REQUIRED TEXTS:


APA style guidelines can be found at several places on the web: One good site which offers several links is: Purdue Owl Writing Lab

(Additional research articles will be assigned for reading throughout semester)

**Course Description:**

Explores major mass communication theories with regard to their development, implication and application.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

1) Students completing the M.A. in mass communication will demonstrate a comprehension of theories central to the mass communication discipline.

2) Students completing the M.A. in mass communication will understand, design, and conduct research in mass communication.

3) Students completing the M.A. in mass communication will demonstrate knowledge of legal and ethical principles that guide media industry decisions.

4) Students completing the M.A. in mass communication will demonstrate knowledge of the historical context and societal implications of the media industry.

5) Students completing the M.A. in mass communication will demonstrate a comprehension of evolving trends in the media industry and learn to think critically about the media’s role in a global market.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1) Students will be able to understand how theories are developed, applied, and tested within the field of mass communication research.

2) Students will be able to demonstrate how theoretical frameworks are developed and applied to research methodology within the field of mass communication.
3) Students will be able to acquire an expanded perspective regarding the role of media within the American and global society and marketplace based on major mass communication theories.

**General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes: n/a**

**Attendance Policy:**
This is an online course and it is your responsibility to stay abreast of all materials in D2L. Regular login to the class is a requirement. You must remain aware of all deadlines for assignments, discussion forums, reading quizzes, etc. If you miss an assignment, you can only make it up with an excused absence.

Important: If you cannot document your illness (e.g., a doctor’s note), emergency, excused absence (e.g., school sponsored event), etc., you cannot make up any missed assignment and/or work. You will lose points for that missed assignment.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1):**
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

To ensure academic integrity, students understand that all required assignments are subject to submission to turnitin.com to verify that it is the student’s original work.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty:**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Here is the SFA policy: *Academic Dishonesty Policy*

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.

Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54):**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within on calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities:**
To obtain disability accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aides, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to *SFA Disabilities Home Page*
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Participation/Discussion Essay:
Participation is an essential part of this class. All students are expected to participate in the class discussions in D2L. Remember, a portion of your grade comes from robust and intellectual participation in these class discussions. These are not “free” points distributed to students just for posting something. They must be earned via the student’s contribution to a productive, inclusive and respectful educational environment for the professor and fellow students throughout the entire semester. The only way to successfully complete this assessment is to read all of the chapters assigned in the respective units prior to posting to the discussion forum.

You will not be able to read your classmates’ discussion board essays on the chapter readings until you have posted your own assignment in the discussion board. Each discussion board post should be critical responses to questions or situations based on the theories being discussed for specific reading material. Students should be thorough, and demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical base lending itself to application and synthesis. Additionally, after reading your classmates' essays in the Discussion Board, you will be required to respond to one of the essays. Both the original essay and the response are to be written at a level expected of graduate students and demonstrate critical thinking skills applied to the content/topic.

Finally, class participation is will also be measured in engagement with the course content. Students are expected to review the required content for this class. This means reading articles or PowerPoints, and/or watching the videos.

Reading Quizzes:
There will be chapter reading quizzes. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions. Questions may cover any of the material covered in class the reading.

Research Paper:
The final project will be a 9-10 page (excluding title page and references, etc.) literature review focusing on a particular theory discussed in class. Literature reviews are important in that they provide researchers with a thorough and varied perspective on the topic(s) they wish to investigate. Students will be asked to choose a major theory in mass communication research (i.e., critical race theory, Marxist theory, cultivation, uses and gratifications, identity construction, etc.) and gather and critically analyze research that has used this theory. Paper should include a brief introduction, extensive literature review synthesizing information, and a brief section discussing potential areas of future research. Focus on comparing and contrasting major arguments and schools of thought. **SUMMARIZATION OF ARTICLES IS NOT ANALYSIS.**

A mandatory first draft will be due several weeks prior to the final draft. Students are required to have at least half the paper complete and preferably a full first draft.

Papers will be checked with TurnItIn. **Plagiarism and/or excessive direct quotation is NOT ACCEPTABLE and will result in a 0 and potential expulsion from the Graduate program.**

Requirements:
- 9-10 pages (excluding references)
- 15 references (minimum)
- Introduction (1-2 pages)
- Discussion/Future Research (1-2 pages)
- Times/12pt/Double Space

**NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER DUE DATE** unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond your control such as a medical emergency, death in the family, documented illness, etc. Extra credit assignments may be given at the instructor’s discretion. Extra credit opportunities cannot be made-up, if missed. But, you may submit assignments earlier than the deadlines. Once you have
submitted an assignment (even if you submitted it earlier than the deadline), you cannot redo the
assignment. Assignments submitted earlier than the deadline will not be graded earlier than the deadline.

**GRADING:**
Grades will be determined on a standard percentage basis. The exact breakdown is as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation/Discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft of Research Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (Literature Review/Analysis)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**Grading Policy:**
100 – 90 = A
89-80 = B
79-70 = C
69-60 = D
59 and below = F

**EVALUATION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

A = Excellent
This work demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of course material, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Includes skillful use of source materials, illuminating examples and illustrations, and fluent verbal/written expression. “A” work is coherent, thorough, and shows some creative flair. An “A” signifies mastery.

B = Good
Most work tends to fall in this category. This work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of course material, presenting a reasonable degree of insight and a broad level of analysis. Work reflects competence, but stays at a general or predictable level of understanding. Source material, along with examples and illustrations, are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. “B” work is reasonable, clear, appropriate, and complete. A “B” signifies full proficiency.

C = Adequate/Fair
This work demonstrates understanding that covers most of the basics but which remains incomplete, superficial, or expresses some important errors or weaknesses. Source material may be used inadequately or somewhat inappropriately. The work may lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations, and articulation/writing may be vague or somewhat hard to follow. A “C” signifies basic proficiency.

D = Unsatisfactory
This work may be “in the ballpark,” so to speak, but it demonstrates a serious lack of understanding, and fails to demonstrate many rudimentary elements of the course assignment. Sources may be used inappropriately or not at all. The work may be inarticulate or extremely difficult to read. A “D” signifies conscientious lack of proficiency.

F = Failed
Work is somehow worse than a D. An “F” signifies extreme lack of proficiency and/or flagrant disregard for the course material and the standards of the assignment. Please note that assignments not completed will receive a zero (0), which is considerably lower than an F in terms of percentage.

Plus (+) or minus (-) grades indicate your range within the aforementioned grades. In other words, B+ means very good.

| Week | Unit | Assignment |
• Please *Introduce Yourself* to your fellow classmates. |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 2    | Aug 30 - Sept 5| Unit One: Chapters 1, 2, & 3  
• Read chapters 1, 2, and 3 in your textbook.  
• Read Unit One course content.  
• Zoom Session (TBA) |
| Week 3    | Sept 6 – Sept 12| Unit One: Chapters 1, 2, & 3  
• Submit the Class Participation/Discussion essay response for Unit 1a -- *What is Scholarly Research and Writing?* by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, September 11. |
| Week 4    | Sept 13 – Sept 19| Unit One: Chapters 1, 2, & 3  
• Submit the Class Participation/Discussion essay response for Unit 1b -- *Chapters 1, 2, and 3 Essay and Response* by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, September 18.  
• Take Reading Quiz Chapters 1, 2, and 3 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Sunday, September 20. |
| Week 5    | Sept 20 – Sept 26| Unit Two: Chapters 4, 5, & 6  
• Read chapters 4, 5, and 6 in textbook.  
• Read Unit Two course content.  
• Zoom Session (TBA) |
| Week 6    | Sept 27 – Oct 3 | Unit Two: Chapters 4, 5, & 6  
• Submit the Class Participation/Discussion Essay for Unit 2 -- *Chapters 4, 5, and 6 Essay and Response* by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, October 2. |
| Week 7    | Oct 4 - Oct 10  | Unit Two: Chapters 4, 5, & 6  
• Take Reading Quiz Chapters 4, 5, and 6 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Sunday, October 11. |
| Week 8    | Oct 11 – Oct 17 | Unit Three: Chapters 7, 8, & 9  
• Read chapters 7, 8, and 9 in textbook.  
• Read Unit Three course content.  
• Zoom Session (TBA) |
| Week 9    | Oct 18 – Oct 24 | Unit Three: Chapters 7, 8, & 9  
• Submit the Class Participation/Discussion Essay response for Unit 3 -- *Chapters 7, 8, and 9 Essay and Response* by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, October 23.  
• Take Reading Quiz Chapters 7, 8, and 9 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Sunday, October 25. |
| Week 10   | Oct 25 – Oct 31 | Unit Four: Chapters 10 & 11  
• Read chapters 10 & 11 in textbook.  
• Read Unit Four course content.  
• Zoom Session (TBA) |
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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Nov 1 – Nov 7</th>
<th>Unit Four: Chapters 10 &amp; 11</th>
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<td>Submit the Class Participation/Discussion Essay response for Unit 4 -- Chapters 10 and 11 Essay and Response by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, November 6.</td>
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<td>Research Paper Idea and Approval due no later than 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, November 6.</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov 8 – Nov 14</td>
<td>Unit Five: First Draft Research Paper</td>
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<td>First Draft of Research Paper due by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Sunday, November 22</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Nov 29 – Dec 5</td>
<td>Unit Six: Final Research Paper</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
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