

JOMC 445.001—Process and Effects of Mass Communication
Fall 2015

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Meeting Times: Tue. & Thu. 9:05 am—10:20 am in 338, Carroll Hall.

Office Hours: Thursday 10:30 am—12:00 pm and by appointment.

Course Overview: This course is an introduction to various aspects of the processes and effects that characterize the world of mass communication. This course will adopt an empirical approach to understanding various media phenomena. Through a combination of readings, lecture, and discussion, we will examine the psychological effects of media—both content as well as technology—and the theoretical frameworks that have led to the development of the media effects paradigm as one of the most fascinating and important areas in mass communication. You will also learn to critically analyze and evaluate published research, and design and conduct a project that will demonstrate your understanding of media effects. At the end of the course, you should become more discerning consumers, and perhaps practitioners, of media, with a deeper understanding and appreciation of media effects and the processes governing them in modern society.

Textbook: Bryant, Bryant, J., Thompson, S., & Finklea, B. W. (2013). *Fundamentals of media effects*. 2nd edition. Waveland Press.

In addition, you will be required to find and I will post selected readings during the course of the semester.

Course Work & Grading: The class will be divided into teams of 3-4 students for the entire semester for all coursework except the individual midterm assignment. In general, team members receive the same grades for group exercises and projects. The midterm offers a chance for distinction, since you will have time to work on it and can use essentially all the resources at your command.

Assignment	Weight
1st Team Crash Exercise	5%
2nd Team Crash Exercise	10%
Midterm: Team Research Proposal	15%

Midterm: Individual Assignment	20%
Final: Team Research Project	30%
Class Participation	15%
Peer Evaluation	5%

Schedule: The schedule includes the main topics for each week and the reading required for the meeting. The lectures will not repeat material in the readings; rather, they will add different perspectives to the existing material. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings BEFORE coming to class.

Note: Based on your input and our progress, I reserve the right to amend and change the syllabus, reading schedules, and grading events during the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Topic & Reading
1	8/18 8/20	INTRODUCTION TO CLASS; THE MEDIA EFFECTS TRADITION Bryant & Thompson Ch. 2 & 3 (Skim)
2	8/25 8/27	A RESEARCH METHODS PRIMER Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 1 (Skim beginning; Focus on p.13-20)
3	9/1 9/3	SOCIAL LEARNING; PRIMING Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 4 & 5
4	9/8 9/10	AGENDA SETTING; FRAMING Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 6 & 7
5	9/15 9/17	CRASH EXERCISE 1 Assignment given 9/15; Team presentations 9/17
6	9/22 9/24	PERSUASION Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 10
7	9/29 10/1	MIDTERM: TEAM RESEARCH PROPOSAL Team workday 9/29; Team presentations 10/1
8	10/6 10/8	CULTIVATION; USES & GRATIFICATIONS Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 8 & 9
9	10/13	MIDTERM: INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT Individual assignment due 10/13; No class Thursday 10/15 (Fall break)
10	10/20 10/22	CRASH EXERCISE 2 Assignment given 10/20; Team presentations 10/22

11	10/27 10/29	EFFECTS OF NEW MEDIA Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 18, 19, & 20
12	11/3 11/5	MEDIA AND HEALTH; EFFECTS ON DEVELOPMENT Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 15, 16, & 17
13	11/10 11/12	MEDIA AND VIOLENCE; MEDIA AND SEX Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea Ch. 11, 12, & 13
14	11/17 11/19	FINAL PROJECT CONSULTATIONS Team consultations times will be assigned; Final team research project data due for analysis 11/19
15	11/24	FINAL PROJECT CONSULTATIONS Team consultations times will be assigned; No class Thursday 11/26 (Thanksgiving)
16	12/1	FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS Team presentations 12/1; Final project reports due on final exam day

Honor Code: I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Seeking Help: If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity: The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Special Accommodations: If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

ACCREDITATION: The School of Journalism and Mass Communication's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on these six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.

- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.