

# COMM 5: MASS COMMUNICATION

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	5
Hours:	5 lecture per week (60 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249; not open to students with credit in JRNL 2.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Description

This course involves the study of mass media and media technology as applied to a diverse society. Includes a study of media functions, responsibilities, practices, and influences, as well as a study of media history, development, and impact in shaping modern culture.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the use of mass media in the areas of information, entertainment, and persuasion.
2. Gain experience in the evaluation of mass communication content and practices.
3. Examine the legal and ethical challenges facing modern media outlets.
4. Practice audience analysis with emphasis on cultural background.
5. Analyze the changing role of mass media in our increasingly diverse society.

## Course Content

1. Critical analysis of media use
  - a. Historical development and current structure of mass media, including examination of communication theories, models, and processes
  - b. Modern media's impact on everyday lives, culture/society, and government
  - c. Journalism trends, including the evolution of creation, distribution, and exhibition of mass communication, as well as its increasingly diverse changing audience
2. Evaluation of communication media, including history, growth, and development of print media

- a. Newspapers: students will discuss the concept of news, how editors select stories for regional and national newspapers, and the potential impact of these choices on a diverse audience
  - b. Magazines: students will critically examine magazine content and advertising
  - c. Radio: students will analyze and report on both local and satellite radio stations, and will reflect upon impactful historical radio-based examples, such as Edward Murrow's newscasts and the "War of the Worlds" program
  - d. Television/Film: students will discuss the ratings system and popularity of network and cable programs. Images and stereotypes used in this medium will be studied. Televised political advertisements will be shown and discussed. Examination of impactful examples of motion picture history
  - e. Internet: exploration of interactive mediated communication, including digital print, streaming video, and social media
3. Examination of legal and ethical challenges in mass media
    - a. First Amendment review and study
    - b. Importance of diverse racial, ethnic, and gender representation
    - c. Concerns about stereotypes and sexual content
  4. Audience analysis
    - a. Methods of audience analytics, including primary, secondary, tertiary, and target audiences
    - b. Characteristics of audiences, including geographic, socio-demographic, and psychographic
  5. Analysis of mass media's changing role
    - a. Concept of "mediated culture," in which media both reflects and shapes the culture
    - b. Role and influence of mass media, including class-dominant theory, limited-effects theory, and culturalist theory

## Lab Content

Not applicable.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

- A. Computer with internet connection, projector, viewing screen, DVD/VCR.
- B. When taught as a hybrid course via Foothill Global Access: ongoing access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Individual or group project  
Written outline  
Research paper  
Written examination

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture  
Discussion  
Cooperative learning exercises  
Electronic discussions/chat

Demonstration

## **Representative Text(s) and Other Materials**

Hansen, Ralph E.. Mass Communication: Living in a Media World, 8th ed.. 2021.

Baran, Stanley J.. Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture. 2022.

Campbell, Richard, et al.. Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication. 2021.

## **Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments**

1. Reading assignments from text and outside sources
2. Online discussion participation in response to prompt
3. Journal entries related to course content
4. Video, audio, animation and/or webpage presentations

## **Discipline(s)**

Communication Studies or Journalism