in Media Communication course is designed to offer the advanced undergraduate student a balanced perspective on the problems faced by consumers of mediated information and entertainment. This class embraces multiple approaches to reach that goal, including interpersonal interaction, group activities, student-to-class presentations, discussion, individual research, and lecture. Students will have the chance to explore theories and perspective unique to their own interests and report on the significance of those theories and perspectives for all.

#### **X. Bibliography**

Cappella, J., and Jamieson, K. (1997). Spiral of Cynicism: The Press and the Public Good. NY: Oxford University Press.

Edelman, M. (1988). Constructing the Political Spectacle. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Hunter, J. (1991). Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America. NY: BasicBooks.

Jamieson, K. (1992). Packaging the Presidency: A History and Criticism of Presidential

Campaign Advertising. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. NY: Oxford University Press.

McLuhan, M. (1969). Communication in the global village. In Toppin, D. Ed. This Cybernetic Age. p. 158-67. New York; Human Development Corporation.

#### **New Research in Media Studies:**

Barkin, S. (2003). American Television News: The Media Marketplace and te Public Interest. Armonk NY: ME Sharpe.

Campbell, R. (1998). Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication. NY: St. Martin's

DeWolk, R. (2001) Introduction to Online Journalism. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Frobish, T. (2004, February; forthcoming). Sexual Profiteering and Rhetorical Assuagement: Examining Ethos and Identity a Playboy.com. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.

Forbish, T. (2000, September). **Lead Article**. Altar rhetoric and online performance: Scientology, Ethos, and the World Wide Web. American Communication Jouranl, 4, no.1.

Goldstein, N. (2002). The Associated Press Guide to Internet Research and Reporting. New York: Perseus Books Group.

Hall, J. (2001). Online Journalism: A Critical Primer. Sterling, VA: Pluto Press.

Hogan, J. Michael. "The Rhetoric of Presidential Approval: Media Polling and the White House Intern Scandal." In *Images, Scandal, and Communication Strategies of the Clinton Presidency*, ed. Robert E. Denton, Jr. and Rachel L. Holloway, 271-98. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003.

Hogan, M. (1999). Public opinion and journalistic voyeurism. American Communication Journal, 2. [Online]. <http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol2/Iss2/editorials/hogan/index.html>.

Hogan, J. Michael. "George Gallup and the Rhetoric of Scientific Democracy." *Communication Monographs* 64 (June 1997); 161-79.

Holtzman, L. (2000). Media Messages: What Film, Television and Popular Music Teach Us About Race, Class, Gender and Sexual Orientation. Armonk NY: ME Sharpe.

Kaye, B., and Medoff, N. (1999). The World Wide Wed: A Mass Communication Perspective. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.

McCauley, M., Peterson, E., Artz, B., and Halleck, D. (2002) Public Broadcasting and the Public Interest. Armonk NY: ME Sharpe.

Pavlik, John V. (2001). Journalism and New Media. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wood, A. (2001). Online Communication: Linking Technology, Identity, & Culture. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

### Annotated Bibliography Assignment

Focus on one aspect of media communication and locate 10 core books on the subject. Prepare a works cited of those books, and include a short, one paragraph annotation of their central arguments and findings. These books should represent leading academic resources on the subject, not popular or fictitious writings. Please see the following examples or consult a style manual of your choice for the proper format of an annotated bibliography.

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### Short Annotated Bibliography of Anti-Technology Resources

Dery, M. Ed. (1994). Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture. Durham, NC: Duke UP. Mary Dery, considered by many a neo-Luddite, encourages resistance to technology through technology. In this collection, Dery claims that we must first understand the technology in its proper social and political context. From this view, he asserts that we can begin to critically investigate and appropriate new technology for good.

Ellul, J. (1964). The Technological Society. Trans. Wilkinson, J. NY: Knopf.

French sociologist, philosopher, and theologian, Jacques Ellul, developed one of the most powerful arguments concerning the role of technology in society. He asserts that we have likened technology to something sacred. He argues that technology is our culture, making it

near impossible to set ourselves aside it for critical examination. However, he establishes several strategies that we may employ so that technology does not usurp our humanity, freedom, choices, and autonomy.

Marx, L. (1964). The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America. NY: Oxford U.P.

Perhaps the seminal text in the new historiography of technology Leo Marx's book explores the pervasive theme of pastoralism. Marx reveals an important contradiction in the idea of nature; We cherish it as a place of serenity, a heaven away from the business of civilized life. Yet, at the same time, we attempt to conquer it; we wish to protect our lands, while simultaneously making money off of it. We invariably, Marx suggests, inflict our modern industrial "machines" upon nature, while arguing and believing that we are doing good.

Mumford, L. (1934). Technics and Civilization. NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

American philosopher Lewis Mumford offers the first critical look at the rise of technology and its influences on civilization. He asserts, for example, that the invention of the clock in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century revolutionized the way in which we live-organizing our lives by minutes and hours. Mumford offers two types of technology: polytechnic and monotchnic. The first is technology used in agreement with human nature and the second is not. Mumford also introduced the concept of the megamachine, or the advantages of human labor. His philosophy is radical for the time, but revolutionary and optimistic toward technology.

### Book Review Assignment

Choose a leading book on a subject that relates to class readings. Read the book in its entirety, being sure to take notes on important arguments, findings, questions you may have, challenges to the written material, and so on. Organize these notes and prepare a critical review of that book. The review must be at least 3 pages, typed, double-spaced, and should present some sort of argument about the importance or non-importance of that book toward understanding mediated communication. It might be referable to choose a book from your annotated bibliography, since you already have a general idea about the subject in question.

### Film Analysis Assignment

Choose a film that is broad in scope and is rich in meaning. The film should make some sort of social commentary. The film, for instance, may be a political or cultural critique, or it could be prophetic or ideological in nature. View the film and develop a well-written analysis of that film, paying close attention to its use of character, plot, agon, humor, explicit and implied themes, structure, and son. Make an argument concerning how film in general can help shape public opinion and how your film, specifically, attempts to persuade. You may choose a film from the follow list, or choose a film of your own.

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## Sample Films for Analysis

JFK	Dr. Strangelove
The Killing Fields	Apocalypse Now
Good Morning, Vietnam	2001: A Space Odyssey
Pleasantville	A Clockwork Orange
Driving Miss Daisy	Being John Malkovich
Dances with Wolves	Trainspotting
Boy'z 'n the Hood	Midnight Cowboy
City of Hope	Gandhi
Schindler's List	
Philadelphia	
Wag the Dog	
Bulworth	
Bob Roberts	
American Beauty	
Crying Game	
Citizen Kane	
Gone with the Wind	
Thirteen Days	
Frankenstein	
MASH	
Anti-Trust	
Pearl Harbor	
The Godfather	

## Research Paper Assignment

Your research project in this class, which comprises 45% of your total grad, should be a significant exploration of either a problem in mediated communication or a possibility of mediated communication. It would expedite your work if you were to choose an area that you've already looked at for your bibliography/book review. Please make an argument in the paper and support his argument with your research. The week that your draft is due, you will present your argument to class, with handouts if applicable. Other types of visual aids are acceptable, but let me know a few days in advance. Once I receive your paper, I will give it back with a "draft" grade and some comments. Your final grade will depend upon your correction of the noted errors and an implementation of my recommendations.

Specifically, your research paper should include the following:

1. 10 – 12 pages
2. typed, double-spaced
3. 10 sources minimum
4. parenthetical documentation works cited