

**JMC 1500: Introduction to Mass Media**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Dr. Adam W. Tyma**  
**University of Nebraska at Omaha**

**TEXTBOOK:**

Campbell, R., Martin, C.R., & Fabos, B. (2013). *Media essentials: A brief introduction* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford St. Martin's

**COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

A survey of the history, organization and social significance of the mass media, including, but not limited to: newspapers, radio, television, books, magazines, advertising, public relations and films. Other thoughts: To provide a historical background of the media in the United States, and an understanding of how the media work and the role they play in today's society. We will examine what influence the media have on thought, the political process and individuals. There will be special emphasis on how to evaluate media messages and how to become a better consumer of the media. This will be accomplished through lectures, class discussions, and group projects.

1. Identify the media of mass communication
2. Argue the effects of mass communication on society.
3. Describe the importance of mass communication in their lives now and in the future.
4. Evaluate news stories, advertisements and entertainment content of the media.
5. Defend the First Amendment concept of freedom of the press.
6. Evaluate the effect of business on media content.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- 1) Exams – Four (4) Exams at 100 points per exam, covering each part of the semester (as laid out in the Table of Contents for the textbook) as well as class discussions and guest speakers. Exams will be taken online via Bb. There will be sessions to explain how this works.
- 2) Group Video Presentations – During the semester, groups of (to be determined based on enrollment) will construct and present an 8 to 10 minute video presentation inspired by but not based on material from the textbook. The goal of the group is not to regurgitate the information from the book but to push the conversation started in the book into new and uncharted territories. Details for this assignment are available on the Bb site.

3) Critical Reflection Papers – During the semester, you will have the opportunity to critically respond to something that has been brought up in class. This 475-500 word (right around 2 pages) essay is for you to voice your concerns, questions, etc. regarding mass communication, the world, and your place in between the two.

a. This is a variable due date assignment. This means that you will be assigned your “Group Video Project”). This will be discussed in detail on Day #1 due date based upon the roster. You may swap your due date with another student to better accommodate your schedule, but only after confirming with Tyma. Due dates are listed on Bb.

4) Discussion Questions – Twice during each unit, you will be asked to post one to two questions that you have regarding the course materials (readings, discussions, etc.). You will be graded on whether or not you complete this assignment. A few choice questions will be responded to the following class session. Consider this part of your overall participation in the course.

5) Others as Assigned – There may be moments where assignments are declared during class (discussion posts, quick essays, pop quizzes, etc.). This will not be announced in advance and cannot be made up because you were not in class that day to hear about them (there are often announcements posted afterwards, so just be aware and present). In other words – you will want to plan to be there.

6) Participation In Class – This goes without saying. Just filling the seat will not serve you here. Engage the material, ask questions, and don’t fear your own voice! It has power – so do you class activities cannot be made up. In-class activities and homework collectively are worth 50 points.

### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

*Overview: Let the games begin!*

*Introduction to the Course (Syllabus, Instructors, Assignments, etc.)*

Week 1– Chapter 1

Week 1 – Chapter 13

Week 2 – In-Class work session (Have signed up for your group video due date by now)

Week 2 – Chapter 15

Week 3 – Chapter 16

Week 3 – In-Class work session for video groups

Week 4 – Review for Exam #1

Week 4 – Exam #1 (Online; No Class Meeting)

Where We Started

Week 5 – Chapter 2 (Essay Group #1 – Your critical reflection essay is due)

Week 5 – Chapter 3

Week 6 – Guest Panel: The State of the Media (Matt Hansen-OWH; Maureen Kaufman-WOWT;

Sherrie Wilson-UNO; Jeremy Lipschultz-UNO)

Week 6 – Chapter 4

Week 7 – Chapter 11

Week 7 – Open Discussion/Exam Review: Chapters 2, 3, 4, 11, Guest Panel, and videos

Week 8 – Exam #2 (Online; No Class Meeting)

*From Hearing to Seeing*

Week 8 – Chapter 5 (Essay Group #2 – Your critical reflection essay is due)

Week 9 – Chapter 6

Week 9 – Chapter 7

Week 10 – Chapter 8

Week 10 – Guest Panel: Not-So Alt Media (Anymore) (Rachel Jacobsen-FilmStreams; )

Week 11 – Open Discussion/Exam Review: Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, Guest Panel, and videos

Week 11 – Exam #3 (Online; No Class Meeting)

*In Our Faces and All Around Us*

Week 12 – Chapter 9 (Essay Group #3 – Your critical reflection essay is due)

Week 12 – Chapter 10

Week 13 – Chapter 12

Week 13 – Chapter 15

Week 14 – Guest Panel #3: Creating, Advertising, Branding, and Business in the 21st Century ()

Week 14 – Open Discussion/Exam Review: Chapters 9, 10, 12, 15, Guest Panel, and videos

Week 15 – Exam #4 (Online; No Class Meeting)

Week 15 – Essay Group #4 – Your critical reflection essay is due (ASH 107b by 1 pm)

Week 16 – Extra Credit Screening: Good Night and Good Luck