Tompkins Cortland Community College

Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: COMM 101 **Year: 2025-2026**

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 while addressing diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. 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, popular music, and other media. 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 Diversity; Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice, Social Sciences, and Humanities Knowledge and Skills Areas. Prerequisites: None. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Fall and spring semesters.

II. Additional Course Information:

1. This course is a required introductory course for all students in the Communication and Media Arts A.S., Broadcast Production – Radio A.A.S., Broadcast Production –TV A.A.S., and Digital Cinema A.S. programs.
2. This course can also be used as a Liberal Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, or Unrestricted Elective in any program.
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. Video clips, group activities, and especially discussion (or argument) will be a major part of this class.
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. Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.
2. Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual’s ability to impact cultural changes.

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, social justice, and class, and relationships between media and society.

IV. Tompkins Cortland Institutional Learning Outcomes; Program Learning Outcomes; SUNY General Education Competencies and Knowledge and Skills Areas

Tompkins Cortland ILOs– N/A

Complete this section for "service" courses only (e.g., courses that are required of all students; courses that are not program specific but satisfy liberal arts requirements; or commonly used in multiple academic programs to meet non-program-specific requirements). Check only Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that are meaningfully developed and assessed in this course. For each ILO chosen, include the SLO to which it aligns.

Students will:
☐ Communicate effectively, in oral and written forms, taking into consideration audience and purpose.

☐ Apply principles and methods of scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning appropriate to their discipline.

☐ Use information, critical thinking, and the creative process to solve problems and reach conclusions.

☐ Use technology appropriate to their discipline.

☐ Describe the ways in which social, economic, or environmental sustainability depends on their own and the collective contributions of a diversity of ideas and people.

Program Learning Outcomes

Complete this section for program-specific courses (e.g., those that share the same discipline code as the academic program or satisfy requirements in related programs). List the academic program(s) here and note which Student Learning Outcomes align to specific Programmatic Learning Outcomes. Please see the MCS Instructions for more details.

Specify the Academic Program:

Communication & Media Arts: Broadcast Journalism A.S.

PLO# 3; Research and analyze data to think critically, creatively and independently to solve problems and reach conclusions.

SLO #1: Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

Digital Cinema A.S.

PLO #1: Express themselves clearly using college-level verbal, presentation, and written skills required by the profession.

SLO #1: Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

Broadcast Production A.A.S.

PLO #1: Express themselves clearly using college-level verbal, presentation, and written skills required by the profession.

SLO #1: Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

SUNY General Education Competencies

If this course assesses a SUNY GEN ED Competency, check all that apply and indicate which course outcome(s) address each checked item:

☒ CRITICAL THINKING & REASONING- Students will:

a. clearly articulate an issue or problem;
b. identify, analyze, and evaluate ideas, data, and arguments as they occur in their own or others' work; acknowledge limitations such as perspective and bias; and
c. develop well-reasoned (logical) arguments to form judgments and/or draw conclusions.

Course SLO(s):

SLO #1 Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

☒ INFORMATION LITERACY - Students will:

a. locate information effectively using tools appropriate to their need and discipline; evaluate information with an awareness of authority, validity, and bias; and demonstrate an understanding of the ethical dimensions of information use, creation, and dissemination.

Course SLO(s):

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

☒ SUNY GENERAL EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AREA(s)

For courses that are approved to meet one (or more) of the ten SUNY General Education Knowledge and Skills Areas, indicate which area the course fulfills, and which outcome(s) are aligned with the SUNY outcomes for that area:

Diversity: Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice

SUNY SLO:

- **Describe the historical and contemporary societal factors that shape the development of individual and group identity involving race, class, and gender.**

SLO #1: Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

SUNY SLO:

- **Analyze the role that complex networks of social structures and systems play in the creation and perpetuation of the dynamics of power, privilege, oppression, and opportunity**

SLO #1: Analyze the historical development of media through economic structure, organization, function, and effect on society, including development of group and individual identity. Students will observe, develop hypotheses, measure and collect data, experiment, evaluate evidence, employ analysis of their findings, and report about media consumption.

SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

SLO #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, social justice, and class, and relationships between media and society.

SUNY SLO:

- **Apply the principles of rights, access, equity, and autonomous participation to past, current, or future social justice action.**

SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

Social Sciences

SUNY SLO:

- **Describe major concepts and theories of at least one discipline in the social sciences.**

  SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

SUNY SLO:

- **Demonstrate an understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena.**

  SLO #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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

Humanities

SUNY SLO:

- **Demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities.**

  SLO# 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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.

SUNY SLO:

- **Recognize and analyze nuance and complexity of meaning through critical reflections on text, visual images, or artifacts.**

  SLO #2: Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies, popular music, and other media and connect the themes to identity, the United Nations sustainability goals, and the individual's ability to impact cultural changes.

☐ This course does not address any of the above Tompkins Cortland ILOs, PLOs, or SUNY General Education Competencies or Knowledge and Skills Areas

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~~ the LMS	25-40%
2. Research Project	20-30%
3. Group Project Based on either: **SLO#2** Describe the influence of media on American culture through advertising, print, books, news, radio, television programming, the Internet, games, movies,-popular music, etc. and connect the themes to identity and the United Nations sustainability goals. **OR** **SLO# 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, social justice, class, and relationships between media and society.	5-20%
4. Attendance/Participation	15-25%

VII. Texts – ☐ Required ☒ Recommended ☐ Used for more than one course (list courses)

High school instructors may consult with staff in the CollegeNow office for additional information and guidance.

	OER
1. *Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication.* [Author removed at request of original publisher]. University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing, 2016. 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 University, Syracuse NY. Fall 1997.

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

IX. Other Learning Resources

Audiovisual
Various DVDs and videos housed in the Tompkins Cortland Community College library

Electronic
Online resources offered by the Tompkins Cortland Community College 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.