

COMM 4389 - 110 - Intro to Mass Communication

Texas A&M University-Central Texas - Spring 2023

COURSE DATES: 1/17 - 5/12/2023

Instructor: Charles R. Hamilton, Ph.D.

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Modality: *This is a 100% online course and uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com/].*

Student-instructor interaction

Student-instructor interaction: Messages sent through TAMUCT email at any time will be answered within 24 hours, seven days a week

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:
 - o [iPhone/iPad](https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756): [https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756]
 - o [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

For updates on COVID information, please monitor the University [website](https://www.tamuct.edu/covid19/) [https://www.tamuct.edu/covid19/]

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Overview and description **Course Overview and description: COMM 4389 - Introduction to Mass Communication (3)** This course offers an in-depth study of issues within media studies. Topics will vary from semester to semester. A more specific course description will introduce the particular focus of a class. This course may be repeated when the topic changes.

Introduction to Mass Communication is a study of mass media and the creation of a "Culture of

online, and other media-based connections" - religions & denominations, individualism, intellectualism, the Internet, races and cultures, political groups, science, education, urban areas, etc. This course examines questions such as: Do media sources manipulate political events, topics, and comments 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" about politicians and agendas? 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)?

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

Text - *Media/Society*. 7th Edition. David Croteau; William Hoynes; Clayton Childress

Sage, 2022, ISBNs: 9781071819340, 9781071819357, 9781071819357, 1071819321, 9781071819326 (*See course outline and schedule for specific weekly assignments.*)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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 reflections/reviews.

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

This is a Writing Instructive (WI) course so writing will be an integral part of my instruction and our interactions. Writing will also be a fundamental way that I measure student mastery of course content. WI means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills.

Writing Assignments & Discussions

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.*)

Students are expected to write brief reflections/reviews of chapters from the text. You will also participate actively in online discussions of the assigned readings and other relevant topics. In addition to the weekly reflection papers, you will also write four (4) summary essays on the different parts of our text as comparative reflections of those readings. Finally, you will write a summation essay/position paper, discussing the chapters, articles, and research you have studied throughout the course, along with comparisons of policies you have chosen to highlight, and situations or genres in which they might apply.

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 200-300 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, 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 10) is worth one hundred (50) points for a total of 500 points. **Writing assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday of each week.**

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 ten (10) 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 fifty (25) points for a total of 250 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 an 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. Initial discussion posts should be made by 11:59 p.m. on Thursdays and final posts completed by 11:59 p.m. Sundays.

Section Summative Essays: These essays are positioned throughout your readings and give you a chance to compare, contrast, and reflect on the information within a section of chapters. Information from your weekly reflection papers may be used or repeated in summarizing and forming a position on what you have read within that section of our text. Be sure to support your comments with in-text citations from the readings. **Writing assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday of each week they are due.**

Final Essay: Position Paper: 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 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. **This final essay assignment is due by 11:59 p.m. Wednesday (5/10) of the final week of class.**

Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

Chapter Reviews/Reflections	10@50 pts. each	500
Discussion Participation	10@25 pts. each	250
Summative Section Essays	4@50 pts. each	200
Final Essay		300
Total Points Available		1250

Posting of Grades

Grades for Weekly Article Reviews, and Chapter Reviews, Summative Essays, and Discussions will be posted one (1) week from the due date.

All student grades will be posted on the Canvas Grade book. Students should monitor their grading status through this tool.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

Week 1 - PART I INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 - Media/Society in a Digital World

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 2 - PART II TECHNOLOGY

Chapter 2 - The Evolution of Media Technology

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 3 - Summative Essay 1 - Parts I & II

Week 4 - PART III INDUSTRY

Week 4 - Chapter 3 The Economics of the Media Industry Chapter 4 Political Influence on Media

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 5 - Chapter 4 - Political Influence on Media

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 6 - Chapter 5 Media Organizations and Professionals

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 7 - Summative Essay 2 - Part III

Week 8 - PART IV CONTENT: MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SOCIAL WORLD

Week 8 - Chapter 6 Media and Ideology

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Spring Break

Week 9 - Chapter 7 Social Inequality and Media Representation

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 10 - Summative Essay 3 - Part IV

Week 11 - PART V USERS

Week 11 - Chapter 8 Audiences and Creators Chapter 9 Media Influence

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 12 - Chapter 9 - Media Influence

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Week 13 - Summative Essay 4 - Part V

Week 14 - PART VI AFTERWORD

Week 14 - Chapter 10 - Globalization and the Future of Media

Assignments - Discussion Questions and Reflection

Weeks 15 & 16 - Final Summative Essay

Spend these last two weeks working on your final essay

Important University Dates

Important university dates for the current Academic Calendar semester are available by following the 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

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](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required) [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717>]

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), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

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

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%2f53b0502-4f36-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.

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant, experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, 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) [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) [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 Library & Archives

The University Library & Archives provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 350 electronic databases containing approximately 631,525 eBooks and 75,149 journals, in addition to the 97,443 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]. 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](#)

[https://tamuct.libguides.com/index]

University Writing Center

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. The hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 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 Saturday 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 [WCOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [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.

OTHER 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](#) online

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

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](#) 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.

Copyright Notice

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