



**South Plains College Intro to Mass Comm COMM1307.601 Syllabus
Lubbock Fall 2026 M/W 230 – 345 p.m.**

Instructor: Margaret Kirby **Office:** CM 154 **Levelland Campus Phone:** 716-2451
e-mail: mkirby@southplainscollege.edu The fastest way to reach me, other than coming to my office during office hours, is to e-mail me. I should get your email and respond within 24 hours unless you e-mail me on a Friday. In that case, it may be Monday before I can respond to you.

Office Hours: Face to face hours are held in my Levelland office, CM 154. Virtual meetings can be scheduled on Collaborate by appointment only. Please email me to book one.

Tuesdays 830 - 9 a.m.; 11a.m. – 12 p.m.; 3 – 4 p.m.

Thursdays 830 – 9 a.m.; 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; 3 – 4 p.m.

Fridays 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

*** I will also be available at the Lubbock Downtown Center in the classroom, Room 1019, most Mondays and Wednesdays from @130 – 230 p.m. Please just ask if you need help with something.

Credit: 3 semesters hours

Course Description: Survey of basic content and structural elements of mass media and their functions and influences on society.

Recommended Supplies: I recommend that you take notes when you read, watch, and/or study course materials.

Available Reference Textbook: Media & Culture Mass Communication in a Digital Age by Campbell, Martin and Fabos, 11th Edition 978-1-319-05851-7

There is a copy of the 9th edition on reserve at the circulation desk at both the Levelland and Lubbock Downtown Center campus libraries.

Technical Requirements: It is in your best interest to have reliable access to Internet service and a computer so that you can send and receive e-mail, access lectures, submit sometimes lengthy assignments, and take exams. Please visit with me about computer issues! I can't help you if I don't know what your issues are.

Technical Skill Requirements. Be comfortable with the following:

- Microsoft Word or being able to save Word compatible files (.doc); an alternative is to convert assignment files to .rtf or .pdf; **If you have a Mac you must convert your files to .pdfs or .rtfs. A .pages is the Mac default. I cannot open a .pages file.**
- Using email for communication, attaching documents.
- The ability to download video files, or to stream files.
- The ability to take digital photographs and upload them as .jpg files into assignment windows on Blackboard. **I cannot open .heic files. Look at the file extension on any photo your phone takes. It may default as an .heic. If you don't know how to convert that to a .jpg file, please let me know. I will send you instructions.**
- **Understand what browser windows you regularly use- You will not be able to complete your blog assignments by replying to a classmate's post, if you are using Microsoft Edge. Edge is not compatible with Blogger, which is owned by Google.**

This course satisfies a core curriculum requirement: Yes- Language, Philosophy, and Culture

Core Objectives addressed:

- Communication skills- to include effective written, oral, and visual communication
- Critical thinking skills- to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- Personal responsibility skills- to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Student Learning Outcomes :

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the fundamental types, purposes, and relevance of mass communication.
2. Demonstrate understanding of mass media in historic, economic, political, and cultural realms.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the business aspects of mass media and the influence of commercialism.
4. Demonstrate understanding of evolving media technologies and relevant issues and trends.
5. Demonstrate understanding of mass media values, ethics, laws, and industry guidelines.
6. Demonstrate understanding of globalization of mass media.
7. Demonstrate understanding of media effects on society.

Course Evaluation: Students' grades in this class will be determined by the following:

854 points are available for the final grade.

There are no "weighted points" in this class. All points are all worth the same.

859 – 954 = A

764 – 858 = B

668 – 763 = C

573 – 667 = D

Below 573 = F

Major project points are earned as follows:

- Class Blog - 85 points {Submitting Gmail address = 10; Intro post worth 15 points; 3 add'l original posts about an assigned topic worth 20 points each}
- Media Diary – 100 points
- Various Assignments – 269
- 4 Exams at 100 points each = 400 points (The fourth exam is the final exam. It = a project)
- Participation = 100 points (see grid below)

Participation

Missed (Classes for semester)	Class Contributions	Grade Range
0-2	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	90-100
0-2	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	80-90
0-2	Rare or no comments	70-80
2-3	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	70-80
2-3	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	60-70
2-3	Rare or no comments	50-60
3-4	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	50-60
3-4	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	40-50
3-4	Rare or no comments	30-40
More than 4		30

Sometimes the final number of points available for the course will not reach the projected 954 mark or it will exceed it. If either is the case, the scale will be recalibrated automatically by the Blackboard gradebook.

The Blackboard gradebook will display a current “running grade” so you know where you stand throughout the semester. It will display in percentages not points. Here are the basic percentage/grade calculations.

90 – 100% = A

80 – 89% = B

70 – 79% = C

60 – 69% = D

Below 60% = F

Instructor’s Expectations of the Student

- You will be expected to log into the Blackboard course and check your SPC email **daily** to be aware of possible announcements/reminders and to pace your progress in the course. Grades will be submitted into the My Grades area.

- Higher institutions recommend that students plan to spend 2 hours of outside study for every 1 hour of in class time. For a 3 credit-hour, face-to-face course that means a total time investment of 6 hours per week. Expectations for time investment are no less rigorous for online courses at SPC.

Lost/Corrupt/Disappeared Files

You must keep/save a copy of every project/assignment on an external disk or personal computer. In the event of any kind of failure (e.g., Blackboard server crash or virus infection, student’s own computer crashes, loss of files in cyberspace, etc.) or any contradictions/problems, I will request that you resubmit the files. In other words, if you submit a document to me, and I do not receive it or I’m unable to open it in the submitted format, you will need to resend it to me, corrected, with little or no “downtime” in regard to the timeline for submission.

Missed Work

Please do NOT assume that I will contact you to tell you about missed work. Course materials will be available on Blackboard so you can keep track of all materials week by week. You can expect new class materials each week.

The assignments in this class are deadline driven. Keep track of deadlines and submit work when it is due. Late work, if accepted, may not be for full point value.

Do NOT assume that I will move deadlines for you unless you contact me and offer very good and documented reasons why you cannot meet deadlines that are already in place. You may contact me by phone, e-mail, or Collaborate.

In the event that you miss an exam, you must notify me within 48 hours about why. You may or may not be able to “make up” the missed exam. If you miss an exam due to COVID-19, you will take the exam the day you return.

Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first class meeting. Students who enroll in a course but have “Never Attended” by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records.

It is the student’s responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

Deadlines- ALL projects will have deadlines. You need to get used to deadlines that exist in the working world. Late assignments may or may not be accepted depending on the assignment and the reasons for missing the deadlines.

Withdrawal Policy: The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of “W” is Dec. 3. It is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from this course. Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course averages will be updated frequently, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php>.

Intellectual exchange, disabilities, non-discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE Team, Campus Concealed Carry, COVID 19, AI statements, and a new digital ID requirement!!!!!!, please visit: <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Tardiness Policy:

I enforce a 5-minute tardiness rule in my face-to-face classes. I use the clock in the classroom or on my computer to check the time. You may come to class **up to** 5 minutes late. That’s the cutoff. If you arrive **after** that 5-minute window, you’ll be given one warning. The next time you arrive to class past the 5minute window, you’ll be asked to leave. I may or may not have taken attendance already if you arrive 5 minutes late. It’s up to you to make sure you are marked present.

Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Each student is expected to abide by absolute honesty. Infractions will result in penalties subject to an assignment of a grade of "F" for the course or expulsion from the college. Students should also regard civility online as a requirement to remain on the roll in class. As future professionals, you are to communicate with each other in a professional and civil manner. Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Cheating: Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating. Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Intro to Mass Comm LBK Section COMM 1307-601

Fall 2026 Tentative Schedule

Week 1- Aug. 24 - 28

Media & Culture Lecture (2 parts)
Culture Map Assignment **(15 points)**

Week 2- Aug. 31 – Sept. 4

Critical Thinking, Optical Illusions, and Media Literacy Lecture
Submit Gmail address for class blog **(10 points)**

Week 3- Sept. 7 = Holiday

Sept. 8 - 11

First introduction blog assignment (15 points)

Communication eras Lecture

Face card #1 assignment using TIPCUP/N **(5 points)**

Media Diary assignment is presented. Collect data on your own!!! You will write it in class on 9/28

Week 4- Sept. 14 - 18

Books blog assignment **(20 points)**

Books vs. Film- film scene analysis **(20 points)**

Digital Games Lecture

Week 5- Sept. 21 - 25

Internet, Digital Media, and Media Convergence + AI
Lecture

Hamilton Blog Post **(20 points)**

Week 6- Sept. 28 – Oct. 2

Media Diary Notes due Monday 9/28- Write paper about notes in class (100 points)

Jeopardy exam review (10 points)

Week 7- Oct. 5 - 9

Exam 1 (100 points) covers Media Literacy and the 5 –step critical process; Communication Eras; Books; Digital Games; Internet, Digital Media and Media Convergence. There will be one Face Card on the exam as extra credit. It will be worth 2 points.

Sound Recordings and Popular Music: gramophones and phonographs- really early Recordings Lecture

Score **(20 points)** “Soundtrack of Your Life” assignment **(20 points)**

Week 8- Oct. 12 – 15

Oct. 16 Fall Break

Newspapers Lecture 1 & 2

Face Card #2 w/TIPCUPN (5 points)

Magazines and Ethics in Photojournalism Lecture

Real or Fake Photo Quiz Blog Post (20 points)

Week 9- Oct. 19 - 23

Early Radio Lecture +Radio Reinvents Itself Lecture

Empire of the Air documentary worksheet (35 points)

Week 10 Oct. 26 - 30

Jeopardy Exam review (10 points)

Exam 2 (100 points) Covers sound recordings, newspapers, magazines, news photograph ethics, and radio

Week 11- Nov. 2 - 6

Television Lecture 1 & 2

Face Card #3 (5 points)

Week 12- Nov. 9

Movies Lecture

Behind the Screens: Hollywood Goes Hypercommercial Film Worksheet (18 points) due in Blackboard by Friday, Nov. 13

Week 13- Nov. 16 - 20

History of Advertising Lecture & Pharmaceutical Literacy Lecture ONLINE

Week 14- Nov. 23 & 24

“The Merchants of Cool” + “Generation Like” documentaries

Crossword puzzle advertising review for Exam 3 due in Blackboard by Mon., Nov. 30 at 1159 p.m. Answers posted by Tues., Dec. 2

Week 15- Nov. 30- Dec. 4

Exam 3 (100 points) Covers television, movies, and advertising due on Blackboard Wed., Dec. 2 by 1159 p.m.

Week 16- Dec. 7 Final Exam Week

Final Exam Project due in Blackboard by Mon., Dec. 7 at 1 p.m. (100 points)