Com 360

Impact of Mass Media

Spring 2013

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Office Hours: TR 8:00-9:00 and by appointment

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BELOW IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IF AND WHEN MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE ARE MADE.

Course Description and Objectives

The fundamental objective of Com 360 is to enhance the media literacy skills of students. As such, Com 360 provides an examination of the impact of the mass media on society. Students will be introduced to pioneering and extant theories of mass communication as well as key areas of research in media effects. Further, students will deepen their understanding of how conceptualizations of the role of media have changed over the years and critically assess the advantages and limitations of these ideas.

Com 360 is taught completely online via the University’s Laulima system. Students should have ready access to the Internet and be able to competently perform the tasks required of Laulima and the MyUH system.

Because this course is offered entirely online, you should be aware that all items that you input into the “Discussion” section are part of the public domain. As such, it is important that all etiquette and protocol norms and rules for electronic communication are followed strictly. Neither the instructor nor the University of Hawaii system will be held responsible for inappropriate or abusive behavior. Your enrollment in this course assumes that you have agreed to the provisions that guide the use of the MyUH system.

A list of these provisions is provided in “E-Course Guidelines” in the Resources tool of the course’s Laulima homepage.

In order to perform well in this class, students should keep current with the reading assignments; this is much easier said than done. Self-discipline is very important.

I do not provide extra-credit work. In those very rare cases where I will allow late submissions of assigned work, a 20% penalty will be applied.

Students should be aware of the fact that the course schedule, requirements, assignments, etc. may change as the semester progresses. Frequently check for announcements to stay current with course procedures.
Online Office Hours

I will be available to respond to questions/comments during the online office hours posted above. I will also be able to respond to email messages at other times when I have access to the Internet.

Should you need to meet with me in person, don’t hesitate to stop by my office during the times posted above. You may also schedule an appointment for another day/time that is mutually convenient.

Course Requirements

Examinations.

Six non-comprehensive exams will be given throughout the semester. The sixth exam will serve as the final exam.

Each exam is divided into two parts. The first part will include a combination of True-False and Multiple-Choice questions. These questions must be answered within a specific time frame. The second part of the exam includes Essay questions. More time will be allowed to answer these questions.

See “Exam Procedures” below for a detailed description.

No make-up exams will be given except in cases of family and health emergencies and official University business. Notification of an inability to take a scheduled exam must be provided no later than 24 hours prior to or after the exam date. Having multiple exams on the same day or leaving campus early is not considered legitimate reasons for missing an exam. Problems associated with your computer (e.g., dead/dying laptop batteries, crashes, etc.) are also not considered legitimate reasons for missing or not completing an exam (you should have access to a back-up computer).

Impact Paper.

This written assignment requires students to identify a particular media event and discuss the extent to which it influenced social, political, and/or economic policies.

See “Impact Paper Assignment” below for a detailed description of this assignment.
Grades

Final grades will be determined via a point system. The points are distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam III</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>Exam IV</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam V</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam VI</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Paper Assignment</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>200</td>
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</tbody>
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The final grades will be determined as follows:

A = 92%, A- = 89%, B+ = 85%, B = 82%, B- = 79%, C+ = 75%, C = 72%,
C- = 69%, D = 62%, F = <62%

Text


The book is available in hard copy at the UHH Bookstore. Purchasing options were previously provided via an attachment in Announcements.

Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office, Hale Kauanoe A Wing Lounge, 933-0816 (V), 933-3334 (TTY), uds@hawaii.edu - as early in the semester as possible.

Tentative Schedule

All references to time are Hawaiian Standard Time.
Jan 07  Section One: Overview and History

  Reading Assignments:

    Chapter 1. Understanding Media Effects
    Chapter 2. Media Effects: Historical Overview
    Chapter 3. History of the Scientific Study of Media Effects

Jan 22  Exam I, Chapters 1-3

  Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
  Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)

  Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Jan 23  Exam I, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Jan 24  Section Two: Theory and Concepts

  Reading Assignments:

    Chapter 4. Social Cognitive Theory
    Chapter 5. Priming
    Chapter 6. Agenda Setting

Feb 05  Exam II, Chapters 4-6

  Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
  Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)

  Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Feb 06  Exam II, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Feb 07  Section Two: Theory and Concepts (cont.)

  Assigned Readings:

    Chapter 7. Framing
Feb 19  Exam III, Chapters 7-10

Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)

Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Feb 20  Exam III, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Feb 21  Section Three. Key Areas of Research

Assigned Readings:

Chapter 11. Effects of Media Violence
Chapter 12. Media Effects from Sexual Content
Chapter 13. Reactions to Disturbing or Frightening Media Content

Mar 12  Exam IV, Chapters 11-13

Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)

Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Mar 13  Exam IV, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Mar 14  Section Three. Key Areas of Research (cont.)

Assigned Readings:

Chapter 14. Political Communication Effects
Chapter 15. Media Effects on Health
Chapter 16. The Effects of Stereotyping

Apr 02  Exam V, Chapters 14-16

Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)
Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Apr 03 Exam IV, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Apr 04 Section Three. Key Areas of Research (cont.)

Assigned Readings:

Chapter 17. Effects of Children’s Educational Television and Infant/Toddler Edutainment
Chapter 18. Effects of Computer and Video Games
Chapter 19. Effects of the Internet
Chapter 20: Effects of Mobile Communication

Apr 23 Exam VI, Chapters 17-20

Part 1-A (5:00 am to 2:00 pm)
Part 1-B (2:00 pm to 11:00 pm)
Part 2 (questions released at 5:00 am)

Apr 24 Exam IV, Part 2 Due (5:00 pm)

Apr 30 Impact Paper Due, 5:00 pm

Exam Procedures

Read the following carefully as it provides information about the nature of the exams and how they will be administered.

As indicated previously, each exam is divided into two parts. Part 1 consists of True-False and Multiple-Choice Questions while Part 2 includes Short Answer Questions. Each of these parts is described below.

Part 1, True-False & Multiple-Choice Questions.

This part of the exam will be offered through the “Tests & Quizzes” tool in Laulima.
Each exam will include a combination of 5 True-False and Multiple-Choice questions from each chapter. Therefore, Exams I, II, VI, and V will each include 15 questions, Exams III and VI will each consist of 20 questions.

In order to accommodate the highly diverse schedules of students, each exam will be available in two versions. The first version, “Part 1-A,” will be accessible from 5:00 am to 2:00 pm while the second version, “Part 1-B,” from 2:00 pm to 11:00 pm. You will be allowed to take only one of the two versions.

When taking an exam, keep in mind that you must complete it within the designated time limit and before it is retracted at either 2:00 pm for version “A” and 10:00 pm for version “B.” So, for example, if you begin the first version “A” at 1:55 pm, you will have only five minutes to complete it.

It is imperative that you access only one version of the exam. Taking more than one version of the test will result in the lower score counting as the official exam score.

Once a test has been opened, Laulima automatically will treat the act as an attempt to take the assessment.

Each exam is timed and will automatically close when the time has expired. You will have 20 minutes for Exams I, II, IV, and V and 25 minutes each for Exams III and VI. Using the “pause” button does not stop the countdown time.

Special Access exams are provided for those students with a documented disability or in cases where a student has permission to take an assessment at a different time. Access to these exams requires an individually assigned user name and password.

Part 2, Essay Questions.

The Essay part of the exam will be offered via the “Assignments” tool. Students will have 36 hours to complete this part of the exam.

Each exam will consist of one question per chapter. The responses are worth a maximum of three points each.

Impact Paper Assignment

This term paper assignment allows students to demonstrate their understanding of how media events impact society and culture. This written assignment is worth 40 points and is due no later than 5:00 pm on April 30th. Paper submissions will be accepted beginning 5:00 pm on April 23rd. Use the “Assignments” tool in Laulima to complete this assignment. The following describes the assignment and grading expectations.
Description

Select a media event that has had or is anticipated to have an impact on society or culture. For the purposes of this assignment, a “media event” is defined as “an action that happened in or to media.” An event that occurred in the media may include a particular radio or television program, a news broadcast, a website, an FCC ruling, merging of media corporations, new media technology, etc. For example, the famous Janet Jackson Super Bowl fiasco a few years ago qualifies as an event that occurred in media. The recent use/abuse of cyberspace to conduct political campaigns and social media to spark or manifest protests also qualify as media events. The war in Iraq or Afghanistan is not a media event—the use of imbedded reporters, however, is a media event. The cell phone and camera phone use and technologies are events that happened to media just as the FCC’s ruling that prevents news broadcasts from predicting an election winner before polls have closed.

The following outlines the minimum requirements for the assignment:

1. Describe the media event that has been selected for examination.

2. Discuss the impact of the event in terms of how it has or is anticipated to modify social behavior, political policies, economic conditions and/or cultural values. This discussion should include evidence of the impact from previous studies and observations. If an impact is anticipated to occur in the future, the discussion should include evidence from previous events that are similar in nature.

3. The paper should follow either the MLA or APA style format (the text is written in the APA format).

4. A minimum of five references is required—three of which must be scholarly research (from refereed journals and academic texts).

5. The paper should have a minimum length of 2000 words (including references).

Grades earned for the assignment will be based on the extent to which the above criteria are satisfied. The discussion of the impact (criterion 2) is the most heavily weighted requirement, as a very convincing case of media’s influence must be presented.