MHU 490 L1, Topics in the Humanities: History of Media in the United States
Spring 2017

3 Credit Hours

Online class: No scheduled class meetings, labs or discussion sections

Instructor:
Vincent J. Kiernan, Ph.D., Dean, Metropolitan School of Professional Studies
Office location: 334 Pangborn Hall
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Office Hours: 1-2 p.m. Thursday and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an historical overview of American mass media. The course examines newspapers in the colonial period, the growth of newspapers in the early years of the republic, the impact of the Civil War, the development of the yellow press, and the rise of muckrakers and public relations. The course also treats the history of film, radio, television, and advertising. Recent conflicts between the press and government are examined, and the impact of the Internet is considered.

Instructional Methods

This is a fully online course. Using the university’s Blackboard site, you will watch videos, engage in discussions with your instructor and fellow students, and submit assignments.

That means that much of your learning will rely on materials from the Web site and your textbook, from your interactions with me and your fellow students, and from your assignments.

Some people sign up for a Web-based course out of the impression that it will be easier compared to a traditional, face-to-face course. This is not true, and laboring under that misconception can cause some heartache as the semester draws on. It is true that this course is more flexible than a traditional class. You can log on at any hour of the day or night to complete your assignments and participate in discussion. But that flexibility means that you will need better study discipline and organization than in a traditional class. Do not fall behind.
All in all, I hope that you find this to be a stimulating, enjoyable learning experience. Please let me know if you have any feedback or suggestions about the course.

**Required Texts**


You are free to purchase the books wherever you wish, but *be sure to get the correct edition*. You must have access to the textbook by the first week of class; extensions to assignments will not be granted because you do not have access to the textbook.

Additional readings will be distributed via Blackboard.

**Libraries**

The CUA Libraries' wide range of resources and services, including databases, online journals, and FAQs are on the [main web site](#). For assistance on papers and assignments, consult the [research guides](#) or schedule an appointment with a [subject librarian](#).

**Course Goals**

This course aims to provide the student with a broad overview of the history of mass media institutions in the United States, including an assessment of their influence on American society in various eras and an understanding of how social forces within society influenced the structure and function of media institutions.

**Goals for Student Learning**

A student who has mastered the content of this course will be able to:

- Describe the roots of the American media in the colonial era
- Assess how the news media influenced, and was influenced by, the American Revolution
- Relate the growth of U.S. media in early years of the United States
- Describe the characteristics of the media industry during the Jacksonian era
- Evaluate media performance during the Civil War
- Relate the roots and impacts of the yellow press
- Describe the relationship between muckraking and public relations
- Describe the history of the motion picture, radio and television industries
- Assess the impact of the advertising industry on U.S. society
- Evaluate media behavior during national crises
- Describe the impact of the Internet on the U.S. media industry
Course Requirements

The course includes several types of assignments. The graded assignments are:
1. Weekly online discussion. Some weeks have two discussion questions, and each is graded separately.
2. Weekly open-book online quizzes. These quizzes will test your understanding of the readings for the week.
3. Documentation that you have completed three brief exercises in skills needed to submit content to Wikipedia.
4. Three open-book essay exams. These take-home exams will each assess your understanding of one-third of the course’s material.
5. The equivalent of 2,500 words of new content for Wikipedia on a topic in media history. This can be a single article of 2,500 words or a total of 2,500 words added to one existing article in Wikipedia. (References are required, but the references are excluded from the 2,500 word minimum.)
6. After you have submitted your Wikipedia paper to Wikipedia, you are to monitor its reception by the Wikipedia community: Was it edited? By whom? Did it trigger any controversy or conflict? If so, how were they resolved? You are to submit a 500-word reflection paper recounting your Wikipedia experience.

Extra credit

You may earn 1 percentage point extra credit by meeting (in person or virtually) with a tutor from the university’s Writing Center or MSPS’s dedicated writing tutor, Mr. Kenneth Killiany, for coaching on your Wikipedia project. Get a note from the tutor certifying your attendance and upload a scan or photo of it to Blackboard.

You may earn 1 percentage point extra credit by meeting (in person or virtually) with a CUA librarian for a research consultation on your Wikipedia project. Get a note from the librarian certifying your attendance and upload a scan or photo of it to Blackboard by the due date for the Wikipedia project.

You may earn up to 1 percentage point additional toward your course grade by visiting a cultural site of your choosing relevant to media history and submitting a 500-word report on it. To earn full credit on this assignment, the essay will not merely describe the materials but will relate the materials to information taught in this course. For example, you might choose to visit the Newseum in DC and compare the content of one exhibit with what has been taught in this class. The essay should be double spaced with 1-inch margins. Use APA citations when appropriate. Use flawless grammar and spelling.

You may earn up to 1 percentage point additional toward your course grade by writing a 500-word review on a book relevant to media history. The book must have been published in 2012 or later. To earn full credit on this assignment, the review will not merely summarize the book but critically evaluate it. The essay should be double spaced with 1-inch margins. Use APA citations when appropriate. Use flawless grammar and spelling.
You may earn up to 1 percentage point additional toward your course grade by preparing a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation about an individual who played a role in the history of mass media in the United States. The presentation should include no more than 10 slides, including at least one slide with references for the information in the presentation, in APA format. You may not duplicate information from your final project for this class. Use flawless grammar and spelling.

There may be other opportunities to earn extra credit. Details will be posted in the Announcements section of Blackboard.

**Expectations and policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is not merely avoiding plagiarism or cheating, but it certainly includes those things. More than anything, having academic integrity means taking responsibility for your work, your ideas, and your effort, and giving credit to others for their work, ideas and effort. If you submit work that is not your own – whether test answers, whole papers or something in-between – I have a responsibility to hold you accountable for that action. I also have a responsibility to treat you with respect and dignity while doing so.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty:

“The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student’s past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.”

There is no group work in the class; therefore, you should not collaborate with classmates on work that is to be submitted for an individual grade.

It is plagiarism to copy information from another source without acknowledging it. It also is plagiarism to use someone’s exact words without both placing quotation marks around the words and providing a reference. In this course, citations must follow the style rules of the American Psychological Association.

For more information about what academic integrity means at CUA, including your responsibilities and rights, visit [http://integrity.cua.edu](http://integrity.cua.edu).

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support ([dss.cua.edu](http://dss.cua.edu)) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.
Response time

This course uses amazing online technology, but it still includes a flesh-and-blood instructor. This means:

- Your written assignments are **not** graded by the computer. They are graded by me, and I cannot do that instantly. You can expect to receive grades on a written assignment within a week after the assignment’s due date.
- I am online frequently but not 24/7. That means you will not get instant responses to email inquiries. I will answer e-mails, questions posted to the discussion board and telephone messages as quickly as I can -- within one business day after I received it.

Late assignments

**Important: No credit will be given for any assignment that is submitted late without the instructor’s prior approval.** “Prior approval” means that the student must communicate with the instructor before the assignment’s deadline. An assignment that is submitted late with the instructor’s prior approval will have its grade reduced by 10 percent for every day it is late.

Absences

The instructor will count a student as “absent” in any week in which the student fails to submit any of the assignments due that week, including discussion postings, quizzes, or take-home examinations.

After the student accumulates two such “absent” weeks, the student will receive an F* failing grade in the course, regardless of the student’s grade in other assignments.

Accuracy

Your writing must be factually accurate. Errors, even seemingly minor ones, will have a heavy impact on your grade.

Turnitin.com

All written assignments also must be submitted to Turnitin.com for a Textuality Similarity Review. **An assignment will not count as submitted until it has been submitted to both Blackboard and Turnitin.com.**

To submit your assignments to Turnitin.com, you first will have to create an account at www.turnitin.com. Click on the new user link and create a user profile. You will need the following information:

Class ID: 13933133
Password: (will be distributed on Blackboard)
Then you can log in and click on the link for this class. Click on the assignment link and upload your paper.

Inclement weather and other emergencies

Due dates for assignments for this online course will not be changed due to inclement weather.

Academic Support Services

The university’s primary academic support resources are located on the 2nd floor of the Pryzbyla Center. These affiliated offices and services include:

Kenneth Killiany is MSPS’s internal writing tutor who provides individualized writing support. He can be reached at killiany@cua.edu. Please put “Metro SPS Writing Help” in the subject line.

The Center for Academic Success provides academic support services for all students through a broad base of programs and services, including Tutoring Services, Workshops, Academic Coaching, Individual Skills Meetings, Peer Mentoring, and more.

Phone: (202) 319-5655  Email: cua-academicsuccess@cua.edu  Web: success.cua.edu

The Writing Center provides free, one-on-one consultations with trained graduate instructors for writing projects across all disciplines at any stage of the process, from brainstorming to revising. Appointments in the main location, Mullen 219, can be scheduled in advance online (http://english.cua.edu/wc/). Drop-in appointments are also welcome based on availability (see website for days and hours).

Phone: (202) 319-4286  Email: cua-writingcenter@cua.edu  Web: english.cua.edu/wc/

The Math Center is staffed with Math Faculty and Tutors who are trained to assist students struggling in areas ranging from the basics to complex problems in calculus and statistics. Any student who feels he or she may need assistance in this or any other math class is welcome to visit the Math Center in Pryz 202 Monday through Thursday between the hours of 4:00 and 10:00pm. No appointment is necessary and services are absolutely free.

Phone: (202) 319-5655  Email: cua-academicsuccess@cua.edu

Disability Support Services provides programs and services designed to support and encourage the integration of students with disabilities into the mainstream of the university community.

Phone: (202) 319-5211  Email: cua-disabilityservices@cua.edu  Web: dss.cua.edu

The Counseling Center provides free individual and group counseling services, psychiatric consultation, alternative testing, and emergency services to CUA students. In addition, we provide consultation services and outreach programs to the CUA community. Appointments can be scheduled in person in 127 O’Boyle Hall, or by phone.

Phone: (202) 319-5765. Web: counseling.cua.edu
Grading
The final grade will be determined as follows:

- 93% to 100% = A
- 90% to 92% = A minus
- 87% to 89% = B plus
- 83% to 86% = B
- 80% to 82% = B minus
- 77% to 79% = C plus
- 73% to 76% = C
- 70% to 72% = C minus
- 60% to 69% = D
- Below 60% = F

This grade will be computed based on your performance on the course’s assignments. The final percentage computed by Blackboard will be rounded to the nearest integer.

The components of the course grade are as follows:

1. Weekly online discussion: Each discussion is worth 1.5 percent of your final grade. Your week’s discussion grade will take into account both whether you meet the deadlines for discussion postings and the substantiveness of your postings. When responding to someone else’s posting a substantial posting is one that says more than “Me too” or “I disagree.” A substantial response will explain why you agree or disagree and will provide evidence or examples to support your position. Some weeks have two discussion questions, and each is graded separately.

2. Weekly open-book online quizzes: Each quiz is worth 2 percent of your final grade.

3. Documentation that you have completed three brief exercises in skills needed to submit content to Wikipedia: Each is worth 1 percent of your final grade.

4. Three open-book essay exams: Each is worth 9 percent of your final grade.

5. New content for Wikipedia on a topic in media history: This assignment is worth 14 percent of your final grade.

6. Wikipedia reflection paper: This assignment is worth 1 percent of your final grade.

University grades:
The University grading system is available at http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad//gradesfull.cfm#II for undergraduates and http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii for graduate students. Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on http://cardinalstation.cua.edu.
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<tr>
<th>Course Schedule</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Course week</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 1: January 9-15</td>
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<td>Module 2: January 16-22</td>
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<td>Module 3: January 23-29</td>
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<td>Module 4: January 30-February 5</td>
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<td>Course week</td>
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| Module 5:       | Late 1800’s: The press in the Civil War; abolitionist press; Matthew Brady; censorship | Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan  
In Fellow, read Chapter 5  
Read Chapter 5 in Broughton.  
Watch Civil War video on Blackboard  
Two discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon. (One discussion question calls for three ideas for your final project.)  
Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night  
Take-home examination on Modules 1-5 is due Sunday night |
| February 6-12   |                                                                                  |                                                                                                       |
| Module 6:       | Yellow Press: Rise of the yellow press; William Randolph Hearst; the Spanish-American War | Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan  
In Fellow, read Chapter 6  
Read Chapter 8 in Broughton.  
Watch video on Joseph Pulitzer on Blackboard  
Discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon  
Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night |
| February 13-19  |                                                                                  |                                                                                                       |
| Module 7:       | Muckraking: The rise and death of muckraking; the development of corporate public relations | Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan  
In Fellow, read Chapter 7  
Read Chapter 10 in Broughton.  
Read Chapter 1 of *The History of the Standard Oil Company* on Blackboard  
Watch video on Edward Bernays in Blackboard  
Discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon  
Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night |
| February 20-26  |                                                                                  |                                                                                                       |
| Module 8:       | Film: Development of motion picture technology, its economic roots; expansion and challenges to the industry | Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan  
In Fellow, read Chapter 8  
Read Rollins article on *Why We Fight* on Blackboard  
Watch *Why We Fight* on Blackboard  
Two discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon. (One discussion question calls for a final idea and research plan for your final project.)  
Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night |
| February 27-March 5 |                                                                                 |                                                                                                       |

March 6-13: Spring break: No assignments
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<tr>
<th>Course week</th>
<th>Principal topics</th>
<th>Assignments and learning activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 9:</td>
<td>Radio: Development of the technology; battles over intellectual property; creation of networks; regulatory trends</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan In Fellow, read Chapter 9 Listen to <em>War of the Worlds</em> on Blackboard Read the <em>New York Times</em>’ coverage of the <em>War of the Worlds</em> broadcast Discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night</td>
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<td>March 13-19</td>
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<td>Module 10:</td>
<td>Television: Development of the technology; development of networks; quiz-show scandals; the McCarthy era</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan In Fellow, read Chapter 10 Watch video on Blackboard Two discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon. (One discussion question calls for 5 sources for your final project.) Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night Take-home examination on Modules 6-10 is due Sunday night</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 20-26</td>
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<td>Module 11:</td>
<td>Advertising: Historical development of advertising; regulatory trends</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan In Fellow, read Chapter 11 Discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon Watch video on Blackboard Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night</td>
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<td>March 27-April 2</td>
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<td>Module 12:</td>
<td>The press and Richard Nixon: Journalists in the Vietnam war; Watergate; the Pentagon Papers</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan In Fellow, read Chapter 12 Watch video on Blackboard Read Dershowitz article on the Pentagon Papers on Blackboard Two discussion postings due Wednesday night and Saturday noon. (One discussion question calls for an outline for your final project.) Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night</td>
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<td>April 3-9</td>
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<td>Module 13:</td>
<td>The 1980s and beyond: Middle East; Lewinsky scandal; 9/11</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan In Fellow, read Chapter 13 Read chapter from Kalb book on Blackboard Discussion postings due Wednesday (April 12) night and Saturday (April 22) noon Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday (April 23) night Wikipedia submission is due by Sunday (April 23) night</td>
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<td>April 10-23 (note extended dates due to Easter break)</td>
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<td>Course week</td>
<td>Principal topics</td>
<td>Assignments and learning activities</td>
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<td>Module 14:</td>
<td>Internet:</td>
<td>Watch overview video by Dr. Kiernan</td>
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<td>April 24-28</td>
<td>Development of the technology;</td>
<td>In Fellow, read Chapter 14</td>
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<td>emergence of</td>
<td>Watch Andrew Lih video on Blackboard</td>
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<td>personal computing and networking;</td>
<td>Read articles about Wikipedia and <em>The Washington Post</em> on Blackboard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>social networking</td>
<td>No discussion postings due</td>
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<td>Online quiz on readings/video due Sunday night</td>
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Reflection paper on Wikipedia experience, third take-home examination, and extra credit assignments (if any) are due in both Blackboard and Turnitin by 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, May 6.