

COMM 4389-115 Visual Literacy

Syllabus - Summer 2022 - Texas A&M University-Central Texas

This is a 100% online course and uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>]. Course dates are 6/6/2022 - 7/29/2022.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor - Charles R. Hamilton, Ph.D.

Office - Online

Phone: (903) 573-5124 (Text first or I will not answer.)

Email: Please use CANVAS email for all communications. c.hamilton@tamuct.edu

Student-instructor interaction - Office Hours - I do not have office hours as such, but I am constantly checking my email and text messages - 7 days per week - and will respond frequently. Email is best. If you need to speak to me directly, please make an appointment by text.

Mode of instruction and course access: This course is a 100% online course and uses TAMUCT Canvas Learning platform. You will use the TAMUCT student username and password communicated to you separately to logon to this system.

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

SAFEZONE. SafeZone provides a public safety application that gives you the ability to call for help with the push of a button. It also provides Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate emergency information quickly via push notifications, email, and text messages. All students automatically receive email and text messages via their myCT accounts.

Downloading SafeZone allows access to push notifications and enables you to connect directly for help through the app.

You can download SafeZone from the app store and use your myCT credentials to log in. If you would like more information, you can visit the [SafeZone](http://www.safezoneapp.com) website [www.safezoneapp.com].

To register SafeZone on your phone, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Download the SafeZone App from your phone store using the link below:
 - [iPhone/iPad](https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756): [<https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756>]
 - [Android Phone / Tablet](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp) [<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp>]
2. Launch the app and enter your myCT email address (e.g. {name}@tamuct.edu)
3. Complete your profile and accept the terms of service

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Overview and description: COMM 4389-115 Media Communication and Visual Literacy

This course offers an in-depth study of particular issues within media studies. Topics will vary from semester to semester. A more specific course description (below) will introduce the particular focus of a class. This course may be repeated when the topic changes.

Media Communication and Visual Literacy is a study of mass media and the manipulation of political events, topics, and comments in order to lure higher numbers of "loyal followers"? Are media sites fulfilling the needs of those concerned citizens who normally might not take the time to do the research necessary to find what they consider "the truth"? Does a media site encourage conversation and expression of individual thought, or is it simply telling followers what they want to hear -- what they are comfortable with? What role does marketing play in online sites with a political agenda (i.e. what products and ideologies are being sold as necessities)?

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to write brief reflections from prompts based on information from the text. Students are also required to participate **actively** in online discussions of the assigned readings and other prompted topics. Finally, students will write a summation essay, discussing the information, chapters, and other research they have studied throughout the course, along with comparisons of policies you have chosen to highlight, and situations or genres in which they might apply. Since this is an online course, and only 8 weeks long, the rigor is extensive, especially during the last weeks. Do not get behind, or you will not only lose points, but you may find that you have to drop the course.

Student Requirements

Examine and then question current media policies related to fairness & ethics.

Make intelligent observations about the benefits and shortcomings of weekly readings through both online discussions and in weekly reviews.

Collect and evaluate a library of sources concerning media involvement in political, social, and commercial issues and ethics used in communication with public audiences, and through a variety of modes.

Course Objectives:

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to differentiate between the common media methods of communication and reporting currently in use.

Students will select and highlight communication & media usage methods they choose as most harmful/useful, based on their personal experience, and research.

Students will select the media devices they feel best fit ethical approaches to public communication.

Students will develop the ability to blend forms of media communication to fit situations where one mode alone may not be sufficient to be effective.

Competency Goals

Students will read and respond, both in essay form, and through written, online discussion, to a variety of communication and agenda-setting tactics, described in the text, and used for the creation of online cultures.

Students will read and respond, both in essay form, and through written, online discussions, to a variety of media practices, described in journal articles they select, and used in a variety of communication modes and situations.

Students will discover, and apply, their personal choices of the "correct" practices necessary for specific scenarios of communication situations.

Students will discover their personal philosophies for use in specific media communication situations, through reading, research, written reviews, and written discussion responses, and record those in essay format.

Required Reading and Textbook: *Media Literacy*, Edition 10, W. James Potter, Sage 2022,

ISBN: **9781071814451**

From the text: Media Literacy teaches students how to navigate through the overwhelming flood of information found in today's media-saturated world. Drawing from thousands of media research studies, author W. James Potter explores key components to understanding the fascinating world of mass media. Potter presents examples and facts to help students understand how the media operate, how they attract attention, and how they influence the public. Chapters conclude with exercises to help readers apply the material to everyday life and improve their media literacy. The **Tenth Edition** integrates a stronger focus on digital media, features a streamlined organization, and updates facts to keep readers informed on the rapidly changing media phenomenon.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Requirements: (Use MLA guidelines on all the writing that you turn in. **All work must be in Microsoft Word format.** Also, as a rule, I do not accept late assignments without prior approval.)

Reflection Papers: You will compose weekly Reflection Papers from supplied prompts based on the weekly readings. Each prompt will address specific topics from selected chapters in the text. For each reflection, begin with an MLA heading followed by stating the prompt for that week, and then a written reflection of 250-500 words (average) about a specific idea you single out that is of great importance within the study of that chapter. Address its usefulness to you and society as a whole, and its general strengths and weaknesses. **You are not required to address the entire chapter, only a specific point, or points, you cite as most important.** Please supply short scenarios, if necessary, to illustrate your application of the practice. **Use Microsoft Word format Only.** Each Reflection Paper (a total of 6) is worth one hundred (100) points for a total of 600 points.

Discussion Participation: In addition, you are expected to contribute to course discussions each week. Count on providing at least one substantive original comment each of six (6) weeks about your readings or in response to my questions/prompts. Also included are comments you post as responses to the posts of others. Each week you are required to post responses to at least two of your classmates' comments. Grades are not assigned to specific posts, but your contributions each week are worth a total of one hundred (100) points for a total of 600 points.

In addition to the discussion of readings, the Discussion Board provides a forum for other course questions and comments. Please check the Discussion Board often to see what your classmates are asking or commenting on. You might be able to help. Grades for this section will be collected and posted each week. Discussion is important to any course, and an online course is no different. Each participant's comments and points of view are essential to gaining knowledge about any subject or topic, and I put quite a bit of weight on active discussion. Comments should be substantive, and should be made early in the week, so that active discussion can take place. Students making comments in the final minutes or hours of the discussion window will not get full credit for participation/discussion.

Final Essay: Position Paper: The importance of Media Literacy for Society/with references from text and outside sources (some sources can be found in the "further readings" sections at the end of each chapter).

This will be an essay that gives you yet another opportunity to ponder the ideas of how media literacy addresses cultural needs, changes, and values. You will write a summation essay/position paper, discussing the media literacy practices you have studied throughout the course, comparisons of practices you have chosen to highlight, and communication situations, scenarios, or genres, in which they might apply. This is a very substantive assignment and should reflect your critical insight into agenda-setting, and other methods that can be manipulated by media to fit specific situations. You do not have to begin this final essay from scratch. Feel free to use parts of your previous reflection papers as integral parts of this final essay. The essay can be constructed by beginning with an introduction followed by a thesis statement, body information from your past reflection papers, and ending with concluding position remarks. Your Works Cited or References page should consist of our text and authors - one citation is enough for our text, but if you add outside sources, you will need formal citations for each source. Be sure to include in-text citations to identify who is speaking. The average length of these papers has been 2000-2500 words (8-10 pages), but this is only an average and could be longer or shorter. (I really do not like limits, but some students feel they are necessary.) This final assignment is worth 300 points.

Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

Reflection Papers	6@100 pts. each	600
Discussion Participation	6@100 pts. each	600
Final Essay	300 pts.	300
Total Points Available		1500

Posting of Grades

Grades for Weekly Reflections and Discussions will be posted no more than one (1) week from the due date. *All*

student grades will be posted on the Canvas

Grade book. Students should monitor their grading status weekly.

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS and VISUAL LITERACY - COMM 4389 (Summer 2022)

SCHEDULE of READINGS and ASSESSMENTS

Week 1 - Part I – INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Why Increase Media Literacy?

Chapter 2: Media Literacy Approach

Assignments: Reflection and Discussion

Week 2 - Part II – EFFECTS

Chapter 3: Broadening Our Perspective on Media Effects

Chapter 4: How Does the Media Effects Process Work?

Assignments: Reflection and Discussion

Week 3 - Part IV – AUDIENCE

Chapter 7: Audience: Industry Perspective

Chapter 8: Audience: Individual Perspective

Assignments: Reflection and Discussion

Weeks 4 & 5- Part V – CONTENT (choices to be made)

Chapter 9: Entertainment

Chapter 10: Advertising

Chapter 11: News

Chapter 12: Competitive Experiences

Chapter 13: Social Networking Experiences

Chapter 14: Acquisition Experiences

Assignments: Reflection and Discussion

Week 6 - Part VI – SPRINGBOARD & ISSUES

Chapter 15: Helping Yourself and Others to Increase Media Literacy

Assignments: Reflection and Discussion

Weeks 7-8 - Assignments and Assessments

The "Issues" Chapters - select an area of focus for your final Position Paper

Discussions - your selections from the issues chapters - not graded.

Work on Final Paper.

Final Assessment (last two weeks)

Position Paper: Based on your choice of one of the "issues" Chapters and focused on "The importance of Media Literacy for Society" with references from the text and outside sources (some found in the "further readings" sections at the end of each chapter).

Important University Dates

Follow this link: <https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html>]

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. **We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.**

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select "Chat with Canvas Support," submit a support request through "Report a Problem," or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Online Proctored Testing

A&M-Central Texas uses Proctorio for online identity verification and proctored testing. This service is provided at no direct cost to students. If the course requires identity verification or proctored testing, the technology requirements are: Any computer meeting the minimum computing requirements, plus web camera, speaker, and microphone (or headset). Proctorio also requires the Chrome web browser with their custom plug in.

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [<http://hdc.tamu.edu>]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://federation.ngwebsolutions.com/sp/startSSO.ping?PartnerIdpId=https://eis-prod.ec.tamuct.edu:443/samlso&SpSessionAuthnAdapterId=tamuctDF&TargetResource=https%3a%2f%2fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2fSubmit%2fStart%2f53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University-Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](#), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](#), [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0].

Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](#) Canvas page (log-in required) [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>]

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](#) [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html>]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](#) online, please visit the website [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question, are interested in becoming a tutor, or in need of success coaching contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, visit the Warrior Center at 212 Warrior Hall, or by emailing WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu.

To schedule tutoring sessions and view tutor availability, please visit [Tutor Matching Services](#) [<https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT>] or visit the Tutoring Center in 111 Warrior Hall.

Chat live with a remote tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Writing Center

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas (A&M-Central Texas) is a free service open to all A&M-Central Texas students. For the Summer 2022 semester, the hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday in Warrior Hall 416 (with online tutoring available every hour as well) with satellite hours available online only Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and most Saturdays from 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via [WOnline](#) at [<https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 400,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 96,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams or in-person at the library. [Schedule an appointment here](https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956) [https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956]. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) <http://tamuct.libguides.com/index>.

POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Wellness and Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html].

Behavioral Intervention

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online

[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/bit) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/bit]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5805.

OTHER POLICIES

Copyright Notice

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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