

**SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**COMM 3505 Mass Comm and Culture**

SPR 2017  
Tues/Thurs  
12:30-1:45pm  
BAB 304

Bret Scott, Asst. Professor  
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Regular Office Hours:  
TBD, walk-in basis  
All others by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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Mass communication – the messages sent intended for consumption by large groups or entire cultures – is ubiquitous in the modern age. Since we’re surrounded by (some would say bombarded by) this form of communication, this class aims to examine what we’re hit with, how it works, and the cultural impacts inherent in the messaging.

Prepare to read, prepare to think, and prepare to talk. Let’s dig in.

### **COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT**

#### **Student Learning Outcomes**

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This course is designed to meet one or more of the program learning outcomes applied to all Communication majors.

The graduating student:

1. Demonstrates the ability to competently deliver public presentations, including the use of presentation technology such as presentation software, video, and audio.
2. The ability to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claims, warrants, data, etc.
3. Demonstrates the ability to complete appropriate discipline specific writing assignments.
4. The ability to apply communication theory to the analysis of communication situations appropriate to each degree specialization.
5. Demonstrate competent use of media technology including video, audio, and internet-based technology.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By the end of this class, students will:

- Demonstrate clear understanding of the terms and definitions used in examination of Mass Communication and Culture (EXAM ONE)
- Analyze Mass Communication messages for semantic and intrinsic content, noting agendas, stereotypes, persuasion, violence, etc. (MIDTERM PAPER)
- Cross-examine and categorize common mass media forms according to type and agenda to discover patterns (FINAL PRESENTATION)

- Personalize impact of Mass Media and Culture on individual world view (FINAL PAPER)

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

- 1) Full participation in class discussion / critique
- 2) Email questions following each chapter reading assignment
- 3) Midterm exam
- 4) Midterm paper
- 5) In-class presentation
- 6) Final paper

**Required Textbooks for this class:**

***Fundamentals of Media Effects, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed***

**Author:** BRYANT

**Publisher:** WAVELAND **ISBN:** 9781577667858.

**CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines**

*Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion*

| Class | Date | Topics and Assignments                                                        | Location         |
|-------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1     | 1/17 | Introduction. Review Syllabus, Assignments, and Deadlines. Expected outcomes. |                  |
| 2     | 1/19 | Screen <i>Mass Media in Society</i>                                           |                  |
| 3     | 1/24 | Discussion: <i>Mass Media in Society</i>                                      |                  |
| 4     | 1/26 | Discussion: Chapter 1+2                                                       | Chapters 1+2 due |
| 5     | 1/31 | Discussion: Chapters 3+4                                                      | Chapters 3+4 due |
| 6     | 2/2  | Discussion: Chapter 5                                                         | Chapter 5 due    |
| 7     | 2/7  | Screening: <i>Constructing Public Opinion</i>                                 |                  |
| 8     | 2/9  | Discussion: Chapter 6                                                         | Chapter 6 due    |
| 9     | 2/14 | Screening: Class Dismissed                                                    |                  |
| 10    | 2/16 | Discussion: Chapter 7                                                         | Chapter 7 due    |
| 11    | 2/21 | EXAM ONE                                                                      |                  |
| 13    | 2/23 | Discussion: Chapter 8                                                         | Chapter 8        |

|       |            |                                                                 |                    |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
|       |            |                                                                 | + 9 due            |
| 14    | 2/28       | Screening: <i>The Electronic Storyteller</i>                    |                    |
| 15    | 3/2        | Discussion: Chapter 8/9 and <i>The Electronic Storyteller</i>   |                    |
| 16    | 3/7        | Screening: <i>Killing Screens</i>                               |                    |
| 17    | 3/9        | Discussion: <i>Killing Screens</i> , Chapters 10+11             | Chapter 10 +11 due |
|       | 3/14       | SPRING BREAK.                                                   |                    |
|       | 3/16       | NO CLASS. STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.                                  |                    |
| 18    | 3/21       | MIDTERM PAPERS DUE                                              |                    |
| 19    | 3/23       | Discussion: Chapter 12 +13                                      | Chapter 12 +13 due |
| 20    | 3/28       | Screening: <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i>                    |                    |
| 21    | 3/30       | Discussion: <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i>                   |                    |
| 22    | 4/4        | Discussion: Chapters 14+15                                      | Chapters 14+15 due |
| 23    | 4/6        | Screening: <i>Sexual Stereotypes in the Media</i>               |                    |
| 24    | 4/11       | Discussion: <i>Sexual Stereotypes in the Media</i> + Chapter 16 | Chapter 16 due     |
| 25    | 4/13       | Screening: <i>No Logo</i>                                       |                    |
| 26    | 4/18       | Discussion: <i>No Logo</i> + Chapter 17                         | Chapter 17 due     |
| 27    | 4/20       | Discussion: Chapter 18                                          | Chapter 18 due     |
| 28    | 4/25       | Discussion: Chapter 19 + 20                                     | Chapter 19+20 due  |
| 29    | 4/27       | Final Presentations day one                                     |                    |
| 30    | 5/2        | Final Presentations day two                                     |                    |
| Final | <b>5/8</b> | <b>FINAL EXAM: 12:20-2:30pm BAB 304</b>                         |                    |

## GRADING

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Assignments are valued as follows:

|                                                   |     |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1) Attendance / participation in class discussion | 15% |
| 2) Email questions                                | 10% |
| 3) Exam One                                       | 10% |
| 4) Midterm Paper                                  | 15% |
| 5) Final Presentation                             | 25% |
| 6) Final Paper                                    | 25% |

### Grading Criteria:

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. Work is of better-than-expected quality, but not quite professional. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Less than proficient with material. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship.

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.

### LATE PAPERS

Deadlines are an inescapable part of responsible, professional, adult life. Late papers will lose a letter grade for each day that the paper is late.

If you discover, *a week or more in advance*, that you have multiple deadlines converging on the same day, you may request a change in deadline> Such a change may be granted at the instructor’s discretion. Once the deadline has passed, it’s too late to ask for exceptions. Manage your time and deadlines wisely.

### TARDINESS / ABSENCE POLICY

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Attendance is 10% of your grade. That’s the difference between an “A” and a “B”...or an “F” and a “D.”

### TARDINESS

Class BEGINS EXACTLY AT THE APPOINTED TIME. It is your responsibility to be prepared to begin BEFORE the class starts.

Three instances of tardiness is equivalent to one absence. See below for the class absence policy.

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY ENTRY TO STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PRESENT AT THE START OF CLASS\* – ON THE HOUR. **PLAN ACCORDINGLY. ON-TIME is EARLY!**

\*Exceptions will be made only for those with classes located in RAS whose end time makes on-time arrival impossible.

Punctuality is essential in this business. Tardiness will not be tolerated.

Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University 2012-2014 Course Catalogue:

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term.

The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. A student will be dropped for excessive absences in remedial courses after nine absences.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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*Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203.*