

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
COMM 3305 Mass Comm and Culture

FALL 2026
Tues/Thurs
11:00am-12:15pm
BAB 318

Bret Scott, Professor
Office: FAB 208
432/837-8794

bscott@sulross.edu

Regular Office Hours:
1-1:50pm M/W @ Mocap Soundstage and
1-1:50pm T/TH@ Mocap Soundstage
on a walk-in basis. Or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

Communication Program

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Students will be able to analyze communication content for argument, including identification of major elements, such as claim, warrants, and data.

SLO 2: Students will be able to effectively construct messages appropriate to audience, purpose, and context; including electronic media technologies.

SLO 3: Students will be able to apply Communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts to the analysis of communication situations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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)

Communication Program Marketable Skills

1. Informative and Persuasive Speaking
2. Audience-centered Writing
3. Critical Analysis
4. Research
5. Effective Message Construction Using Technology

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, 2nd 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

Week	Date	Topics and Assignments	Location
1	8/24	Introduction. Review Syllabus, Assignments, and Deadlines. Expected outcomes.	
	8/26	Screen <i>Mass Media in Society</i>	
2	8/31	Discussion: <i>Mass Media in Society</i>	
	9/2	Discussion: Chapter 1+2	Chapters 1+2 due
3	9/7	LABOR DAY. No Class. Thank a union member.	Chapters 3+4 due
	9/9	Discussion: Chapter 3+4	Chapter 5 due
4	9/14	Screening: <i>Constructing Public Opinion</i>	
	9/16	Discussion: Chapter 5+6	Chapter 6 due
5	9/21	Screening: <i>Class Dismissed</i>	

	9/23	Discussion: Chapter 7	Chapter 7 due
6	9/28	EXAM ONE	
	9/30	Discussion: Chapter 8	Chapter 8 + 9 due
7	10/5	Screening: <i>The Electronic Storyteller</i>	
	10/7	Discussion: Chapter 8/9 and <i>The Electronic Storyteller</i>	
8	10/12	Screening: <i>Killing Screens</i>	
	10/14	Discussion: <i>Killing Screens</i> , Chapters 10+11	Chapter 10 +11 due
9	10/19	MIDTERM PAPERS DUE	
	10/21	Discussion: Chapter 12 +13	Chapter 12 +13 due
10	10/26	Screening: <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i>	
	10/28	Discussion: <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i>	
11	11/2	Discussion: Chapters 14+15	Chapters 14+15 due
	11/4	Screening: <i>Sexual Stereotypes in the Media</i>	
12	11/9	Discussion: <i>Sexual Stereotypes in the Media</i> + Chapter 16	Chapter 16 due
	11/11	Screening: <i>No Logo</i>	
13	11/16	Discussion: <i>No Logo</i> + Chapter 17	Chapter 17 due
	11/17	Discussion: Chapter 18	Chapter 18 due
14	11/23	Discussion: Chapter 19 + 20	Chapter 19+20 due
	11/25-27	THANKSGIVING. NO CLASS. ENJOY YOUR FOOD COMA. I KNOW I WILL.	
15	11/30	TBD for contingency	
	12/1	Final Presentations	
16	TBD	FINAL DATE AND TIME TBD	

GRADING

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Attendance / participation in class discussion	15%
2) Email questions	15%
3) Exam One	10%
4) Midterm Paper	15%
5) Final Presentation	20%
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

Attendance is 15% of your grade. That's the difference between an "A" and a mid-"B"...or an "F" and maybe a "D." Here's the math: we meet thirty times. If you miss six of those thirty, you've missed 20% of the class. So I drop you from the class, because you can't miss 20% and be graded on an equal basis with students who have attended 100% of the class. And that drop is an automatic "F."

TL;dr: Come to class.

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 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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers **FREE** resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass. Offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website, library.swtjc.edu. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

Classroom Climate of Respect

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Diversity Statement

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email mschwartz@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.