



COMM. 1307.032 HY-Intro to Mass Communication

Course Syllabus: Spring 2025

“Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed.”

Instructor: Mandy Smith

Office: Humanities 116

Phone: (Office) 903-434-8254 (Cell) 903-466-6377

Email: msmith@ntcc.edu

Office Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
	1:30-4:30	1:30-4:30	1:30-3:30	1:30-3:30		Email anytime

This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.

Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.

Course Description:

3 credit hours.

Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of class each week.

Survey of basic content and structural elements of mass media and their functions and influences on society.

Prerequisite(s):

None

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the fundamental types, purposes, and relevance of mass communication.
2. Demonstrate understanding of mass media in historic, economic, political, and cultural realms.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the business aspects of mass media and the influence of commercialism.
4. Demonstrate understanding of evolving media technologies and relevant issues and trends.
5. Demonstrate understanding of mass media values, ethics, laws, and industry guidelines.
6. Demonstrate understanding of globalization of mass media.
7. Demonstrate understanding of media effects on society.

Evaluation/Grading Policy:

Your assignments will be evaluated using the following percentages:

Discussion assignments	20%
Smart Book reading assignments	10%
Online homework assignments	10%
Essays	20%
Exams	20%
Final research essay	15%
Attendance	5%

Total

100%

Assignments will be graded within two weeks of receipt or before your next assignment is due. Your essays will be graded holistically based on the scoring rubric. (See the evaluation criteria (rubric) for writing assignments in Appendix A at the end of the syllabus.)

Required Instructional Materials:

Baran, Stanley - Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture (Twelfth Edition)

Publisher: McGraw Hill 2023

ISBN Number: 978-1-260-822286-1

*You have inclusive access to the e-book and the assignments for this course. This fee was included in your tuition and fees. **There is no need to purchase any books for this course unless you would like a loose-leaf copy of the digital book. The loose-leaf version can be purchased at the NTCC bookstore.***

Optional Instructional Materials:

None

Minimum Technology Requirements:

You will need access to a computer to complete the writing assignments for this class. You will be typing your assignments and submitting the assignments through Blackboard.

Required Computer Literacy Skills:

Blackboard Learning Management System, Microsoft Word processing, average email usage

Course Structure and Overview:

The Intro to Mass Communication course is designed to help students gain an understanding of the role that mass media plays in society including its historical and cultural functions. The course also takes a look at the varied effects that different types of mass media have on society as well as its relevancy and purpose. Along with the writing, reading and test assignments, the course also incorporates some online assignments in Blackboard. Please read the instructions below for assignment instructions.

Writing Assignments:

Please follow these instructions when writing your papers:

- Writing assignments must be typed using MLA format.
- Use Times New Roman 12 pt. font.
- Double-space
- Pay close attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Due dates for writing and reading assignments will be assigned during class and will also be noted in the class calendar.
- Final drafts will be submitted through a Blackboard Turnitin assignment on the due date.
- Turnitin's AI detection tool will be used in this class to determine if all or part of your essays are generated with the use of artificial intelligence tools.
- **Late assignments are only accepted at the instructor's discretion. Emergency situations will be handled on an individual basis.**

Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to read all assigned material before coming to class. You will be expected to respond to reading assignments orally during class discussions.

Blackboard Discussion Assignments:

Your original post should be a minimum of 300 words, address the topic, and be relatively free of grammar,

spelling and punctuation (50 points). Respond to the posts of two other classmates. Each peer post should be a minimum of 100 words and should be a thoughtful addition to the discussion (25 pts. each).

Communications: Office hours are listed on the top of the front page of this syllabus. I have also listed my cell phone. I do accept calls and text messages on my cell. Emails will be answered within 24 hours. Please note that NTCC email is the official form of communication used by the college.

Institutional/Course Policy:

To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:

- Read all of the textbook assignments
- Participate actively and meaningfully in all group discussions
- Prepare and submit all writing assignments on time
- Attend class regularly

Always remember to bring your textbook, paper and writing utensil to each class. You will not be successful in this class without the appropriate materials. Please don't engage in casual conversations during our lecture, discussion and group times or while we are working on other assignments. I reserve the right to act as necessary to maintain a productive class environment, including asking disruptive students to leave, and in extreme circumstances, dropping chronic disruptors from my course. I will not tolerate uncivil behavior toward other class members during class discussions. Please do not use cell phones, tablets or computers during class unless the device is being used as a part of the classwork. Please inform me at the beginning of the semester if you plan to use a digital copy of the textbook. See the evaluation criteria (rubric) for writing assignments at the end of the syllabus.

Attendance policy:

Attendance will be taken either orally or by a sign-in sheet. If you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure that the instructor counts you in attendance for that day. **Students who miss more than five class periods will be subject to failure in this course.**

Course Evaluations:

Toward the end of the course you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation. Students are encouraged to fill out an online evaluation for each of their courses. This will be your opportunity to share important feedback on each of the courses you take at NTCC and the faculty member who teaches the class. Please watch for info about the evaluation on your NTCC email account and make sure you participate in evaluating your experiences in the classroom.

Withdrawal policy:

It is your responsibility to drop or withdraw from a course. Failure to do so could result in receiving a failing grade for the course.

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure and/or Alternate Course Delivery Requirements

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Northeast Texas Community College to move to altered operations. During this time, Northeast Texas Community College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to, online through the Blackboard Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor NTCC's website (<http://www.ntcc.edu/>) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, Blackboard for each class for course-specific communication, and NTCC email for important general information.

Additionally, there may be instances where a course may not be able to be continued in the same delivery format as it originates (face-to-face, fully online, live remote, or hybrid). Should this be the case, every

effort will be made to continue instruction in an alternative delivery format. Students will be informed of any changes of this nature through email messaging and/or the Blackboard course site.

NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:

NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

Plagiarism:

In any written paper, you are guilty of the academic offense known as plagiarism if you do not produce your own work by either fully copying or half-copying another person's words or sentences. You cannot mix another author's words with your own or "plug" your synonyms into another author's sentence structure. If you use words, phrases, or sentences from another source even if you are paraphrasing, you must cite the outside material within the text and on a work cited page. Written assignments created by ChatGPT or other forms of artificial intelligence (AI) are also considered a form of plagiarism because you are not producing your own work. Plagiarism usually results in an automatic grade of "F" for the assignment or the course, depending on the offense. Most written assignments for this course will be submitted to TurnItIn.com, which includes a plagiarism and AI checker. Both the similarity report and the AI report are used to determine plagiarism.

Statement Regarding the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology:

Absent a clear statement from a course instructor, use of or consultation with generative AI shall be treated analogously to assistance from another person (collusion). Generative AI is a subset of AI that utilizes machine learning models to create new, original content, such as images, text, or music, based on patterns and structures learned from existing data (Cornell, Center for Teaching Innovation). Unauthorized use of generative AI tools to complete an assignment or exam is not permitted. Students should acknowledge the use of generative AI and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt. Individual course instructors may set their own policies regulating the use of generative AI tools in their courses, including allowing or disallowing some or all uses of such tools. Students who are unsure of policies regarding generative AI tools are encouraged to ask their instructors for clarification. **(Adapted from the Stanford University Office of Community Standards-- accessed August 31, 2023)**

Additional Information on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in This Course :

All work submitted in this course is expected to be original work for this particular class. Any previously written work, either by the student or another source, will either be considered ineligible for course credit or a percentage of the grade will be heavily deducted.

This does include the use of any artificial intelligence (AI) programs including ChatGPT. I use Turnitin's AI detector to check for AI usage for essay assignments in this course. The grade will be affected on any writing assignment that is detected with more than 20 percent AI generated material, and based on the percentage of usage, could receive a zero.

So, my advice is to please avoid the temptation to use AI generated work in any of your written assignment.

Eagle Assist:

At Northeast Texas Community College, we understand that students often need support that extends beyond the classroom. “Eagle Assist” is the place to start when looking for that type of assistance. Our support system is here to help you succeed in both your academic and personal growth. www.ntcc.edu/eagleassist

Services provided:

- [Mental Health Counseling](#)
- [Classroom Accommodations](#)
- [NTCC Care Center Food & Hygiene Closet](#)
- [Financial Literacy](#)
- [Students with Children](#)
- [Emergency Aid](#)
- [Tutoring](#)

Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

[Mental Health Counseling Services](#) are available on campus- in person and online - to all NTCC students at no cost. If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do. You can also contact us directly at counseling-center@ntcc.edu.

ADA Statement:

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special populations page on the NTCC website.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children’s educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered “eligible students.” In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child’s college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as “directory information” may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student’s name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

Appendix A

EVALUATION CRITERIA RUBRIC FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Grade	Criteria
90-100	The essay provides a well-organized response to the topic and maintains a central focus. The ideas are expressed in appropriate language. A sense of pattern of development is present from beginning to end. The writer supports assertions with explanation or illustration, and the vocabulary is well suited to an academic paper. Sentences and phrasings within sentences reflect a command of standard written English, including what constitutes a complete sentence. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are almost always correct.
80-89	The essay provides an organized response to the topic. The ideas are expressed in clear language most of the time. The writer develops ideas and generally signals relationships within and between the paragraphs. The writer uses vocabulary that is appropriate for the essay topic and avoids oversimplifications or distortions. Sentences generally are complete and also grammatically correct, although some grammatical errors may be present when sentence structure is particularly complex. With few exceptions, punctuation, and spelling are correct.
70-79	The essay shows a basic understanding of the demands of essay organization, although there might be occasional digressions. The development of ideas is sometimes incomplete or superficial, but basic logical structure can be discerned. Vocabulary generally is appropriate for the essay topic but at times is oversimplified. Sentences reflect a sufficient command of standard written English to ensure reasonable clarity of expression. Sentence fragments, fusions, and comma splices may be present. Grammar is usually, although not always, correct. Common words are spelled correctly but more difficult words may be misspelled.
60-69	The essay provides a response to the topic but generally has no overall pattern of organization OR begins with a response to the topic but does not develop the response. Some paragraphs have adequate structure, but ideas are often undeveloped or are repeated and/or seem to be presented randomly. The writer generally does not signal relationships within and between paragraphs. The writer uses informal language frequently and writes in a conversational style when appropriate academic prose is needed. Vocabulary seems limited and words may be misused. Sentences are often simplistic and lacking in variety. Sentence phrasing obscures rather than enhances clarity of expression. The essay has recurrent grammatical problems or has occasional problems <i>only</i> because of the narrow range of sentence and language variety. Fragments, fusions, and comma splices are common. Punctuation, and spelling errors occur often.
Below 50	The essay suffers from general incoherence and has no discernible pattern of organization. It displays a high frequency of error in the regular features of standard written English. Lapses in punctuation, spelling, and grammar often frustrate the reader. Or, the essay is so brief that any reasonably accurate judgment of the writer's competence is impossible.

Assignment Calendar Spring 25

Tentative Course Timeline – All SB and homework assignments due no later than Sunday night each week (*note* instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this timeline at any point in the term)

- Week 1 **Face-to-Face – Welcome to the class introduction**
Face-to-Face – Course and Syllabus review
Face-to-Face – Watch the video in the Lesson One folder
Begin reading Chapter 1 Smart Book (SB) assignment on “Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy” in the Media Consumption folder in Module One
Begin keeping media usage log (assignment given in class)
- Week 2 **Face-to-Face – Bring media usage log to class for discussion**
Face-to-Face – Discussion on media literacy
Complete Chapter 1 SB assignment on “Mass Communication, Culture, and Media Literacy” and homework assignment in the Media Consumption folder
Read the essay “Is Google Making us Stupid” in the Media Literacy folder
Submit initial discussion post to Media Literacy discussion assignment in the Media Literacy folder
Begin reading SB assignment on “Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication” in the Digital Natives folder

Watch the video on “Digital Natives” in the Digital Natives folder
Post responses to two of your fellow students’ post in the Media Literacy discussion located in the Media Literacy folder
Submit initial post to Digital Natives discussion in the Digital Natives folder In Module One
Complete Chapter 2 SB assignment on “Convergence and the Reshaping of Mass Communication” and homework assignment in the Digital Natives folder
Begin reading Chapter 3 SB on “Books” in the Books folder in Module Two
- Week 3 **Face-to-Face – Face-to-Face – Introduce discussion on books and on the practice of banning and challenging books and American Library Association (ALA) website**
Complete Chapter 3 SB assignment on “Books” and the homework assignment in the Books folder in Module Two
Post responses to two of your fellow students’ in the Digital Natives discussion assignment in the Digital Natives folder
Read and follow the instructions for ALA writing assignment in the Books folder
- Week 4 **Face-to-Face – Begin discussion on newspapers**
Submit ALA writing assignment to Blackboard assignment link in Books folder
Begin reading Chapter 4 SB on “Newspapers” in the Newspaper folder in Module Two

Face-to-Face – Continue discussion on newspapers and begin discussion on the Reporters Without Borders Website (link in Newspaper folder in Module Two)
Complete Chapter 4 SB assignment “Newspapers” and homework assignment in the Newspaper folder

Begin reading Chapter 5 SB “Magazines” in the Magazine folder in Module Two
Read the article “13 Times Celebrities Called Out Magazines Over Retouching”

Submit initial post to the Magazine Cover discussion assignment

Begin writing Reporters Without Borders essay (instructions in Newspaper folder)

Week 5

Face-to-Face – Discussion on magazines and advertising

Receive print media (Take home and submit to Blackboard by March 12)

Read the NPR article “Fake or Real: How to Self-check the News and Get the Facts” in Radio folder in Module Three and complete the writing assignment for class discussion

Post responses to two of your fellow students’ posts in the Magazine Cover discussion assignment located in the Magazine folder

Face-to-Face – Discussion on film

Submit Reporters Without Borders writing assignment to Blackboard assignment link in the Newspaper folder

Complete Chapter 5 SB assignment “Magazines” and homework assignment in Magazine folder

Begin reading the instructions in the Film folder for the “Product Placement in Films” writing assignment for class discussion

Week 6

Face-to-Face – Discussion on film and product placement

Face-to-Face – Bring your written response to class on the “Product Placement in Films” writing assignment in the Film folder

Begin reading Chapter 6 SB “Film Good” in the Film folder in Module Three

Face-to-Face – Discussion on radio

Complete Chapter 6 SB assignment “Film Good” and homework assignment in the Film folder

Begin reading SB Chapter 7 “Radio, Recording, and Popular Music” in the Radio folder

Follow the instructions in the Radio folder for listening to NPR and commercial radio stations and writing a response for class discussion

Face-to-Face – Continue Discussion on Radio and Popular Music

Complete Chapter 7 SB assignment “Radio, Recording, and Popular Music” and homework assignments in Radio folder

Begin reading Chapter 8 SB “Television, Cable, and Mobile Video” in the Television folder in Module Three

Face-to-Face – Discussion on Television

Watch the video “Meet the CEOs Who Decide What You See Online” in the Social Media folder in Module four

Complete Chapter 8 SB assignment “Television, Cable, and Mobile Video” and homework assignment in the Television folder in Module Three

Submit the initial post to the Meet the CEOs Who Decide What You See Online discussion assignment in the Social Media folder

Week 7 **Face-to-Face – Continue discussion on television**

Read the instructions and begin working on final paper writing assignment in the Writing Assignment folder in Module Four

Post responses to two of your fellow students’ post in the discussion assignment Meet the CEOs Who Decide What You See Online in the Social Media folder

Face-to-Face Discussion on social media and society

Continue working on final paper writing assignment

Begin reading Chapter 14 SB “Media Freedom, Regulation and Ethics” in the Media Freedom and Ethics folder in Module Four

Receive Radio, TV, and Film test (Take home and submit to Blackboard link in Module Three

Week 8 **Face-to Face – Discussion on media freedom, regulation, and ethics in media**

Complete Chapter 14 SB “Media Freedom, Regulation and Ethics” in the Media Freedom and Ethics folder in Module Three

Submit Radio, TV and Film test to Blackboard link in Module Three

Face-to Face – Continue discussion on media freedom, regulation, and ethics in Media

Submit final writing assignment essay to Blackboard link in Final Writing Assignment folder in Module Four