

**S Y L L A B U S**  
**THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ROME**  
**Department of Communication and English**

*The learning goals for students pursuing a degree in Communication are meant to develop and enhance their writing skills, whether expository, reflective or analytical; or journalistic; or creative. The program also aims to develop students' conceptual analysis skills and critical thinking; and train them in the use of the appropriate/required tools and technology related to the field of Communication, in selected courses. The Communication degree program also offers students the opportunity to benefit from the Rome location, and prepares them to work and operate successfully in a global environment characterized by diversity and intercultural understanding and respect.*

<b>Course Title:</b>	Introduction to Mass Media
<b>Course Number:</b>	COM100
<b>Period:</b>	Fall 2010
<b>Credits:</b>	Three hours.
<b>Professor:</b>	Kristen Palana e-mail: <a href="mailto:k.palana@aur.edu">k.palana@aur.edu</a> office phone. 06/58330919 ext. 702 URL: <a href="http://www.kpalana.com">http://www.kpalana.com</a>
<b>Time:</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays 12:30-1:55
<b>Office hours:</b>	By appointment. My office is located on the first floor of the Carini Building near the Multimedia Lab.
<b>Class Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.kpalana.com/massmediaweb">http://www.kpalana.com/massmediaweb</a>

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to the history and functioning of the mass media based on lectures, reading, and analysis of various media products. Students will gain an understanding of the forces, origins, and principles that shaped mass media, explore some ethical and legal issues that media users and practitioners may face, and learn how the mass media are changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

In this course students will:

1. Learn how to distinguish mass media from other types of media and gain a better understanding of various forms of communication developed by humans over time.
2. Develop an understanding of the origins, forces, and principles that helped shape the mass media.
3. Examine their own relationship to mass media and record their daily usage of mass media for analysis and discussion.
4. Develop an awareness of legal and ethical issues that media users and practitioners may face.

5. Examine current and future trends in mass media and how the mass media are changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
6. Gain a better understanding of mass media's effects on themselves, society, culture, religion, politics, and populations.

### **Course Learning Activities:**

Class lectures, class discussions, multimedia presentations, video documentaries, guest lectures, reading and analysis of media products: These learning activities will monitor the student's progress toward achieving course learning objectives 1-6.

Writing Assignments and the Keeping of a Media Journal: These learning activities will monitor the student's progress toward achieving course learning objectives 3, 5, & 6.

Term Project: An 8 to 10 page research paper on a topic related to material covered in the course. This learning activity will monitor the student's progress toward achieving course learning objectives 1-6.

### **Assessment Tools**

Students will be assessed by the following:

Periodic quizzes on course material, writing assignments, the media journal, class participation in discussions, the midterm and final exam, and the term project.

### **Grade Tabulation:**

The term project will be rubric graded.

Quizzes	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Term Project	25%
Writing Assignments/Media Journal	10%
Participation	10%

### **AUR grade values**

94 – 100 points	=	A	"Excellent"
90 – 93.99 pts	=	A-	
87 – 89.99	=	B+	
83 – 86.99	=	B	"Good"
80 – 82.99	=	B-	
77 – 79.99	=	C+	
70 – 76.99	=	C	"Satisfactory"
60 – 69.99	=	D	"Poor"
59.99 – 0	=	F	"Failing"

### **Course Textbook:**

*Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in Transition* -Joseph R. Dominick  
McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages; 11 edition (February 24, 2010)

To purchase an electronic eBook version of this title, visit [www.CourseSmart.com](http://www.CourseSmart.com) (ISBN 0-07-733362-4).

-Additional readings from handouts and online sources.

**Courtesy Policy:**

Make sure your cell phone is turned off. If you have an emergency situation that requires your phone to be on, please speak with me first. Ringing cell phones, late arrival, leaving early, and walking in and out of class while class is in session is disrespectful to your Professor and to your fellow classmates and will result in the lowering of your Class Participation Grade and Overall Grade.

**AUR Attendance Policy:**

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

Minimum Attendance Requirement

Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

Absences

- **Students will not be penalized for three absences from class.**

If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus. If the instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement.

Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

**Kristen Palana's Specific Attendance Policy:**

Any student with more than two absences will get a half letter grade off their final grade for every absence beyond two. **Please note that each two lates count as one absence.**

No make-up exams or quizzes will be given without a documented medical excuse. Incomplete grades are not given.

Attendance is taken at the start of each class. Late arrival will be marked as such. If a student is more than a half hour late to class they will be marked as absent.

**If You Miss Class:**

Please use the class contact sheet (given out after the add/drop period) to email or phone a classmate who can lend you their notes and help you get back on track. In this course it is important to stay on top of material since so much is covered. \*Please do not email your professor for a briefing on what you missed, as it's not possible to sum up a two hour+ class in a short email. After you have made an effort to contact a

classmate and catch up, your professor will be happy to give you individual help by appointment.

### **AUR Academic Integrity Code & Policy against Plagiarism**

"Integrity is fundamental to the academic enterprise. It is violated by such acts as borrowing or purchasing assignments, including but not limited to term papers, essays, and reports; lending to or producing assignments for others (either for or without payment); using concealed notes or crib sheets during examinations, copying the work of others and submitting it as one's own; and otherwise misappropriating the knowledge of others. Such acts are both dishonest and deceptive: the work submitted to instructors is not the work of the person whose name it bears. In consequence, the sources from which one derives one's ideas, statements, terms, and facts, including internet sources, must be fully and specifically acknowledged in the appropriate form. Failure to do so, intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes plagiarism." -- AUR Student Handbook, 2006/2007, p. 15.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

\*This outline is subject to change.

### **Week 1**

Introduction to mass comm. and mass media. The functions of the media. The Nature of Mass Communication. *Read for this Week: Chapter 1.*

### **Week 2**

Books. The development of communication, language, and writing. *Read for this Week: pp.50-55 and Chapter 6.*

### **Week 3**

Newspapers. Examination of different types of newspapers. Journalistic styles. Watchdogs of the public interest vs. Entertainment. *Read for this Week: Chapters 4 and 13.*

### **Week 4**

Magazines. Examination of various magazines. *Read for this Week: Chapter 5.*

### **Week 5**

Film. Examination of early films. Film as Persuasion. *Read for this Week: pp. 58-61 and Chapter 9.*

### **Week 6**

Radio. Listening to Golden Age Programming vs. Programming from 2008. *Read for this Week: pp. 61-64 and Chapters 7 and 8.*

### **Week 7**

Television. Midterm Review. *Read for this Week: pp. 64-65 and Chapters 10 and 11.*

### **Week 8**

Midterm Exam.

**Week 9**

The New Media. Changes in Mass Media today and in the future. Careers in Media Professions. *Read for this Week: pp. 65-74 and Chapter 12.*

**Week 10**

Advertising and Audience Studies. Marketing to Audiences. Marketing and Politics. *Read for this Week: Chapters 14 and 15.*

**Week 11**

Media Laws and Ethics. Case studies. *Chapters 16 and 17.*

**Week 12**

Social Effects of Mass Communication. Review for Final Exam. Individual term paper help available by appointment. *Read for this Week: Chapter 19*

**Week 13**

Term Papers due. Individual help available by appointment.

**Week 14**

Final Exam

\*The Final Exam is **Wednesday, December 15 from 1-3** in B306.