“Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which people communicate than by the content of the communication.”
---Marshall McLuhan

Instructor: Mark Stuhlfaut, PhD, associate professor
Office: 143 Grehan Journalism Bldg.
Phone: (859) 257-4240
Email: mark.stuhlfaut@uky.edu
Office Hours: 10 to 11 am, or 1 to 3 pm, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, or make appointment by sending me an email to request a day and time.

Course description

CJT 608 examines mass communication through the media from a theoretical perspective to explain and predict its function and effects upon society. Conducted as a seminar, the course will focus on the relationships between the media, its stakeholders, and its audiences across various disciplines in the communication field.
Course objectives (learning outcomes)

1. To achieve a broad understanding of media, its functions, its effects and its role in society, so that students become scholars of media rather than consumers of media
2. To develop critical thinking skills
3. To improve the understanding of mass communication theories as the foundation for empirical learning
4. To improve academic writing skills
5. To improve research skills
6. To improve presentation skills
7. To learn about the culture, history, and influential people and theories in the field for the purpose of developing a sense of context

Required text

*McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory, 6th edition (McQ),* by Denis McQuail, available at the UK bookstore or from Amazon for about $35 to $80 (new) or $22 (used)

Additional readings are on line at the Sage Publications website: www.sagepub.com/mcquail6/gIanllbltpspb7.htm.

Other readings may be assigned.

Elements and purposes of course work

1. A term paper requires you to investigate and become familiar with a key concept or theory in the field from its germination to the present day. You will trace the conversation that other academicians have had about it. The purpose is to give you a deep understanding of a particular topic, and to develop your research and writing skills. Essentially, the paper represents a literature review that could be the foundation for your future research.
2. Two take-home exams will require you to respond to a focused question. Their purposes are to engage you in a topic, to develop your critical thinking, and to improve your written communication skills.
3. Two in-class presentations provide another method to have you learn more deeply about key topics in the field. They also provide you the opportunity to practice your presentation and leadership skills. Your written reports about the subjects will not only help improve your writing skills, they also will communicate the salient information to your colleagues for their benefit.
Performance evaluations

See the schedule on pages 18 through 19 for key dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>A 90 – 100% (180+ points)</td>
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<td>Report 1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>B 80 – 89.9% (160 – 179 points)</td>
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<td>Presentation 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>C 70 – 79.9% (140 – 159 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report 2</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>D 60 – 69.9% (120 – 139 points)</td>
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<td>Take-home exam 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>E 0 – 59.9% (0 to 119 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take-home exam 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Possible</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
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Note: Small, extra assignments may be given during the semester.

Grading criteria

A = Work that is original, insightful, well substantiated, appropriate, and well crafted. The work should show the author has put considerable effort into the activity and has gone beyond the expected.

B = Work that essentially fulfills the assignment without any major problems

C = Work that is going in the right direction but that has some significant deficiencies

D = Work that is off target, carelessly produced, and has serious deficiencies

E = Work that does not fulfill the assignment, or work that is late without making arrangements with the instructor

Completion policies

Your instructor sincerely wants you to succeed in this course and will do anything legally and ethically possible to help you. Your instructor is available to critique your work and to offer suggestions before the assignments are due. Please feel free to discuss the content, readings, assignments and your performance before or after class, during office hours, or by special appointment.

Assignments must be turned in at the start of class on the day they are due.

Directions and written instructions for the two take-home exams will be given during a scheduled class period, and your responses will be due at the next class periods. Make-up exams will not be allowed and late assignments will not be accepted, except for the following reasons: a documented illness or injury, death in the family, major religious holidays as defined by the university, or a university-related trip or activity. If you fail to turn in an exam or to give a presentation on its due date, you will receive zero points, unless you make prior arrangements with the instructor.

If you have any questions about the course or its policies, you should first contact this course’s instructor. If you have any unresolvable concerns about the course or the performance of the instructor, you may contact the college’s director of the graduate education, Dr. Bobi Ivanov, at bobi.ivanov@uky.edu.

Fair Notice

The topics, assignments, and schedule for the course are subject to change depending on the flow of the course. You are responsible for keeping up with any changes in the schedule or
assignments that might be announced in class or communicated via e-mail to your UK student email account.

**Course conduct**

This course will be conducted in a professional manner to promote the educational goals and academic standards of the university. It is expected that you give your instructor and fellow students the respect and courtesy that they deserve.

Class will start promptly at the scheduled time. Please arrive beforehand and stay through the end of class, so you do not disrupt the discussion. Turn off or silence all cellular phones, pagers and other electronic devices.

**Attendance**

As a graduate course that meets once a week, your attendance is critical. Any absences will be noticed, and unless you have a valid reason, **you are expected to attend every session.**

Students may be asked to withdraw from the class if the miss more than 20% of the classes (3) scheduled for the semester (excused or unexcused) per university policy.

Students anticipating an absence for a MAJOR religious holiday must notify the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day for adding the class. Information regarding dates of major religious holidays may be obtained through the university’s religious liaison, Mr. Jake Karnes (257-2754).

**Cancellation of class or office hours**

In the event that class or the instructor’s office hours cannot be held, you will be notified through your **UK e-mail account.** It is your responsibility to check your e-mail for the latest information.
Personal Issues
We all have complex and busy lives with responsibilities and circumstances that are outside this course. If a situation occurs that makes fulfilling the requirements of this course difficult, please contact your instructor at the earliest opportunity. He doesn’t want to know any personal details, but he would like to work out alternative arrangements to keep you in good standing.

Diversity
As with any course at the University of Kentucky, we will conduct this class with respect for each individual and with an appreciation of diverse opinions, backgrounds and life experiences. We in the UK College of Communication and Information believe that it is vitally important to promote a diverse educational environment. People of all ages, ethnicities, races, religions, gender orientations, sexual identities, socio-economic circumstances, abilities, occupations, political persuasions, and beliefs have much to share with us, as we have much to share with them.

We believe that understanding and appreciating the rich tapestry of our society, which is woven with threads of many colors, is especially important to students of communication, because the media play a pivotal role in our society. If we are to succeed in our profession, we must move beyond our prejudices and preconceptions to a broader view of a diverse society.

Academic integrity
All assignments and projects are expected to be your original work that is properly annotated with citations to source material. In the professional world, plagiarizing and cheating gets you fired. Here, the minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, including suspension from the university, may be imposed.

Plagiarism occurs when work is submitted that is purported to be original but that actually uses ideas, wording, visuals, formatting and styles from another source without proper credit. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work or having someone else do the work for you. Be especially careful in using reference material from the internet.

Please note: Any written assignment that you submit may be processed through an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

Special needs
Please talk privately with your instructor if you have a documented condition that requires personal accommodations for you to participate in this course. Your special needs will be handled as discretely as possible. In order to receive such accommodations, you must provide the instructor with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2,
Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address: jkarnes@email.uky.edu) for coordination of campus
disability services available to students with disabilities.
Presentations

You will prepare and lead two discussions during the semester based upon the supplemental readings related to the main subject of each session. See the following list of readings at www.sagepub.com/mcquail6/glannlibtpspb7.htm. Readings for media policy session (October 28) will be posted on Blackboard.

Research the topic online to find at least one additional related article that offers either illuminating information or counterpoint views. Consider contacting the author of that article and the primary reading to engage them in a conversation, so that you might have any new thoughts or perspectives.

One week before you present your topic, tell the name and author of the article that you have selected to your instructor and colleagues, so they may read the article and be prepared for an active discussion.

Begin your presentation in class by quickly summarizing the main argument of the article. Then discuss the salient points and an issue of controversy. Consider these questions:

- What are the assumptions that the author makes?
- What is the author’s bias and point of view?
- What is the key conflict?
- What is an alternative point of view?

Offer a critique of the article based upon McQuail’s text or other readings and most importantly, your own opinions. Bring in information and opinions from the related article. Pose a question to your colleagues that requires more than a yes-or-no answer. Encourage discussion.

Write a brief summary—no more than two pages copied onto the front and back of a single sheet of paper—that summarizes the article and your critique. Keep the summary to a minimum (one paragraph of five or six sentences). Emphasize your discussion, opinions, and critique. Bring copies of your summary to class for the instructor and your colleagues.
Term Paper

Here is your opportunity to align this course with your current or future research. This paper could serve as narrowly as a literature review for a paper to be submitted to a journal, or as broadly as a launching pad for your academic career.

1. Pick a particular and specific theoretical construct from this course that relates to your interests.

2. Find a key journal article or book from the past that is based upon a theory, that could be considered the seminal or foundation article for that topic of academic study. Here are several examples:


   To find the seminal article for a subject, search the topic via an online academic database. Peruse several of the found articles, and examine their references to find the seminal article on which everyone has based their research.

3. Find 10 to 15 articles between the time that the seminal article was published and today that trace the conversation between subsequent authors, as they theorize, test, develop, illuminate and extend the topic.

4. Write a 15-to-20-page paper that explicates how the topic has developed over time. Consider the following questions:
   a. What is its definition or description?
   b. What observation or impetus sparked its genesis?
   c. What are its antecedents, moderators and effects?
   d. How has the topic evolved?
   e. Has it been organized into categories or divided into multiple streams of research?
   f. How does it relate to the body of knowledge about mass communication?
   g. Is there a model based upon the theory?
   h. How is it operationalized or measured?
   i. Why is it important?
   j. What are its implications (theoretically and practically)
   k. What is the main controversy or issue related to its study?
   l. **What is the state of the theory now? What is the cutting edge?**
   m. What are its limitations or opposing theories?
   n. What is the potential for future research? How could the stream of research be moved forward?

   Suggested outline:
   Introduction
Objective of the paper
   Key reason why the reader should care about the topic
   Explain theory
   Trace its development
   Discussion
   Implications
   Limitations
   Future research

5. **Climb to a high level of analysis.** In tracing its development, organize your paper around the ideas and subtopics. **DO NOT** organize your paper around authors by writing “(Author) found…”, “(Author) reported…”, etc. In most cases, unless you are writing about the seminal author and how he or she came upon the theory, restrict the mention of authors to citations and references.

6. Use APA style for citations and references. Reference pages do not count toward the total number of required pages.

7. Include:
   a. a cover page with a title, your name, course name, and date
   b. an abstract
   c. table of contents.

8. Write a one-page proposal for the paper to sell the topic to your instructor. Due in Class on October 21.
   a. Briefly describe the topic
   b. How does it relate to your interests?
   c. How does it relate to mass communication?
   d. Why is it important to study?

9. Set up a meeting with your instructor during the week of November 10 to discuss your topic and your progress.
Supplemental Readings

Supplemental readings are available at www.sagepub.com/mcquail6/glanllbltpsdpb7.htm.

Part I Preliminaries

Chapter-1 Introduction to the Book


Journal Articles


Part II Theories

Chapter-3 Concepts and Models for Mass Communication

Journal Articles


Chapter-4 Theory of Media and Society


Chapter-5 Mass Communication and Culture


Chapter-6 New Media - New Theory?


Chapter-7 Normative Theory of Media and Society


**Part III Structures**

*Chapter-8 Media Structure and Performance: Principles and Accountability*


**Chapter-9 Media Economics and Governance**


**Chapter-10 Global Mass Communication**


**Part IV Organizations**

**Chapter-11 The Media Organization: Pressures and Demands**


**Chapter-12 The Production of Media Culture**


**Part V Content**

*Chapter-13 Media Content: Issues, Concepts and Methods of Analysis*


*Chapter-14 Media Genres and Texts*


**Part VI Audiences**
Chapter 15 Audience Theory and Research Traditions


Chapter 16 Audience Formation and Experience


Part VII Effects

Chapter 17 Processes and Models of Media Effects


Chapter 18 Social-Cultural Effects


Chapter-19 News, Public Opinion and Political Communication


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<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Session 1 Introduction to Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>Foundations of Media Theory and the Study of Media</td>
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<td>McQ 1</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Session 2 Media past, present, and future</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td>McQ 2</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Session 3 Media concepts and models</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 3</td>
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<td>Sept. 16</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Session 4 Media Theory and Normative Theory</td>
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<td>Presentation 2</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 4 and 7</td>
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<td>Sept. 23</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Session 5 New Media Theory and Global Mass Communication</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 6 and 10</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Session 6 Mass communication and culture</td>
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<td>Presentation 4</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 5 and 12</td>
<td>Take-home Exam 1 distributed</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Session 7 Media Structures and pressures</td>
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<td>Presentation 5</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 8 and 11</td>
<td>Take-home Exam 1 due</td>
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<td>Oct. 14</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Session 8 Media economics</td>
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<td>McQ 9</td>
<td>Term paper topics due</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Presentation 9</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 15 and 16</td>
<td>Meet with instructor about term paper topic</td>
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<td>Nov. 11</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Presentation 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>McQ 17</td>
<td>Take-home Exam 1 distributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
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</table>
| Week 13 | Tuesday  
Nov. 25 | Session 13  
Media effects: socio-cultural issues | McQ 18 | Take-home Exam 1 due Presentation 11 |
|---------|-----------|-----------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Week 14 | Tuesday  
Dec. 2  | Session 14  
Media effects: News, opinions and politics | McQ 19 | Presentation 12 |
| Week 15 | Tuesday  
Dec. 9  | Session 15  
Future of media studies  
Reflection on the semester | McQ 20 | Term paper due |