 COMM 1500 Syllabus

**COMM-1500 *Introduction to Mass Communication***

This course meets M/W @ 1:00pm in CB106

  Instructor Contact Information

**Name: Brent Austin**

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**or Canvas mail**

**Office CB508a**

**Hours: M 11:30-12:30, T/TH 10-11:00, by appt.**

  Course Description

This course is a GE course that Introduces students to the study of American mass media and culture. It provides a critical overview of the main themes in the study of mass media, including the historical development of the media; the social, political, economic, and organizational contexts, impacts, and significance of the media; the nature of media content; its complex relationships to mass audiences; and the legal/regulatory context in which the media operate.

General Education

COMM 1500 is a general education course. Completion of this course adheres to the articulation agreements with Utah Valley University General Education requirements. "General Education is a shared academic experience that provides students with the opportunity to explore new subjects, intellectual traditions, and perspectives; expands their awareness of the wider world; and prepares them with foundational knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expanded on in their disciplines of study in order to be successful learners and professionals positioned to contribute to their broader communities"  (see the  [Utah Valley University General Information page Links to an external site.](https://www.uvu.edu/catalog/current/policies-requirements/general-education.html)for further information).

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This course is associated with these programs:

* Applied Communication, B.A.
* Applied Communication, B.S.
* Public Relations and Strategic Communication, B.A.
* Public Relations and Strategic Communication, B.S.
* Applied Communication, Minor

  Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a narrative of the historical development of mass media, beginning with the printing press;
2. Describe the relationship between mass media, free press, free speech, and democratic society;
3. Explain the advantages and challenges of different economic organizations of mass media;
4. Analyze the interconnected relationships between mass communication, politics, culture, and society.

  Prerequisites and Needed Skills

Technology Skills needed for this course include basic computer literacy, Microsoft Office apps, audio/podcast recording software and mic, and possibly video recording software and camera.

  Materials, Fees and Technology Tools

**Required Textbook**:

Richard Campbell, Christopher Martin, Bettina Fabos, and Ron Becker: *Media & Culture 13th Edition: An Introduction to Mass Communication* (2022). Bedford/St. Martin's.

* Print ISBN

9781319244934, 1319244939

Print ISBN 9781319244934, 1319244939

* eText ISBN

9781319365721, 1319365728

An e-copy or hard copy is fine, as is a purchased or rented copy. Please make sure you have the correct edition, which is the 13th edition!

**Technology:**Students will need access to a computer or mobile device, reliable internet connection, Microsoft Office apps, microphone, webcam or camera phone. **Students do NOT need to purchase any “optional study tools and resources” through the UVU Bookstore website, nor are they even recommended by UVU.**

How This Course Works

**Course Mode:**

**This course is an online asynchronous course.**For this **three (3) credit-hour** course students should expect to spend up to**9+ hours a week** completing course activities.

This course is made up of 15 modules.  In each module students, students will be asked to read the chapters in the textbook, watch and discuss the lecture videos prepared by the instructor, review the resources and interactivities, complete a chapter quiz and submit reflection responses and short essays. Major assignments include a podcast episode submission, a journalism and democracy essay, a mid-term, and a final exam.

**Course Policies:**

In order to create an optimal learning environment, there are a few important policies that should be established:

1. ***The classroom needs to be a supportive place to learn***  
   This means that we must be respectful of our fellow classmates. We are obligated to create a space where everyone feels supported to reflect, share, disagree, and explore ideas together.
2. ***Attendance and participation is essential***  
   Attendance and participation are essential because a vast amount of information is covered in a sequential manner and can be absorbed only through active participation. Active participation and communication is critical to your success in this course. Given that this course is largely discussion based, your attendance is imperative. It is expected that you complete the required readings and assignments.
3. ***Due dates are FIRM***  
   Assignment dates CANNOT be changed or made up. In the case of an extreme emergency contact me as soon as you can; otherwise, the schedule provided explicitly lists the due dates for all of the assignments for the entire semester.

**Grade Inquiries:**

All grades will be recorded on Canvas and can be viewed by students throughout the semester. All questions about graded assignments must be brought to your professor within 48 hours of the day the grade is posted. We will schedule an appointment during office hours to discuss any questions you may have.

**Class Involvement:**

This class is designed for active student participation. I ask that students stretch themselves and try to be two things in our classroom: kind and brave. To be an active student requires you to step outside your comfort zone and learn about new ideas and use these new ideas to challenge your existing ideas. You can sensitively AND constructively critique and respond to your fellow classmates’ work and perspectives. This type of learning requires respectful listening and respectful sharing of your perspective.

Involvement includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Being focused and practicing good listening/comprehension skills
* Contributing to group discussion
* Participating relevantly and actively in class exercises
* Visiting office hours regularly to talk with me about class concepts, skills, and issues
* Relating class material to the “outside” world
* Not monopolizing discussion or discrediting others
* Demonstrating your understanding of course concepts as they apply to your in-class communication

**Written work:**

Written work should be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and 12-point Times New Roman Font. Written work must be submitted on Canvas in the space provided under the assignment description – originality checks and plagiarism systems will be used. Accurate APA formatted documentation and citations will be standard in this course. Please refer to the appropriate style manual for stylistic guidelines. In terms of content, all papers should be focused, well organized, and free of punctuation errors. I expect all writing to be nothing less than a model of brevity, clarity, and style. If you have questions about a writing assignment, please feel free to contact me to set up a time to meet and work through your questions. Writing assistance is also available and highly recommended in the [UVU Writing Center.Links to an external site.](https://www.uvu.edu/writingcenter/)

**Office hours/receiving assistance:**

I am available to meet with you by appointment. Please feel free to email me for an appointment if you are unable to see me during the allotted time. I am fairly accessible via email. Should you have a question about something covered in class, an assignment, or about life in general, send me an email and I will try to respond to you within a reasonable time. Questions regarding specific assignments sent within 24 hours of the assignment deadline will not receive a response. Be aware of this and plan accordingly.

**Student Responsibilities:**

* *Start class the first week of the term.*
* ***Be accountable by setting aside regular time each week to complete course activities and assignments on time as noted per the due dates****.*
* *Learn how to use Canvas including communication tools (e.g. discussion, Canvas inbox, etc.). Learn how to use Microsoft Teams to hold video/voice meetings, post chats, and retrieve files. If you have technology-related problems contact the*[*Service DeskLinks to an external site.*](https://www.uvu.edu/servicedesk/)*.*
* *Abide by ethical standards. Your work must be your own.*
* *Contact your instructor as early as possible if an emergency arises. Do NOT wait until the last minute to ask for an extension.*

**Instructor Responsibilities:**

* *Respond to messages within ONE business day. If multiple messages are received regarding the same question or concern, they may be responded to with an announcement to the entire class.*
* *Provide timely, meaningful and constructive feedback on assignments.*
* *Facilitate an effective learning experience.*
* *Refer students to appropriate services for issues that are non-course content specific. For instance, technical issue, writing labs, accessibility services, etc.*
* *Mentor students through the course.*

**Inclusion Statement**

“Come as you are. UVU has a place for you.”--President Tuminez.

Your experience in this class is important to me. As your instructor, it is my intent to create an inclusive and equitable climate that fosters a safe and successful learning environment. My main goal is to provide you with equal opportunities to succeed in this class. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to talk about any suggestions and/or concerns.

 Grading and Late Work Statement

**Grading Scale:**

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Percent** |
| **A** | 94-100 |
| **A-** | 90-93 |
| **B+** | 87-89 |
| **B** | 83-86 |
| **B-** | 80-82 |
| **C+** | 77-79 |
| **C** | 73-76 |
| **C-** | 70-72 |
| **D+** | 67-69 |
| **D** | 63-66 |
| **D-** | 60-62 |
| **E** | 0-59 |

**Assignment Categories**

| **Activity** | **Percent** |
| --- | --- |
| **Podcast Assignment** | 8% |
| **Journalism & Culture Essay** | 7% |
| **Discussions** | 20% |
| **Quizzes** | 20% |
| **Reflections** | 25% |
| **Mid-term Exam** | 10% |
| **Final Exam** | 10% |

**Late Work Statement:**

As noted in the Course Policies above, due dates are FIRM.  Assignment dates CANNOT be changed or made up. In the case of an extreme emergency contact me as soon as you can, as I am happy to work with you.

 Assignment and Assessment Descriptions

**Assignments:**

This course will have two main assignments outside of the discussions, quizzes, reflections, mid-term, and final exam: the Podcast Assignment and the Journalism and Democracy short essay.

The **Podcast Assignment** is due in Module 3, For this assignment, you will select an article on any topic that interests you related to the "digital media playground" (see chapter 3). You should select one article that advocates for a position, and you will analyse its arguments. You may locate potential editorials for analysis in many places: the opinion columns of a news magazine, editorial pages of newspapers, the literature produced by lobbying groups, letters sent out by advocacy groups, in forums online, or other sources. The editorial you analyse can be in written or video format. The best editorials for this assignment will advance a clearly structured argument and support it using a variety of types of arguments and evidence. The only strict requirements for the editorial you select to analyse are that it must:

1. Clearly advocate and argue for a position.
2. Be published within the last nine months.
3. Not repeat an editorial another student has selected.

You will then prepare a 15-20-minute-long audio podcast in which you interview a professional/academic/practitioner/’real person’ about their thoughts on your topic with a special emphasis on the affirmative or negative side of the argument.

The **Journalism and Democracy short essay**is due in Module 14.  For this short essay, you will consider the relationship between journalism and American democracy. More specifically, you will explore your perceptions of American journalism in the wake of fake news, misinformation, and disinformation and further consider what can be done to improve American journalism.

Essay Prompts:

1. What is the relationship between contemporary journalism and American democracy?
2. What are your main criticisms of the state of news today?
3. How would you go about changing journalism to make it more credible to a wider audience?

More information about both assignments can be found in their respective module descriptions.

**Discussions:**

Each week where a major assignment is not due, you will answer a few discussion forum prompts to discuss the weekly topics in more depth with your classmates. Discussions will be opportunities to explore topics together.  Posts to the discussion should add significantly to the conversation and support your point of view.  *Comments that do not add significantly to a discussion will receive****no credit****.* It is okay to disagree in a discussion.  In fact much learning happens when we disagree.  However we need to be respectful and keep our online classroom a safe place to learn.

Due dates for discussions correspond with the initial post date which is usually a **Wednesday**.  Follow up comments are due by the **Sunday of each module**. After the Sunday of each module, the discussion forum will lock, so no late posts will be permitted.

**Weekly Chapter  Reading Quizzes:**

Each week, you will have a low-stakes, open-note reading quiz on the weekly chapter reading. Quizzes will be due on **Sunday**of each module. Please prepare accordingly. If you miss a quiz in the case of illness or emergency, please let your professor know immediately.

**Reflections:**

Certain weeks will also have Reflection Assignments where you will have the opportunity to reflect upon the personal significance of the module topics to your own life. The goal of the reflection assignment is not to reiterate what the textbook/essays say, but rather demonstrate how concepts apply, connect, and/or relate to YOUR life. As you read, take notes on the things that stand out as important or interesting to you. Then, include the following in your reflection:

* **Reflect**on how the readings impacted your role as a communicator. Was something illuminated? How did you become more mindful of your communication? How does the chapter relate to your life or experience you have had?
* **Apply**a minimum of two terms (the bolded words) from the chapter. Tie the terms into your commentary.
* **Write**a minimum of one page. It's okay to go over that limit.

**Mid-term and Final Exams:**

This class will have one mid-term exam in Module 8 and one final exam in Module 15. The Mid-term and Final Exams will have 50 questions (Mid-Term, Modules 1 - 8 and Final Exam, Modules 9 - 15). Each one will time out at one hour and will be taken online here through Canvas.

 Course Schedule

**Here is the**[**Course Schedule**](https://uvu.instructure.com/courses/555835/pages/course-schedule)**.**

 UVU Policies and Resources

[Policies and ProceduresLinks to an external site.](https://www.uvu.edu/otl/students/policiesandprocedures.html)

[Student Success ResourcesLinks to an external site.](https://www.uvu.edu/otl/students/index.html)

[Accessibility Services Links to an external site.](https://www.uvu.edu/accessibility-services/)

* Students who need accommodations because of a disability may contact the UVU Office of Accessibility Services (OAS), located on the Orem Campus in LC 312. To schedule an appointment or to speak with a counselor, call the OAS office at 801-863-8747. Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals, email nicole.hemmingsen@uvu.edu or text 385-208-2677.

  Technology Support Services

 For 24/7  technical support contact [Instructure's Canvas Support Live Chat Links to an external site.](https://cases.canvaslms.com/liveagentchat?chattype=student&sfid=001A00000085cNxIAI)

 (385) 204-4930 (Available 24/7)