

## **Intro to Media**

**JRSM 1700-001/350**

**Spring 2023**

**Class meeting: Monday-Wednesday, 12:40 to 2:05 p.m.**

**100 Meeman Journalism Building**

### **Prof. Otis Sanford**

**Office:** 318B Meeman Journalism Building

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment

**Office number:** 901-678-3669

**Cell number:** 901-233-4997

**Email:** o.sanford@memphis.edu

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Catalog description**

Social background, scope, functions and organization of modern communication media, attention to all major mass communication media; history, philosophy and goals of modern journalism and media entertainment; impact on governmental, social and economic systems.

### **Prerequisites**

None

**Textbooks: No textbook required for this class.**

### **Classroom format**

Lecture, PowerPoints and intense discussion will be used in the teaching of the class, and students will be tested on lectures by the professor and occasional guest speakers, as well as PowerPoint presentations.

### **Accessing the course website**

1. Go to the University of Memphis Canvas login page: <https://memphis.instructure.com>
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. On the Dashboard, click on the course JRSM 1700-001/350.

### **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in the discussions. Quizzes and exams will be based on classroom lectures, PowerPoint presentations and discussions as well as any additional assigned readings and discussions with guest speakers from various media disciplines. There will be two major exams during the semester, each counting 200 points toward your final grade. You will be tested only on the material covered since the last exam. There will also be several quizzes on the PowerPoints, classroom discussions and readings that you will be

assigned. Each of these quizzes counts 50 points unless otherwise noted. There will also be a special 50-point ethics quiz and at least three 50-point media-related assignments (specifics to be announced later). Students in the 350 Honors section will also be assigned an extra written paper. Details will be discussed later in this syllabus and forwarded to the 350 section later in the semester.

As part of emphasizing media literacy in this class, several times during the semester students must post in the Assignments module in Canvas a link to a news story from any one of the following online news sites.

1. The Commercial Appeal
2. The Daily Memphian
3. The Jackson (Tennessee) Sun
4. The Tennessean
5. The Knoxville News-Sentinel
6. The Clarion-Ledger
7. USA Today
8. The New York Times
9. The Washington Post
10. The Wall Street Journal
11. The Chicago Tribune
12. The Los Angeles Times
13. The New Tri-State Defender
14. The Institute for Public Service Reporting at the University of Memphis
15. The Daily Helmsman (no more than 2 articles during the semester)

These news organizations have been selected because they provide comprehensive news coverage for local, regional, national or global issues. **Articles from other sites will not be considered.** Access to The Commercial Appeal, the Daily Memphian, The Jackson Sun and The New York Times is available for free through the University of Memphis Library. You do not need to buy a subscription. **Along with the link to each article, include a paragraph on why you selected the particular article, what about it interests you and why do you think it is important or newsworthy.**

### **Media film critique**

In preparation for the lecture on movies, students will be required to watch a media-related film and write a short critique of the film's content and impact. The critique should be no more than 300 words and downloaded to Assignments in Canvas under Movie Critique no later than 11:59 p.m. Oct. 17. It is up to you to access the movie either through YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, your cable or satellite On-Demand services, DVDs or other places. Choose only from these films:

1. Spotlight
2. The Post

3. All the President's Men
4. Good Night and Good Luck
5. Broadcast News
6. Absence of Malice
7. Citizen Kane
8. The Paper
9. Deadline USA
10. Network
11. The Front Page
12. His Girl Friday

Be aware that the professor will be looking for evidence that the student truly watched the whole film. I don't need a paragraph describing the plot, because I have seen all these movies. I want in some detail what you took away from the film. I want to see some well-thought-out reactions to the storyline of the film you select.

### **Honors 350 Students**

If you are registered in the Honors section, you have an additional written assignment titled the Media Professional Essay. Each TLC student will interview a media professional who works in print media, PR, broadcast, journalism education, Internet/web, film, visual communication or advertising. The person must work at this job full-time and must be paid. No volunteer work or part-time jobs. Your goal is to discover the skills, issues and future directions for a particular media job and field. **If you have trouble finding someone for your story, ask me for help. You cannot interview me.**

More specifically, answer these kinds of questions in your essay from the interview:

1. Who is this person?
2. What does this person do?
3. Where does this person work?
4. When did this person begin this job or career?
5. How did this person get into this career field? Were there any obstacles/challenges the person faced when beginning this career path? What were the obstacles and does this person have any advice to help others avoid them?
6. Would this person suggest this career for an aspiring young professional? Why or why not?
7. What are the negative aspects of this career for an aspiring journalist?
8. What are the positive aspects of this career that the person likes the most?

Please note: This is an important exploratory exercise to help you learn more about the media. So have fun with the interview. Your essay should be at least 500 words. Please prepare this assignment in narrative writing form. You may use direct quotes from the person interviewed. No Q & A formats.

At the top of your submission, include your name and email, as well as the name, title, email, and business telephone number of the person you interview. Your professor or the graduate assistant may call the source to verify the interview.

This is meant to be journalistic writing, so do not use library or Internet sources or footnotes. Think of yourself as a reporter who is interviewing a subject and writing a story based on what you have been told in your interview. This is a newspaper-type story, not a research paper. Again, have fun with it.

### **Ground Rules for the Media Professional Essay:**

- You may conduct the interview by phone or in person. You may establish contact by email, but you cannot conduct the interview by email. You must talk to the person you interview.
- Local and national media professionals are acceptable. Most media professionals will be very kind to students, so use that to your advantage and don't hesitate to use my name as your professor. Most media professionals in greater Memphis know me. Direct messages via social media can be more effective than email for contacting sources.
- You may complete this assignment at your convenience during the semester, so long as it is turned into the Assignment module in Canvas on or before **11:59 p.m. on Monday, April 24.**
- No late submissions will be accepted.
- You should file your essay as a Word document. No other format will be accepted. For instance, if you file your essay in the WPS format from Apple, you will receive a zero.
- Do not forget to put your name on the essay!

### **Grading**

Final grades in this class are based on a point system. The more points you accumulate from quizzes, exams, assignments, special writing assignments and any extra credit, the better your grade will be at the end of the semester. I will explain the grading system further in class.

A: 900 points and above

B: 800-899 points

C: 700-799 points

D: 600-699 points

F: 599 and below

### **Attendance**

As stated earlier, students are expected to attend each class session and be on time for the start of class. The class will begin promptly at 12:40 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday. The instructor usually makes announcements about class assignments and other issues at the

beginning of the class. So you must be on time. In most instances, the announcements will not be repeated at the end of class. You will have to get the information from a classmate. Most announcements and assignments are also sent to your campus email. I do not use your personal emails. The graduate assistant for this class will be in charge of keeping track of attendance. If you have more than ten (10) unexcused absences during the semester, you are subject to a reduction of one letter grade. The fact is, it is virtually impossible to get a good grade in this class if you do not attend class sessions and take part in the lectures. **There will also be no make-up work at the end of the semester to help improve your grade. So please do not ask.**

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Because guest speakers will visit the class during the semester, either in person or by video, it is impossible to schedule those visits too far in advance. The first half of the course schedule is listed below. The second half will be sent to students later.

**Week 1, Wednesday, Jan. 18:** First roll call, go over syllabus, discuss textbook and class decorum, introduce the instructor and his credentials in the field of mass communication. Introduce graduate assistant and his/her role in the class. Discuss the class material in depth and the expectations for the semester. Take questions.

**Week 2, Monday, Jan. 23:** Culture and Evolution of Mass Communication. How did it all start? A careful examination of the history of oral and written communication, including the development of print that changed the world. The influence of newspapers and magazines and how they affected the political process and the culture of society. The evolution of media and the four stages of media innovation from emergence to convergence. Will also discuss the electronic media era, the move to digital and how each change in delivery of media was accepted or rejected by society.

Assignment: Be prepared to discuss your primary source of receiving information, including news, and the primary way that you communicate with others.

**Week 2, Wednesday, Jan. 25: The role of Media in Society**

Complete our discussion of the culture and evolution of mass communication with a look at the tremendous effect that media have on our world. To what extent does media consumption (news, basic information and entertainment) affect our lives, our opinions, our morals, our actions, our self-esteem and self-worth, our politics and our view of those who are different from us? Will also discuss the importance of story-telling in the delivery of media messages and disinformation in the age of social media. Complete review of PowerPoint to be distributed by instructor.

Week 3, Monday, Jan. 30: Digital Media and Convergence. An examination of how the Internet and digital media have changed the way we communicate. The birth of the Internet age and the changes it brought. How has the Internet further divided the haves from the have-nots? In general, we will discuss how social media have transformed society. We will also examine how so-called new media have made legacy media expendable to the point of driving some out of business.

First quiz of the semester on previous lectures will be available in Canvas.

Assignment: Come prepared to discuss how you use the internet and your favorite news web sites, social media sites and apps.

Week 3, Wednesday, Feb. 1: Books and the Power of Print. A look at the history of book publishing, the modern book publishing business, trends and issues in book publishing, why printed books remain popular, even in the digital age, the difficulty and joy of writing a book and the future of book publishing. Discuss the best-selling books of all time.

Assignment: Be prepared to discuss the last non-textbook you have read.

Week 4, Monday, Feb. 6: Newspapers: The Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism. A detailed look at the origins of newspapers, who started them, how they became so powerful, the calling of a newspaper journalist, how newspapers still make a difference in society and why they are on the decline.

Assignment: First link to newspaper article due in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. this evening.

Week 4, Wednesday, Feb. 8: Complete discussion of newspapers with a look at major newspaper investigations in history. **50-point quiz from previous lectures and discussions will open in Canvas.**

Week 5, Monday, Feb. 13: Special guest(s) from the newspaper industry to discuss the present and the future state of print journalism. **Second link to newspaper article due in Canvas at 11:59 p.m. this evening.**

Week 5, Wednesday, Feb. 15: Magazines in the Age of Specialization. The early history of magazines, the dawn of muckrakers, the development of modern American magazines, the dominant magazine titles, the importance of magazine covers and magazines in a Democratic society. **Discuss 50-point magazine assignment due Monday, Feb. 27.**

Week 6, Monday, Feb. 20: Special lecture on ethics and media law. **50-point quiz on newspapers and magazines will open in Canvas.**

Week 6: Wednesday, Feb. 22: Begin discussion of Popular Radio and the Origins of Broadcasting. From the history of sound to satellite radio and podcasting. The evolution of audio media has been astounding. **Special 50-point ethics quiz will open in Canvas.**

Week 7: Monday, Feb. 27: Sound Recording and Popular Music. A detailed look at Motown and Stax Records. Turn in Magazine assignment in Canvas by 11:59 p.m. this evening.

Week 7: Wednesday, March 1: Special guest speaker from local radio industry, Stormy Taylor from V101 radio.

Week 8: Monday and Wednesday, March 6 and 8: Spring break, no classes.

Week 9, Monday, March 13: The history and evolution of protest music. Why it has such a profound impact on society. What events in history sparked the most protest and message music. For extra credit, prior to class submit the title and name of the artist of your favorite protest song and be prepared to explain why it is your favorite. We will play some of it in class along with my favorites. Third link to newspaper article due by 11:59 p.m. this evening. Begin taking 200 Point Midterm Exam in Canvas under quizzes. You have until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 19 to complete the exam.

(The remaining class schedule for the semester will be posted and emailed to students later pending confirmation of guest speakers.)

## ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

### Professional Values and Competencies in JRSM 1700

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, both in a global context and in the United States
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially along racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation and ability differences.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

### How professional values and competencies will be met

#### *Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)*

- Recognize the role of media in influencing the political and cultural dynamics on the global stage.
- Demonstrate a strong historical sense of how mass communication technologies originated and developed.
- Understand the variety of relationships between media and their audiences, including diverse audiences.
- Be sensitive to the needs of diverse and under-represented groups in the delivery of media messages.
- Recognize the ethical and philosophical issues that arise in media culture and understand the range of viewpoints regarding these issues.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the behind-the-scenes operations and decision-making processes of major mass communication industries.
- Understand how new technology affects the media and communication.

- Understand what's involved in preparing for and advancing a career in the changing media.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct effective interviews that elicit information needed to for delivery of media content.
- Development an awareness of how of forms of mass communication that are often taken for granted, such a music, movies television shows and social media postings, are used to affect society and effect change.
- Understand the allied fields of social media, advertising and public relations and their relationship to media systems.
- Understand mass communication theories and their application to media professions.

*Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)*

- Complete out-of-class assignments related to assessing content and media messages in newspapers, magazines, advertising, music, television, radio and movies.
- Participate in discussions about relevant issues and events in mass media.

**How assessment of student learning will be met**

*Awareness*

- Grow awareness of the First Amendment and basics of media law
- Recognize major divisions of mass media, including newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, the internet, books, movies, music, public relations and advertising.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the need for diversity in all areas of mass communication.

*Understanding*

- When ethical decision making is discussed throughout the semester as it applies to each media profession, students will be required to present justification for their opinions during discussion and class exercises to show they are not just repeating the instructor's lecture points, but showing understanding of the process.
- A requirement to read news content regularly, either on web sites or in printed newspapers, will help students understand and appreciate the decisions that go into how news is covered and what is presented to consumers on a daily basis.

*Application*

- Written analysis of U.S. media operations and systems.

**JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES**

**Portfolio requirement**

As an undergraduate student in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, you are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of your work. Portfolios begin in JRSM 3900/3905. The portfolio should contain samples of coursework and/or professional experiences and should develop as you build skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while you are enrolled in your capstone course.

You may use any type of web hosting for your portfolio, but it must have an independent and professional URL. You may use any content management system, but you are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix, or Squarespace. It is also encouraged to purchase a URL if you plan to use the portfolio long term. You must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.



You should have a professional email address you plan to use throughout your professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Professional social media links (minimum LinkedIn)

You may wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, presentations, design PDFs, audio files or writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career you seek after graduation. Your portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

### Email

You must have your UofM email account activated. If you are using another provider, such as Google, you are required to have all UofM emails forwarded to that account. Go to the [account management website](#) for information about implementing email forwarding. You are required to check your email daily.

### Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

### Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism & Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual tardiness.

### Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade (C- for undergraduate; B- for graduate) in a class required by your program of study in Journalism & Strategic Media after three attempts will be dropped from the program.

You may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. Substantially reworking the original submission, or working with the same general idea, may be permissible upon discussion and with written approval from the professor of the current course.

### Academic integrity

The University of Memphis expects all students to behave honestly and follow the policies stated in the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities. If you need more information about the University policy on academic integrity visit the [Office of Student Accountability's website](#).

In addition to University-wide policies, the Department of Journalism & Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on your own, as acts of cheating and

punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, you are expected to comply with copyright and intellectual property laws and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas and to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. All creative work may be checked for policy adherence by the professor. The only exception to this policy is your online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo). By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.

### **Online SETEs**

You are encouraged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. If completed, once the instructor has posted final grades, you can immediately see that grade. To access evaluation forms, log in to MyMemphis; click the "Student Pages" dropdown menu and select "My Resources" and find the SETE evaluation forms; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and is appreciated.

### **Deadlines**

All deadlines are firm. Because Journalism & Strategic Media is a professional program, students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

You may be permitted to make up missing work if it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented.

### **AP Style and grammar**

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. You are responsible for learning these rules and checking your work for errors.

### **Disability and accommodations**

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, contact Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

### **Diversity and inclusivity**

The Department of Journalism & Strategic Media values diversity in all its forms. Some of these forms include ability, age, appearance, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences. As such, students are expected to participate in fostering an inclusive environment that

respects the differences of others.

Students are expected to approach their work through a diverse lens. Creating messages that resonate with diverse audiences requires an understanding of a variety of perspectives, which are carried out through multiple platforms, such as digital and traditional media outlets.

The department seeks to foster healthy and positive classroom discussions and experiences. As such, faculty and students are expected to remain respectful and professional at all times.

### **Weather policy**

Always check with local media, the University of Memphis website and the LiveSafe App regarding inclement weather.

### **Student support**

If you are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, visit the Student Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php> or contact the Dean of Students Office at 901-678-2187, or in person in Suite 359 in the University Center for assistance. You may also talk with course instructors about the challenges you are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting you with campus or community support.