MASS MEDIA
COMMUNICATION 214-004
FALL 2006 (Term 067)
Class Meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:50-12:05 in R.S. Small Library 002

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Course Description
This course will examine the broad field of mass media from newspapers, magazines and books to radio, television, sound recordings, motion pictures and the internet.
We will give special attention to how the media are changing due to technology. Media-related responsibilities, ethics, laws and regulations will also be covered. Professional opportunities in each media field will be examined as well.
Handouts, videos, online resources, guest speakers and my own insights as a 20-plus year media veteran will complement the teachings in the course textbook.
For your term paper requirement, you will have the opportunity to write a research paper/news article about a media-related topic of your choosing.

Course Objectives
A major course objective is to make you a wiser, more savvy and informed “consumer of mass media” by gaining a better understanding of how the mass media function (and in some cases, dysfunction). This class will also, hopefully, give you a solid foundation that will help you in your other communication courses.
And this course can help you professionally by making you more knowledgeable about the media, specially the business operations of each, and the job possibilities that each media form has to offer.

Attendance Policy
Because of the size of this class attendance will not be regularly taken. However, there will be frequent quizzes on the chapter readings that cannot be made up if you are absent when they are given. There may also be in-class activities that will be credited. Homework is assigned on a class-to-class basis, so attendance is vital in order to keep up with everything.

Homework and Quizzes
We will be following the textbook chapters closely. There will be regular short quizzes at the beginning of class that will cover the Questions for Review and Key Terms at the end of each chapter. You do not have to turn in the Questions and Key Terms, instead read the chapter and review the questions and terms so that you will be ready for the quiz and other discussions and activities related to the given chapter. For written homework, you will regularly be assigned one or more of Questions for Critical Thinking for each chapter.

**Grading Homework, Quizzes, Activities, etc.**

I use a check plus, check, check minus system for grading homework, quizzes, etc. A check plus is worth 2 ½ points, a check 2 points, and a check minus 1 ½ points. Your total points at the end of the term will determine 15 percent of your grade. For example, if there are 30 assignments, the most points—with all check plusses—would be 75. Note: Homework turned in one class period late receives a check minus and will not be accepted after one class period. NOTE: I do not accept homework via email.

**Book Online Resources**

A helpful online resource connected with our book can be found at [www.mhhe.com/dominick9](http://www.mhhe.com/dominick9). Students have found this a valuable tool in preparing for tests and quizzes.

**Tests**

There will be three tests covering Chapters 1-6, 7-11, and 12-14/17-18. Test questions will come mostly from the textbook terms and review questions, but also may come from additional class notes, handouts, videos and guest speakers. The tests will be in the form of multiple choice, fill in the blank, lists, short answer and short essay questions. A detailed study guide will be distributed one week before each test.

**Research Article**

A four-to-five page research article on a media-related topic is due at the end of the semester. This paper must include first hand interviews. Details will be distributed.

**Grading Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests (3)</td>
<td>75 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework, Quizzes, other activities</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Test Grading Scale**

- A 94-100; A- 90-93; B++-- 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83; C+ 77-79; C 74-77; C- 70-73; D+ 67-69; D 64-66; D- 60-63; F—59 and below (note: last two tests will receive letter grades)

**Final Grades**

- A (Superior)=4.0; A-=3.7; B+(Very Good)=3.3; B (Good)=3.0; B-=2.7; C+ (Fair)=2.3; C=2.0; C-=1.7; D+=1.3; D (Barely Acceptable/Passing)=1.0; D -=.70; F (Failure)=0.0

**Extra Credit Opportunities**
You can earn extra credit points by writing papers on media-related speakers and events on campus and around Charleston. Topics must receive prior approval from the instructor. Some extra credit opportunities will be announced in class but you are welcome to suggest others. Extra credit work can earn points that will be added to your lowest test score.

CLASS SCHEDULE
(subject to change—NOTE: homework is assigned during class, not here)

Week 1—August 24
- Course introduction; review syllabus; student information sheets

Week 2—August 29 and 31
- Chapter 1, “Communication: Mass and Other Forms”
- Tour Student Media Center on Calhoun Street Thursday (tentative)

Week 3—September 5 and 7
- Chapter 2, “Perspectives on Mass Communications” and Chapter 3, “Historical and Cultural Context”
- Tour Rivers Communications Museum (corner St. Philip and George Streets)

Week 4—September 12 and 14
- Chapter 4, “Newspapers” and Chapter 5, “Magazines”

Week 5—September 19 and 21
- Continue Chapters 4 and 5
- Chapter 6, “Books”
- Distribute first test study guide—Test I is Thursday, Sept. 28

Week 6—September 26 and 28
- Tuesday—review for test
- Thursday, September 28—Test I covering Chapters 1-6

Week 7—October 3 and 5 (Oct. 3 is last day to withdraw with a “W” grade)
- Return and review Test I
- Chapter 7, Radio, and Chapter 8, Sound Recording

Week 8—October 10 and 12
- Continue Chapters 7 and 8
- Chapter 9, “Motion Pictures”

Week 9—October 17 and 19 (Midterm Grades due Wednesday, Oct. 18)
- Continue Motion Pictures

Week 10—October 24 and 26
∀ Chapter 10, “Television”
∀ Chapter 11, “The Internet and the World Wide Web”
∀ Distribute study guide for Test II which is on Thursday, Nov. 2

**Week 11—Oct. 31 and Nov. 2**
∀ Tuesday—review for test
∀ **Thursday, November 2—Test II covering Chapters 7-11**

**Week 12—November 7 and 9 (no class Nov. 7 due to Fall Break)**
∀ Thursday—return Test II
∀ Distribute research article guidelines (for topic ideas look at chapters ahead)
∀ Start Chapters 12-14 which covers “The Media Professions” (Reporting, Public Relations and Advertising)

**Week 13—November 14 and 16**
∀ Chapters 12-14, “The Media Professions”
∀ Research Article topics due this week

**Week 14—November 21 and 23 (No class Nov. 23 due to Thanksgiving)**
∀ Continue Media Professions

**Week 15—November 28 and 30 (Nov. 30 is last class)**
∀ Continue Chapters 17 and 18
∀ Distribute study guide for Test III on our exam date, Tuesday, Dec. 12
∀ Research articles are also due by Tuesday, Dec. 12

**EXAM DATE:** Tuesday, December 12, 8-11 a.m. (research articles also due)
**Final Grades are due Friday, December 15**

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