South Plains College   Intro to Mass Comm
Online COMM 1307-151 Fall 2025 Syllabus

Instructor: Margaret Kirby   **Office:** CM 154 Levelland Campus   **Phone:** 716-2451
e-mail: mkirby@southplainscollege.edu The fastest way to reach me, other than coming to my office during office hours, is by e-mail. I should respond to you within 24 hours unless you e- mail me on a Friday. In that case, it may be Monday before I can respond.

Office Hours: Face-to-face hours are held in my Levelland office, CM 154. Virtual meetings can be scheduled on Collaborate by appointment. Please email me to book one.

- Tuesday 830 - 9 a.m.; 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; 3 – 4 p.m.
- Thursday 830 – 9 a.m.; 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; 3 – 4 p.m.
- Fridays 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
  *** I will also be available at the Lubbock Downtown Center on most Mondays and Wednesdays in room 1019 from @130 – 230 p.m. Please just ask if you need help with something.

Credit: 3 semesters hours

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

Recommended Supplies: I recommend that you take notes when you read, watch, and/or study course materials. While Powerpoints, etc., will remain open while we're covering material, I will remove them prior to test windows.

Technical Requirements: It is in your best interest to have reliable access to Internet service and a computer so that you can send and receive e-mail, access lectures, submit sometimes lengthy assignments, and take exams. Several students who have tried to complete this course relying on a smartphone only, have **not** succeeded.

Please visit with me about computer issues! I can't help you if I don't know what your issues are.

Technical Skill Requirements. Be comfortable with the following:

- Microsoft Word or being able to save Word compatible files (.doc or .docx); an alternative is to export your assignment files to .rtf or .pdf. **I <u>CANNOT</u> open .pages files, which is the default for Macs.**
- Using e-mail for communication, attaching documents. The ability to download video files, or to stream files.
- The ability to take digital photographs and upload them as .jpg files into assignment windows on Blackboard
- <u>**You will NOT be able to complete your blog assignments if you use Microsoft Edge. Edge is not compatible with Blogger, which is owned by Google. I strongly suggest using Google Chrome.**</u>

This course satisfies a core curriculum requirement: Yes- Language, Philosophy, and Culture
Core Objectives addressed:
- Communication skills- to include effective written, oral, and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills- to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Social Responsibility- to include intercultural knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global communities
- Personal responsibility skills- to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students will
- Demonstrate understanding of the fundamental types, purposes, and relevance of mass communication.
- Demonstrate understanding of mass media in historic, economic, political, and cultural realms.
- Demonstrate understanding of the business aspects of mass media and the influence of commercialism.
- Demonstrate understanding of evolving media technologies and relevant issues and trends.
- Demonstrate understanding of mass media values, ethics, laws, and industry guidelines.
- Demonstrate understanding of globalization of mass media.
- Demonstrate understanding of media effects on society.

Course Evaluation: Students' grades in this class will be determined by the following:

889 points are available for the final grade. –

    801 - 889   = A
    712- 800   = B
    623 - 711   = C
    534- 622   = D
     Below 534   = F

Major project points are earned as follows:
Class Blog   -85   points {Submitting Gmail address = 10; Intro blog post = 15; three blog posts about an assigned   topic worth 20 points each}
Media Diary – 100 points
Various Assignments –404 points
4 Exams at 100 points each = 400 points (Final exam = project)

Sometimes the final number of points available for the course will not reach the projected 889 mark or it will exceed it. If either is the case, the scale will be recalibrated automatically by the Blackboard gradebook.

Instructor's Expectations of the Student

· You will be expected to log into the Blackboard course and check your SPC email **daily** to be aware of possible announcements/reminders and to pace your progress in the course. Grades will be submitted into the My Grades area.

· Higher institutions recommend that students plan to spend 2 hours of outside study for every 1 hour of in class time. For a 3 credit-hour, face-to-face course that means a total time investment of 6 hours per week. Expectations for time investment are no less rigorous for online courses at SPC.

Lost/Corrupt/Disappeared Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external disk or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g., Blackboard server crash or virus infection, student's own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions/problems, I will request that you resubmit the files. In other words, if you submit a document to me, and I do not receive it or I'm unable to open it in the submitted format, you will need to resend it to me, corrected, with little or no "downtime" in regard to the timeline for submission.

Missed Work

Please do NOT assume that I will contact you to tell you about missed work.

Course materials will be available on Blackboard so you can keep track of all materials. You can expect new class materials each week.

Late work, if accepted at all, may not be for full point value.
Do NOT assume that I will move deadlines for you unless you contact me and offer very good and documented reasons why you cannot meet deadlines that are already in place. You may contact me by phone, e-mail, or Collaborate.

Deadlines- The assignments in this class are deadline driven. ALL projects will have deadlines. You need to get used to deadlines that exist in the working world. Keep track of deadlines and submit work when it is due. Late assignments may or may not be accepted depending on the assignment and the reasons for missing the deadlines.

In the event that you miss an exam, you must notify me within 48 hours about why. You may or may not be able to "make up" the missed exam. If you miss an exam due to COVID-19, you will take the exam the day you return.

Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first class meeting.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or

participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted

in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

Withdrawal Policy: The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of "W" is Dec. 4. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course.
Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course averages will be updated frequently, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please
Visit
https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php

Intellectual exchange, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE Team, Campus Concealed Carry, COVID-19, and AI statements visit:

https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/

Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Each student is expected to abide by absolute honesty. Infractions will result in penalties subject to an assignment of a grade of "F" for the course or expulsion from the college. Students should also regard civility online as a requirement to remain on the roll in class.

As future professionals, you are to communicate with each other in a professional and civil manner. Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor not student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Cheating: Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating.

Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Purpose of ChatGPT and other AI:
Chat GPT is an advance language model designed to provide assistance and engage in meaningful conversations. It is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities

- Academic Integrity
  Using ChatGPT to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of academic integrity policies.
- Collaboration and Consultation
  While ChatGPT can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility.
  Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other

approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on ChatGPT as a tool for brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.

- Ethical Use and Bias Awareness
  ChatGPT is trained on large amounts of data from the Internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the responses provided by ChatGPT. Students must verify information from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral.

- Compliance with South Plains College policies
  Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in disciplinary action, including academic penalties.

Remember, ChatGPT is a tool to support your learning, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your academic growth.