CMST &102 Introduction to Mass Media Syllabus
Spring Quarter, 2014

Instructor: Dr. Roger George
E-mail: rgeorge@bellevuecollege.edu
Phone: (425) 564 2021
Office location: R 230D
Office Hours: Daily 10:30-11:20

Course Information

Course Outcomes

Learning Outcomes: (At the end of this course, students will be able to…)

1. Analyze the impact of media messages on American culture, values, and political process.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the historical and economic forces that shaped and continue to shape mass media.
3. Explain the legal rationale for licensing and/or censoring certain media.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the First Amendment and crucial court decisions which have expanded or limited its protections, the difference between broadcast and cable television, the unrestricted nature of the Internet, etc.
5. Compare and contrast American commercial media system with non-commercial media in the United States and other countries.
6. Analyze how content is shaped by the nature of particular media.
7. Demonstrate critical use of various media.
8. Demonstrate an ability to use media effectively to communicate with a particular audience.

Course Preview

Information is power, and since the time of the American Revolution, information has been considered fundamental to our freedom. Today, we have access to more information from more media than ever before. But has this information made us freer? How reliable is it? We have more entertainment available than ever before, too. But what are the consequences? Are we, as Neil Postman put it, “amusing ourselves to death?”

Every day, we’re bombarded by media messages. Some maintain that we owe our very sense of what’s “normal” and “natural” to these media—that our own individual experiences and observations are
overwhelmed by the images and sounds we encounter on the job, at school, even in our most private moments at home.

This course will examine the role and the history of the mass media and their impact on American culture and society. We'll look at:

- The nature of the mass media in America and how they developed as they have
- the impact of our media upon our democratic society—particularly our entertainment, the ways we get our news, and political and corporate advertising.
- Current issues in media (recording, television & film, video games, etc.)
- the limits of the first amendment and the tension between the ideal of free, unrestricted speech and the need/desire of authorities to control the media.
- changes in ownership, changes in technology, and where all of this is taking us.

Grading

Your final grade will be based upon the following:

- two short papers, each worth 20% 40%
- midterm exam 20%
- final exam (take-home) 30%
- quizzes and participation 10%

*These percentages or the nature of the assignments may change after discussion with the class.*

**A note about papers:** This is a college-level communication class. That means that your ability to communicate effectively and with substance is an important factor in your grade. Grammar, coherence, effective punctuation and spelling are expected for the highest grades. If your communication skills are weak, please make use of the Academic Success Center (see the link on the left of this page.) Also, read the essay "College Writing"

*READ THE POLICIES OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES DIVISION AT THE FOLLOWING URL:  [http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/artshum/policy.html](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/artshum/policy.html) THESE ARE THE POLICIES OF THIS CLASS, AND YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THEM. BE ESPECIALLY SURE TO READ THE SECTION ON “ACADEMIC HONESTY.” I HAVE A “ZERO TOLERANCE” POLICY ON PLAGIARISM.*

Books and Materials Required

**Text:** Hanson, *Mass Communication: Living In A Media World, 4th Edition*

* Pariser, *The Filter Bubble*

*CLASS INFORMATION, THE SYLLABUS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND USEFUL WEB LINKS WILL BE POSTED ON YOUR CANVAS CLASS WEB PAGE.*

I may even establish a discussion page. **You will be expected to use this website as part of the class.**

*IF YOU LACK INTERNET ACCESS OR SKILLS, PLEASE REQUEST A PRINTED COPY OF ANY MATERIAL PLACED ONLINE.*
Instructor’s Expectations

A popular “buzzword” in the media these days is “interactive.” It applies to this class as well. You are expected to be a participant, not a spectator. I want an exchange of ideas and observations, not just a lecture. To succeed in this interactive class, you will need to:

- **read thoroughly and critically.** This means making margin notes, using a highlighter to mark passages which seem to be important, asking questions or making comments in the margins and, of course, completing all reading by the assigned date. You may expect quizzes over the reading material throughout the quarter.

- **attend class.** At the Academy Awards a few years ago, director Stanley Donen said that the secret to success is “showing up.” You will not get a “B for breathing;” you will, however, fail to earn credit if you fail to attend. The Arts and Humanities Division policy is that if you miss more than one-fifth of the class (in other words, ten class sessions), that in itself is grounds for failing the class—even if you turn in all assignments. Even if you don’t fail the class completely, your overall grade may be lowered by however much I consider to be appropriate. Much will go on in the class which simply can’t be reconstructed from somebody else’s notes or from the reading. You are expected to be in class on time; if you arrive late, you may not be credited with attendance.

- **turn in assignments on time.** You will be writing a number of papers and possibly doing some investigative projects. The deadlines are fixed; if you fail to turn in a paper or complete a project on time, you will receive a grade for it which is no higher than the lowest grade given to anybody who turned the paper in by the due date.

- **improve your writing and reading skills.** College-level reading and writing skills are expected for the highest grades; plan to use the Writing Lab to revise your papers if your writing is not at this level.

- **Keep up** with all reading, class discussion, and projects so that you’ll be ready for the midterm and final.

Additional Note: Essential to a liberal arts education is an open-minded tolerance for ideas and modes of expression which might conflict with one’s personal values. By being exposed to such ideas or expressions, students are not expected to endorse or adopt them but rather to understand that they are part of the free flow of information upon which higher education depends.

To this end, you may find that class requirements may include engaging certain materials, such as books, films, and art work, which may, in whole or in part, offend you. These materials are equivalent to required texts and are essential to the course content. If you decline to engage the required material by not reading, viewing, or performing material you consider offensive, you will still be required to meet class requirements in order to earn credit. This may require responding to the content of the material, and you may not be able to fully participate in required class discussions, exams, or assignments. Consult the syllabus and discuss such issues with the instructor.

**Affirmation of Inclusion**

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.
We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect. http://bellevuecollege.edu/about/goals/inclusion.asp

Student Code

“Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one’s own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Vice President of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Vice President of Student Services.” The Student Code, Policy 2050, in its entirety is located at: http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050_Student_Code.asp

Important Links

Bellevue College E-mail and access to MyBC

All students registered for classes at Bellevue College are entitled to a network and e-mail account. Your student network account can be used to access your student e-mail, log in to computers in labs and classrooms, connect to the BC wireless network and log in to MyBC. To create your account, go to: https://bellevuecollege.edu/sam.

BC offers a wide variety of computer and learning labs to enhance learning and student success. Find current campus locations for all student labs by visiting the Computing Services website.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact us as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

The DRC office is temporarily located in the Library Media Center (Testing Center offices L100) or you can call our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Please visit our website for application information into our program and other helpful links at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc

Public Safety

The Bellevue College (BC) Public Safety Department’s well trained and courteous non-commissioned staff provides personal safety, security, crime prevention, preliminary investigations, and other services to the campus community, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Their phone number is 425.564.2400. The Public Safety website is your one-stop resource for campus emergency preparedness information, campus closure announcements and critical information in the event of an emergency. Public Safety is located in K100 and on the web at: http://bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/
Academic Calendar

The Bellevue College Academic Calendar is separated into two calendars. They provide information about holidays, closures and important enrollment dates such as the finals schedule.

- Enrollment Calendar - http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/deadlines/ On this calendar you will find admissions and registration dates and important dates for withdrawing and receiving tuition refunds.
- College Calendar - http://bellevuecollege.edu/enrollment/calendar/holidays/0910.asp This calendar gives you the year at a glance and includes college holidays, scheduled closures, quarter end and start dates, and final exam dates.