

**CM 203.08: Introduction to Communication
Fall 2014**

Tuesday, Thursday 12:15 pm – 1:30 pm
College Center W012

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 11:00am-12:00 pm

Available on Wednesdays 11:00am – 12:30 pm (by prior appointment only)

Course Description

Students explore the impact of media on culture and social structure through the close examination of cultural products including books, television shows, music, and advertising. Using a wide range of theoretical constructions, students learn to analyze the social meanings of cultural objects.

Specific Educational Objectives of the Course:

At the completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define and discuss the different elements of mass media;
2. Describe and deconstruct the impact of mass media on the individual and society;
3. List and explain the function of various forms of the mass media including:
broadcasting,
advertising, the Internet, publishing, and broadcast journalism;
4. Critically examine the effects of media law and its correlation to freedom of expression and ethics; and,
5. Interpret their own experiences with mass media

Required Texts and Materials

Currents in Communication, 2nd Edition by Cook, King, and Tropin (**CC**) – (This book is available as an e-book)

Course web site (found on Moodle)

A Twitter Account

Additional readings and materials may be required some weeks. They will be posted online and can be accessed via the course Moodle page. **READINGS ON MOODLE ARE LABELED WITH (M)**

I will use Moodle to post course lecture slides. Slides will be available prior to class (by 12 noon on Fridays of the week before).

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Expectations

Students who wish to be successful in this course will come to class prepared by having done the readings and assignments ahead of time and be able to discuss with the larger group. Part of being an active contributor in class is offering your own commentary on the material. It will also be important to respect the comments and questions of your fellow students as we work to answer some tough questions. It is your job as students to keep up-to-date with the course schedule. It is my job as the professor to keep you informed of any changes in schedule.

Contacting Me

Email is the best way to reach me (abbecker@loyola.edu) with any course related questions. If your email arrives during normal business hours (M-F, 9am – 5pm), I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. I do not check my email regularly during the evenings and weekends. Please remember to put CM 203 in your email subject line and remember that while email is electronic, it is still a form of professional communication.

Contacting You

I plan to contact you via email at your Loyola.edu account. It is your responsibility to regularly check this account for announcements and notes about the course. If there is a change in schedule, I will send out important information via email so please check your messages daily.

Office Hours

My office hours are posted on the syllabus. Please feel to drop in during my open office hour times on Tuesdays and Thursdays. While I will be around most Wednesdays for office hours, it's a good idea to email me ahead of time if you'd like to stop by. I am also available to meet with you at other times; simply email me to set up an appointment. If you make an appointment with me, I expect you to keep it. If you need to cancel, please email me 24 hours ahead of time.

Technology Policy

While laptops, cell phones, and tablets are useful for multi-tasking, they can sometimes pose a distraction. I'm going to trust you to use technology appropriately while in the classroom. I understand that sometimes emergencies arise and you may need to step out and answer a phone call. Please let me know ahead of time if something is going on and just step out quietly and discreetly. I expect students to be active participants in the classroom –we only meet for 2 ½ hours each week. I'll give you my full attention; I expect you to do the same.

Attendance

Attendance at class (and on-time arrival) is expected. I understand that sometimes things happen or that you might get sick during the course of the semester. Please take care of yourselves and don't bring your germs to class.

Officially, I allow **two** unexcused absences during the course of the semester. If you miss more than **two** classes, I will start to deduct points from your class participation grade. Please keep track of your absences yourself; I will not email you with updates of the number of classes you have missed. If you missed class it is your responsibility to find out what material we covered and get the notes and announcements from another student; please don't email me asking for notes for missed classes. It is your responsibility to catch up – it is not my job to catch you up. In order to do well in this class you really must be present; if an emergency arises and you know you will miss class, please email me ahead of time.

Student Athletes

If you are a student athlete, please provide me with your travel and game schedule indicating when you will need to miss class to participate in athletic events. While travel for athletics is an excused absence, you will need to make up any missed work.

Late Work/Missed Exams

****Late assignments will not be accepted, except in the following instances:**

1. hospitalization or illness, with a documented doctor's note; or
2. a death or serious illness in the family, with documentation from an immediate family member.

In all cases, the decision to allow a student to make up an exam/extend the deadline for an assignment, as well as the time period for completion, is up to the discretion of the professor.

In general, assignment due dates are published well in advance. If you know you are going to be out or away from your computer when an assignment is due online, please

upload ahead of time.

If you are unable to take an exam given the reasons listed above, please try to contact me at least 24 hours ahead of time (if possible). Barring extenuating circumstances, students who miss an exam and do not make alternate arrangements ahead of time will receive a zero.

Students with Disabilities

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the Disability Support Services Office at (410) 617-2062 or Marcia Wiedefeld at mwiedefeld@loyola.edu. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability, which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to understand the meaning of the Honor Code. **Ignorance of the Honor Code is not a valid reason for committing an act of academic dishonesty.** The following constitute violations of the Code and are defined in the **Community Standards Handbook**: cheating, stealing, lying, forgery, plagiarism, and the failure to report a violation. Please refer to the College Catalogue and Student Handbook for further explanation of the Code. Violations of the Honor Code may result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the course. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Loyola College Honor Council.

Department of Communication policy reiterates that the university honor code applies to all CM courses, including this one. I will follow the Department of Communication's policy guidelines for honor code violations if any infraction of the code occurs. The department's policy is available upon request.

Student Support Services

Loyola offers services to support students' academic and emotional development:

1. The Study Center, located on the third floor of Jenkins Hall, offers tutoring, writing coaching, and study skills guidance <https://www.loyola.edu/thestudy>;
2. The Writing Center offers consultations on writing technique and is located in Jenkins Hall 011 <https://inside.loyola.edu/writingcenter/index.html>. Make an appointment by calling 5415 or emailing lwc@loyola.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Textual Analysis	15%
Following the Story	15%
Tweet Week	15%
MyStory	15%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

Grading

A	94-100	Grading Policy: Students earn the grades they deserve based on the quality of the work completed; students are not given grades . It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their grades on Moodle and monitor their progress/status in the course. In general, I do not change grades unless there is some sort of administrative error. Students are always welcome to come to office hours to discuss grades 24 hours after the grade is posted online. I will not discuss grades or grade complaints/concerns over email.
A-	90-94	
B+	87-90	
B	84-87	
B-	80-84	
C+	77-80	
C	74-77	
C-	70-74	
D+	67-70	
D	60-67	
F	Below 60	

Assignments

Textual Analysis. (15%)

The objective of this assignment is to compare how two different "texts" (documentary and long form journalism article) treat a relevant social justice issue. Your job is to pick one documentary from the list below and screen it independently. You'll also need to review the corresponding article posted on Moodle. After reviewing the film and the article, you are to write a 3-4 page (~1,000 words) paper offering an analysis of the two "texts." Your response paper should start by briefly summarizing the documentary and article (25%) and then work to address the following key questions in the balance of the paper (75%).

- What are the differences in content between the two texts?
- What are the advantages of using a documentary to tell this story?
- What are the advantages of using a long form article to tell this story?

- How are the texts similar? different?
- What are the texts saying? Offer a cultural analysis of both pieces in your response.
- In your opinion, which text tells a better story? Why?
- Which text would you recommend to a friend? Why?

All papers will be due electronically via Moodle on **Tuesday, September 30th by 10:00am**. Please also bring a paper copy to class on **Thursday, October 2nd**. We will meet in small groups to review the textual analysis papers.

Documentaries and Corresponding Articles

Links to articles and documentaries on Moodle.

Copies of documentaries on reserve in library as well.*

Gender and Representations:

Makers from PBS

Article from *The Atlantic* – Why Women Still Can't Have it All

Income Inequality:

Inequality for All

Article from *NYT Magazine* – Who Gets to Graduate?

Education:

Waiting for Superman

Article from *NYT Magazine* – *The Tale of Two Schools*

Marriage Equality:

The Case Against 8*

*Currently only available via HBO Go

Article from *NYT Magazine* – How the President Got to 'I Do'

** While a more detailed grading rubric will follow for each assignment, it is important to note that all papers should be written in 12-point Times New Roman font. Papers should be double-spaced and have 1" margins all around. Make sure you add page numbers to your paper in the footer and put your name in the header (you'd be surprised how many people forget). A reference list (if applicable) should be on a separate final page(s). Everything should be uploaded as one word document (.doc or .docx) with your Last Name_Assignment as the title (e.g., Becker_TextualAnalysis). We use APA style for citing all references. For more information on APA style, visit:

<http://guides.indlibrary.org/content.php?pid=344229&sid=2972524>

Following the Story (15%)

The objective of this assignment is to carefully follow a breaking or recent news story in an in-depth fashion. You will be asked to follow a major news story of your choosing (e.g., Ferguson, the conflict between Israel and Gaza in the Middle East, the 2014 midterm elections, the ALS bucket challenge, or something breaking) across a wide array of mediums (television news, newspaper, online sources, political comedy, Internet, social media, radio, etc.) for a one-week period (7 days). You should keep a running log or note page of the materials you review with corresponding links. If you watch something on TV or radio, note down the dates and times, etc. You should be able to locate a corresponding link for most material as well. After following the story for a week, you'll need to write a 3-4 page (~1,000 words) reflection paper about the experience. In the paper you will briefly summarize the news event and the amount/type of content you reviewed (25%). In the remainder of the paper, you should talk about the differences in coverage of the story you see across the mediums (75%) and which items you reviewed helped to best tell the story and why. Be sure to cite any news content you directly refer to both in the text of the essay and on a separate reference page at the end of the paper (in other words you need in-text citations and a bibliography). Be sure to also type up your running log or note page and include at the end of your assignment on a separate page(s). Your analysis of the news coverage should address the following questions:

- Which medium offers the most in-depth coverage?
- Which medium is easier to follow?
- Which medium do you prefer and why?
- Are different elements of the story covered across different mediums?
- What kind of political perspective (or lack thereof) do you notice in the coverage?
- How much of the content you reviewed was discovered via social media?
- Which pieces of your story did you or would you want to share via social media?

Students will meet in small groups to share their reflections. Your reflection paper will be due on Moodle on **Tuesday, October 28th at 10:00 am**. Please bring a paper copy of your reflection paper to class on **Thursday, October 30th**.

Tweet Week (15%)

The objective of this assignment is to both engage in and keep track of social media activity. During the course of a week (Thursday, October 30th – Thursday, November 6th), we'll all share what we're reading and reviewing on social media via Twitter using the hashtag **#COM203**. Each student needs to share a minimum of 30 tweets (~ 4 per day) and engage in the practice of retweeting and favorite-ing tweets. Once the week is up, we'll gather all the tweets, retweets, etc. and look at what the group has posted in class. Then, your job will be to write a 3-4 page (~1,000 words) reflection paper on the Twitter content and activity. The first part of your paper (25%) should summarize the Twitter activity of you and your fellow classmates. The second part of the paper (75%)

should offer a reflection on the activity. You should address the following questions in your response paper:

- What themes were present in the content shared?
- What themes or types of content were missing?
- What was unique or important about using Twitter as a medium to share this content?
- What were the drawbacks of using Twitter to share this content?
- Were there certain tweets or topics that were more memorable for you? Less memorable?
- Did this activity encourage you to follow new individuals, groups, etc. on Twitter? Which ones? Why?
- Did this activity lead you to acquire new followers?
- Does this activity reflect standard social media behavior?
- How will this activity shape your use of Twitter in the future (or won't it)?

Students will meet in small groups to share their reflection papers. Your reflection paper will be due on Moodle on **Tuesday, November 18th at 10:00 am** along with a PDF of your individual tweets using the #COM203 hashtag during the week. Please bring a copy of your paper and a printout of your individual tweets to class on **Thursday, November 20th** for discussion.

My Story (15%)

Students will produce an appropriate text in a medium of their choice that answers the following questions:

- Who am I? How do I separate who I am from whose I am?
- Where am I from? And how did that “place” shape me?
- Where am I going? And why do I want to go there?

Suggested mediums: 8-10 photographs in a photo documentary; 3-5 minute digital story; 3-5 page short story with 3-5 photographs; 5 minute Prezi, etc.

You will only have 5 minutes to make your high impact presentation of your MyStory. You will also want to allow 2-3 minutes for discussion/questions with the class.

My Story assignments will be uploaded via Moodle on the **Tuesday, December 2nd at 10:00am** and then presented in class. Presentation dates will be selected later in the semester.

Students should pay careful attention to the MyStory presentations of their fellow classmates. Following the presentations, a 2-page response paper will be due (on the course final date) offering a reflection on the experience of sharing your MyStory and the experience of being present for the MyStory work of your peers.

Exam 1 (15%). Exam 1 will focus on the material covered in lecture and course readings during the first half of the semester. The exam will take place on **Tuesday, October 14th**

Exam 2 (15%) Exam 2 will focus on the material covered in lecture and course readings during the second half of the semester. The exam will take place on **Tuesday, November 25th**.

Participation: (10%) Participation is an integral part of this course. Your level of participation includes your contributions and preparedness for class, your engagement with course discussion, responses to periodic prompts on Moodle, and your Twitter activity during the course of the semester using the hashtag #COM203 (separate from the Tweet Week assignment). Multiple missed classes will impact your participation grade.

Extra Credit. A small number of extra credit assignments may become available during the course of the semester (e.g., participation in a research study, attendance and review of a campus event). These activities will be announced via Moodle along with information about point value

The Loyola Difference

What makes this Loyola University course different from similar courses taught at other universities? The difference is the Jesuit educational philosophy. Here are some of the ways that the Jesuit philosophy influences and enhances this course.

Concern for the World. The Jesuit philosophy affirms the goodness of the world and encourages a realistic knowledge of our society. In practical terms, this means that we do not restrict ourselves to text material. To help us relate what is going on in the world with course content, learning will include critical analysis of the practitioner world.

Concern for Critical Thinking. In Jesuit education, particular care is given to developing the imaginative, the affective, and the creative dimensions of the student, as well as the development of logic through argument and counter-argument. This means, whatever the course subject matter, there will always be room for the subjective, the opinion, and the intuition. In this course, we are encouraged and expected to question assumptions and assertions.

Emphasis on Communication Skills. A Jesuit education prepares students for active participation in their businesses and communities. Full participation is impossible without well-exercised skills in written and oral communication. Course assignments will include opportunities to practice and improve your communication skills. You will be required to make both written and oral presentations for this class.

Concern for Ethics and Values. Jesuit education is value-oriented; it does not take place in an ethical vacuum. This means much more than the obvious proscription of plagiarism, cheating, and similar academic dishonesty. It means that, whenever possible, the ethical implications of course material or relevant situations will be raised and discussed.

Concern for the Individual. Finally, the primary hallmark of a Jesuit education is cura personalis, individual care and concern for each person. Feel free to request an individual review or to discuss any issue at any time. Loyola faculty members are duty bound to serve students. Posted office hours are when I am guaranteed to be available, but students will be met at all other times as well, as much as possible.

[COURSE SCHEDULE ON NEXT PAGE]

	Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments
Week 1	T 9/2	Introduction to Course	Sign up for Twitter and tweet between now and next class
	Th 9/4	Introductions from Students	Introduce Twitter Profile and Media Product in Class
Week 2	T 9/9	Reading/Introduction to Textual Analysis Assign.	Reading As Act of Creation (CC)
	Th 9/11	Thinking Communication	Ch 2 & Medium Theory (CC)
Week 3	T 9/16	Media Analysis	Ch 3 (CC) Atlantic Article on OITNB (M)
	Th 9/18	A Place at the Table	Thanksgiving FAQ (M)
Week 4	T 9/23	Rules & Regulation	Ch 4 (CC) & Net Neutrality (M)
	Th 9/25	NO CLASS	Work on Textual Analysis
Week 5	T 9/30	Communication & Community	Ch 5 (CC) & Schill (2014) (M) Textual Analysis Due
	Th 10/2	Textual Analysis	Discussion of Textual Analysis
Week 6	T 10/7	Communication and Politics/ Talk about Following the Story	Ch 6 (CC) 8 Big Social Media (M) Presidential Campaign (M)
	Th 10/9	The News (Page One)	Work on Following the Story
Week 7	T 10/14	Exam 1	
	Th 10/16	Communication Marketplace	Ch7 & Translating Advertising (CC)
Week 8	T 10/21	Celebrity Culture	Chapter 8 & Imaginary Social (CC)
	Th 10/23	#Regeneration	Continue with Following the Story
Week 9	T 10/28	Storytelling	Ch 9 & Narrative Complex (CC) Following the Story Due
	TH 10/30	Following the Story/Tweet Week Assignment	Discussion of Following the Story Start Tweeting with #COM203
Week 10	T 11/4	Media Systems	Ch 10 (CC)
	Th 11/6	Generation Like	End Tweeting with #COM203
Week 11	T 11/11	Twitter Review	
	Th 11/13	Aesthetics and Production	Ch 11 (CC) & Dunham – 2 links (M)
Week 12	T 11/18	Media Industries	Ch 12 (CC) & Tweet Week Due
	Th 11/20	Tweet Week Discussion	Introduce My Story
Week 13	T 11/25	Exam 2	
	Th 11/27	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING	
Week 14	T 12/2	My Story Presentations	My Story document due online
	Th 12/4	My Story Presentations	
Week 15	T 12/9	My Story Presentations	

EXAM SLOT: SAT. DECEMBER 13th at 1:00PM – My Story reflections @Moodle