

**Tompkins Cortland Community College**  
**Master Course Syllabus**

**Course Discipline and Number: COMM 101**

**Year: 2021-2022**

**Course Title: Mass Media**

**Credit Hours: 3**

**I. Course Description:**

This is a critical issues survey course of national mass media that focuses on media literacy. The historical development, economic structure, organization, function, and effects of mass media in society today are emphasized. The course studies the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, and popular music, etc. It reviews ideological, technological, and regulatory developments that produced our existing media system, and analytical tools and techniques that enhance media literacy. Topics include: media's role in shaping attitudes towards race, gender, sexuality, and class, and relationships between media and society. COMM 101 fulfills the SUNY General Education Social Sciences requirement. Prerequisites: None. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall and spring semesters.

**II. Additional Course Information:**

1. This course is an introductory course for all students in the Communications and Media Arts, Broadcast Production, and Digital Cinema programs.
2. This course fulfills the SUNY General Education Social Sciences requirement.
3. It is strongly recommended that students who are taking this course in their first semester, and who are also taking a developmental writing support course (e.g., ENGL 098), enroll in the face-to-face class, rather than an online section.
4. Audience: The main goal of this course is to encourage students to think about the way the media affect our lives, by allowing students to discover how the mass media work and why they work the way they do. Videotapes, group activities, and especially discussion (or argument) will be a major part of this class. This would also be a good course for students interested in learning more about the ways media influence our lives.
5. Guided Pathway: Helping Students Stay on Their Path, a) Faculty will begin building relationships on day one, b) Faculty will post office hours and make sure students have access to their emails and contact information and check in frequently, c) Faculty will ask pointed, detailed, and sometimes personal specific questions to get to know their students and make connections. This will allow them to make referrals and assist with resources like tutors, financial aid, childcare, veterans affairs, mental health, the food pantry, the recovery center, etc.,

**III. Student Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Explain the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society. Students will observe, develop hypothesis, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings regarding media consumption.
2. Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, and popular music, etc.
3. Research and write about ideological, technological, and regulatory developments that produced our existing media system, and analytical tools and techniques that enhance media literacy. Topics include: media's role in shaping attitudes towards race, gender, sexuality, and class, and relationships between media and society.

## IV. Tompkins Cortland General Education Goals & SUNY Competencies

### Critical thinking

Students will work on a research assignment in the course and will meet with the instructional librarian in the process. Students apply knowledge gained from lectures, readings, and media presentations to help them make informed decisions about planning and delivering their group project and research paper. In addition, students will develop problem-solving skills such as team building, effective collaboration and creative brainstorming as they complete hands-on course projects. Students will be studying and evaluating communication models from around the world.

### Social/Global Awareness

Students explore creative works in media and the impact of media in society. Students will watch and discuss documentaries focusing on media and society, politics, gender, war, etc. All aspects of media have economic consequences. Discussing economic concepts is part and parcel of the daily discussions. Students will be comparing media forms and their economic consequences. An example is e-readers/books vs. traditional books. Gut instinct might say the e-reader is environmentally a better alternative. Yet, environmentalists suggest the battery and electronic components are worse for the environment than books.

### Information Management

Students use the computer to submit their work for weekly discussions and to do their basic research. They will also use the computer to locate, evaluate, and synthesize information for their groups and research projects both on their own and with the help of a research librarian.

## V. Essential Topics/Themes

1. Media & Culture a) Media and Culture, b) Intersection of American Media and Culture c) The Evolution of Media d) Convergence, e) The Role of Social Values in Communication, f) Cultural Periods, g) Mass Media and Popular Culture h) Media Literacy
2. Media Effects a) Mass Media and Its Messages, b) Media Effects Theories, c) Methods of Researching, d) Media Effects, e) Media Studies Controversies
3. Books a) History of Books, b) Books and the Development of U.S. Popular Culture, c) Major Book Formats, d) Current Publishing Trends, e) The Influence of New Technology
4. Newspapers a) History of Newspapers, b) Different Styles and Models of Journalism, c) How Newspapers Control the Public's Access to Information and Impact American Pop Culture, d) Current Popular Trends in the Newspaper Industry, e) Online Journalism Redefines News
5. Magazines a) History of Magazine Publishing, b) The Role of Magazines in the Development of American Popular Culture, c) Major Publications in the Magazine Industry, d) How Magazines Control the Public's Access to Information, e) Specialization of Magazines, f) Influence of the Internet on the Magazine Industry
6. Music a) The Evolution of Popular Music, b) The Reciprocal Nature of Music and Culture, c) Current Popular Trends in the Music Industry, d) Influence of New Technology
7. Radio a) Evolution of Radio Broadcasting, b) Radio Station Formats, c) Radio's Impact on Culture, d) Radio's New Future
8. Movies a) The History of Movies, b) Movies and Culture, c) Issues and Trends in Film, d) The Influence of New Technology
9. Television a) The Evolution of Television, b) The Relationship Between Television and Culture, c) Issues and Trends in the Television Industry, d) Influence of New Technologies
10. Electronic Games and Entertainment a) The Evolution of Electronic Games, b) Influential Contemporary Games, c) The Impact of Video Games on Culture, d) Controversial Issues, e) Blurring the Boundaries Between Video Games, Information, Entertainment, and Communication
11. The Internet a) The Evolution of the Internet, b) Social Media and Web 2.0, c) The Effects of the Internet and Globalization on Popular Culture and Interpersonal Communication, d) Issues and Trends
12. Advertising and Public Relations, a) History, b) Effects, c) Types, d) Impacts, e) Issues and Trends

13. Economics of Mass Media, a) Characteristics of Media Industries, b) The Internet's Effects on Media Economies, c) Digital Divide in a Global Economy, d) Information Economy, e) Globalization of Media, f) Cultural Imperialism

14. Media and Government, a) Government Regulation of Media, b) The Law and Mass Media Messages, c) Censorship and Freedom of Speech, d) Ownership Issues in the Mass Media, e) Digital Democracy and Its Possible Effects, f) Media Influence on Laws and Government

## VI. Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
1. Quizzes/Writing Assignments in Blackboard	25-40%
2. Research Project	20-30%
3. Group Project	5-20%
4. Attendance/Participation	15-25%

## VII. Texts

### RECOMMENDED

#### Open Educational Resource

Book Name: *Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*

Author: [Author removed at request of original publisher]

Publication Date: March 22, 2016

Publisher: University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing edition, 2016. *This edition adapted from a work originally produced in 2010 by a publisher who has requested that it not receive attribution.*

EBook ISBN: 978-1-946135-26-1

*Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.*

## VIII. Bibliography of Supplemental Materials

1. Biagi, Shirley. *Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*. Australia: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2014.

2. Carter, T. Barton, Franklin, Marc A. and Wright, Jay B. *The First Amendment and the Fourth Estate: The Law of Mass Media*, Prentice Hall, © 1997.

3. Dodge, Diane Trister. *The Creative Curriculum*, Washington D.C.: Teaching Strategies, Inc., Latest edition.

4. Leslie, Larry F. *Mass Communication Ethics: Decision Making in Post Modern Culture*, Houghton Mifflin Publishers, © 2004.

5. Maxwell, J. (2003). *Relationships 101*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

6. Vivian, John. *The Media of Mass Communication*. © 2016.

7. Wright, Jay B. *Com 505: Communications Law for Journalists*, Syracuse NY, Syracuse University. © Fall 1997

*Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.*

## IX. Other Learning Resources

#### **Audiovisual**

Various DVDs housed in library

**Electronic**

Online resources offered by the library-Video on demand library database

**Other**

None specified

**Attendance Policy:** *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

**Academic Integrity:** *Every student at Tompkins Cortland Community College is expected to act in an academically honest fashion in all aspects of his or her academic work: in writing papers and reports, in taking examinations, in performing laboratory experiments and reporting the results, in clinical and cooperative learning experiences, and in attending to paperwork such as registration forms.*

*Any written work submitted by a student must be his or her own. If the student uses the words or ideas of someone else, he or she must cite the source by such means as a footnote. Our guiding principle is that any honest evaluation of a student's performance must be based on that student's work. Any action taken by a student that would result in misrepresentation of someone else's work or actions as the student's own — such as cheating on a test, submitting for credit a paper written by another person, or forging an advisor's signature — is intellectually dishonest and deserving of censure.*

*Several degree programs offer student learning opportunities (such as internships, field work, and clinical experiences) outside the standard classroom setting. As part of the learning process, students must understand and engage in conduct that adheres to principles guiding employment within the professional workplace. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, accountability, reliability, respect, use of appropriate language and dress, civility, professional ethics, honesty, and trustworthiness. Disciplinary action may be initiated for inappropriate conduct occurring while participating in any course-related project or event.*