

Hampton University  
Department of Mass Media Arts  
Spring 2002 Course Syllabus

## MME 200: The Mass Media in a Multicultural Society

### Administration:

Professor: Clarence J. Cotton, Jr.  
Telephone: 727-5437  
a.m.  
Room: AR 241  
Time: TTH 2:00 – 3:15 p.m.  
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Office: 238-B Armstrong Hall  
Hours: M & F 10-12 noon, T-R 9-11  
or by appointment  
E-mail:

### Course Description:

This course is a comprehensive examination of the various relationships that exist between the media, their producers and users. These relationships are analyzed with our culturally diverse society as a backdrop. Students will examine how the media influence our understanding of reality. The course will distinguish the press from other media. Further, they will investigate how mediated messages direct, sustain, create and modify individual, group and societal behaviors. Lecture. Credit: 3 hours. Prerequisites: ENG 101 and ENG 102.

### Purpose:

Mass media professionals play a crucial role in a culturally diverse society and an economically and politically interdependent world. The student in this course will learn the intricacies of the human and mass communication process. The student will learn the component parts of American mass media, their role in, their effects and influences on individuals and society as a whole, and the relationship between the mass media and various segments of society.

### Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course the student will:

- I. Understand the complexities of the human and mass communication process.
- II. Demonstrate accurate knowledge of the American mass media, their structures and operations, and their relationship to other institutions and other facets of society.
- III. Evaluate the interdependence of mass media, their audiences/clients, and society in general.
- IV. Become better consumers and producers of communication messages, through critical evaluation and analysis of such messages, which has become even more important in a society of greater cultural diversity and communication dependency.
- V. Understand the role of the press in a democratic society.
- VI. Distinguish the press from other media forms.

### Texts:

1. Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture by Stanley J. Baran, 2001 edition.

### Course Evaluation:

Students in this course are expected to be knowledgeable about current events (able to have thoughtful, analytical conversations about the topics). You should have a general understanding of the press and the communication industry; democratic process issues; issues with local, national and international dimensions; multiculturalism issues such as women and minorities; and their coverage by contemporary mass media.

**Equipment and Supplies:**

A major portion of your course grade will be your demonstrated knowledge of current events. Therefore, you must have access to current newspapers, magazines and books and other mass communication forms throughout this course. You may be required to record radio and television broadcasts, you may need audiocassettes and videocassettes.

Newer forms of communication technologies exist and present exciting opportunities for young journalists and media consumers. Be aware of the Internet and the World Wide Web and their ramifications for your future. As usual, a notebook and pen or pencil will come in handy for class notes.

**Classroom Activities:**

You will be responsible for material assigned from the course text and any assigned readings. Throughout the semester, there will be campus activities, guest lecturers and other events at our home by the sea. Your attendance at assigned events is expected.

To foster an environment conducive to a shared learning experience, you will be expected to complete all assignments before their deadline and be prepared to participate in all class sessions. All work completed for this course must be original work by the student.

**Grading:**

Your final grade in MME 200 will be a composite of percentage points assigned to three objective examinations, oral presentation, current events quizzes and class attendance/participation. Points will be awarded as follows:

<u>Grading Scale</u>	<u>Percent of Final Grade</u>		
A+ = 98-100 points	Exam# 1	Feb. 12 <sup>th</sup>	
A =94-97 points 20 pts.	Exam # 2	March 26 <sup>th</sup>	
A- =90-93 points 20 pts.	Final Exam	TBA	20 pts.
B+ =88-89 points B = 84-87 points 15 pts	Oral Presentation	TBA	
B- = 80-83 points C+ = 78-79 points 10 pts.	Current Event Quizzes		15 pts.
C = 74-77 points	Class Attendance/ Participation		

C- = 70-73 points  
D+ = 68-69 points  
D = 64-67 points  
D- = 60-63 points  
F = 59 or less points

**Examinations:**

Examinations in MME 200 are cumulative in nature. Material covered in exam #1 may be included on exam #2. The final examination will cover all assigned course material. The exams will be objective and may include a current events component.

**Oral Presentation:**

Several mass media (plural) and eras in American mass communication history will be discussed in this class. The typewritten script which will accompany your presentation must include a minimum of five (5) current sources, other than the course text.

Your presentation must address the following topic:

"The mass media are/are not (choose one) effective agents of societal change. For example, consider these recent examples ..."

The presentation will give documented examples of the effects of one of the media on modern society.

You will make a 10-minute oral presentation, appropriate audiovisuals and examples are suggested. You are required to provide a copy of your script a week in advance of presentation.

All research must be original. Students are encouraged to discuss the topic question among themselves and elicit ideas and opinions. Any work that is found to be plagiarized or not properly documented will receive a failing grade for the assignment and a recommendation for expulsion from the university for violating the Honor Code. I will also request that the student(s) be charged with violating the Hampton University Code of Conduct.

**Current Events Quizzes:**

Each week you will be given a current events quiz. This quiz can cover any recent event. Make sure that you keep abreast of what is going on in the news.

It is highly recommended that you read the Daily Press, the Virginian-Pilot, the Washington Post and the New York Times daily. Also, reputable television and radio newscasts and internet websites are helpful sources for keeping abreast.

**Class Participation:**

The world in which the modern journalist and communications professional work is very diverse and requires an appreciation of this variety. No matter what your ultimate career goal, a basic understanding of the rudiments of mass communication

will help you understand how you can bring about increased input from non-traditional but valid sources. Your professional input can produce a broader perspective within the mass media. For this reason, I expect you to take this course seriously. I measure earnestness by consistency in class attendance and enthusiasm during class discussion.

#### Absences:

No unexcused absences are allowed. Each unexcused absence will result in 5 points being deducted from your attendance/participation grade (2 or more unexcused absences will result in no attendance/participation points). Acceptable absences include those approved by the Dean of Students (or like authority); or, in the case of illness, signed by the attending physician. Please inform me in advance when you know of a planned absence.

Emergencies do arise. This I know. If you must miss class, you will be responsible for getting the information shared in class. As a student in the Department of Mass Media Arts, you have the major responsibility for fulfilling your education goals and meeting the objectives defined in this course. Be aware that without a legitimate excuse approved according to university regulations, there will be no make-up for exams or assignments in this course.

The department's policy is that tardiness and late assignments will not be tolerated. You will be considered absent if you arrive after I have taken attendance.

#### Code of Conduct:

Integrity should be the cornerstone of all your career plans. Thus, all students are expected to avoid academic dishonesty or plagiarism. Proof of such activity will result in an automatic failing grade for this course. Class participation and use of my office hours are two methods which can help you get the most out of this course.

Students must comply with the Hampton University Code of Conduct. These are the eight elements of the code:

- I. To respect himself or herself.
- II. To respect the dignity, feelings, work, and values of others.
- III. To respect the rights and property of others and to discourage vandalism and theft.
- IV. To discourage discrimination, while striving to learn from difference in people, ideas, and opinions.
- V. To practice personal, professional and academic integrity, and to discourage all forms of dishonesty, plagiarism, deceit, and disloyalty to the Code of Conduct.
- VI. To foster a personal professional work ethic within the Hampton University family.
- VII. To foster an open, fair and caring environment.
- VIII. To be fully responsible for upholding the Hampton University Code of Conduct.

#### Final Notes:

No food, drinks, hats or personal listening devices are allowed in class.

Please turn off all beepers and cellular phones before coming to class.  
Refer to the Student Handbook regarding appropriate attire in class.  
This syllabus is subject to change with appropriate notification.

## Tentative Course Outline

(Warning: This may change, depending on students' progress)

	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Week 1	Tuesday	1/15	Introduction to MME 200
	Thursday	1/17	What is Mass Communication – chapter 1
Week 2	Tuesday	1/22	Media Literacy and Culture – chapter 2 Current Events Quiz #1
	Thursday	1/24	Media Literacy and Culture, con't.
Week 3	Tuesday	1/29	Understanding the First Amendment Current Events Quiz #2
	Thursday	1/31	The Book Publishing Industry -- chapter 4
Week 4	Tuesday	2/5	Current Events Quiz #3
	Thursday	2/7	Books, con't.
Week 2	Tuesday	2/12	Examination # 1 Current Events Quiz #4
	Thursday	2/14	The Newspaper Industry – Chapter 5
Week 2	Tuesday	2/19	Oral Presentations -- Group One
	Thursday	2/21	The Magazine Industry – Chapter 6
Week 2	Tuesday	2/26	Oral Presentations -- Group Two
	Thursday	2/28	The Motion Picture Industry – Chapter 7 Current Events Quiz #5
Week 2	Tuesday	3/5	Oral Presentations -- Group Three
	Thursday	3/7	The Radio and Sound Recording Industries – Chapter 8 Current Events Quiz #6
Week 2	Tuesday	3/19	Oral Presentations – Group Four
	Thursday	3/21	The Age of Television – Chapter 9

Week 10	Tuesday	3/26	Examination #2 Current Events Quiz #7
	Thursday	3/28	The Age of Television, con't.
Week 11	Tuesday	4/2	Oral Presentations -- Group Five Current Events Quiz #8
	Thursday	4/4	Oral Presentations -- Group Six
Week 12	Tuesday	4/9	The Internet and the WWW – Chapter 3 Current Events Quiz #9
	Thursday	4/11	The Internet and the WWW, con't.
Week 13 10	Tuesday	4/16	Public Relations and the media -- chapter Current Events Quiz #10
	Thursday	4/18	The Advertising Industry – Chapter 11
Week 14	Tuesday	4/23	The Mass Media and Society: An overview
	Thursday	4/25	Course Review
Week 15	Final Exam	TBA	

Department of Mass Media Arts  
MME 200: The Mass Media in a Multicultural Society  
Prerequisites: ENG 101 and ENG 102  
Addition to the Syllabus

## Student Acceptance Contract

I agree that I have read and thoroughly understood the attached syllabus for MME 200 and will comply with the requirements of this syllabus in full and adhere to the Hampton University Code of Conduct.

I understand that I must communicate with the instructor of this course and that I am responsible for my own academic progress and for meeting all catalog requirements for graduation.

I am a Mass Media Arts major            YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

I have taken all required prerequisites YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

My major is other than Mass Media Arts; I have taken the following course(s) in this department

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SSN: \_\_\_\_\_