



Course Description: This course is designed to provide you with an introductory look at the media - - not only in terms of effects, but also with regard to the legal, economic and socio-historical features that are a part of, and result from, the media industry at large.

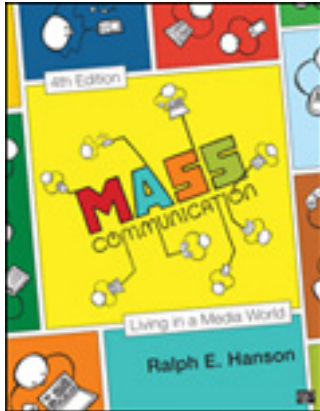
While you might be most interested in what is happening in the media today or where it might go in the future, it is important to take a look at how media industries have developed and changed over time. This background will help us explore the current and possible future of media.

We will explore:

- Theories about the relationship between media and society
- Changes in the industry and its economic structure (e.g., moving from Broadcasting to Narrowcasting, from analog to digital, etc.)
- Controversial media practices like manipulating photographs, phone tapping for news stories, paying sources, and big mergers that leave consumers with fewer choices.

What You'll Need for the Course

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Textbook: Hanson, Ralph E. (2013). Mass Communication: Living in a Media World. 4th Edition, CQ Press. ISBN 978-1-4522-0299-0

Stable Internet Connection: You will need to be online for our course several times a week to watch videos, participate in discussions, take timed exams, etc. So it is imperative that you have a stable internet connection.

PLATO: PLATO is the name of the WSU course management system, which is actually **Blackboard Learn 9**. You can explore our online resources by logging into Plato at http://www.westfield.ma.edu/plato/?page_id=115

If you have any problems, you can seek help at the Center for Instructional Technology at <http://cit.westfield.ma.edu/support/>

What the Workload Will Look Like

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Because of the condensed time frame for the course, things will move quickly. You will be required to complete course assignments on time. There will be either a paper due or an exam to take each week of the course. In addition, you will be working on readings, video viewing, discussions and homework. Below is a general description of the coursework.

Readings: You will be expected to read 1-2 textbook chapters per week. In addition, you may be assigned to read articles from trade publications, blogs or news aggregators about issues taking place in the industry.

Viewing: You will be required to view at least three videos/documentaries about the media industry. These will either be streamed from our site, or I will provide links to online sources.

Discussion: You will be required to participate in weekly online discussions of course material. I will provide questions/issues based on our readings or video viewing. You will post your own original reflections as well as responses to your classmate's work.

Exams: There are three exams in the course. They are open-book, but timed. The format is objective (i.e., multiple-choice, true/false, etc.)

Papers: There are two formal paper assignments in this course. The papers require you (1) track a change in the media industry and (2) closely analyze some media content. There will be other smaller writing assignments (e.g., evaluating a blog, answering questions about a video, etc.).

Grading:

- 3 Exams = 45% of the final grade
- 2 Formal papers = 40% of the final grade
- Discussions/Homework = 15% of the final grade