MCOM 5160: Proseminar in Media & Communication
Fall 2019, MC 084

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Office hours: T/TH 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., or by appointment.

Course Description:

The Proseminar in Media & Communication provides an opportunity to make the transition into doctoral-level graduate study. The course is designed to help you understand the difference between being a student and being a scholar. Ideally, what you learn in the course should help you complete this transition. It also provides you the opportunity to become better acquainted with the types of research being conducted in the College of Media and Communication. The class will also allow you to get to know the other students who will be joining you in classes and projects. It will also give you a useful opportunity to ask “housekeeping” questions that will smooth your way in the many areas of personal and academic concern and through the times of heavy workloads that lie ahead. You are encouraged to freely discuss your problems and to ask for assistance working your way through difficulties that are common to all graduate students. Please do not be embarrassed to ask questions.

Learning Objectives and Methods of Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Expected Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Methods of assessment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will have an understanding of the procedures and steps involved in earning a PhD degree.</td>
<td>Class discussion, instructor interviews, degree plan assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to select a program of study</td>
<td>Class discussion, degree plan assignment, and course equivalency assignment</td>
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<td>Students will become acquainted with the research being conducted in the college</td>
<td>Class discussion and instructor interviews. Written reviews of research presentations, journal articles, and/or theses/dissertations.</td>
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<td>Students will have an understanding of the exam processes in the college</td>
<td>Class discussion and instructor interviews.</td>
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Students will be able to explain what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

Class discussion and instructor interviews.

### Course Requirements

**Dissertation Review:** Each student will prepare a typed three-four page written analysis of a media & communication dissertation. Explain what research question(s) the author asked, how the research questions were answered and the limitations of the research. Also, give your overall impression of the dissertation. Was the literature review adequate? Was the methodology appropriate and were the results useful? You should not comment on the grammar, spelling and punctuation of the dissertation.

**Matriculation Assignments:** Periodically, students may write a short report related to the topics covered in class and/or complete degree plan and course equivalency assignments.

### Grade Weights

- **Dissertation Review** 50 percent
- **Matriculation Assignments** 50 percent

Final semester grades will be assigned as follows:

- A 90 to 100 percent
- B 80 to 89.9 percent
- C 70 to 79.9 percent
- D 60 to 69.9 percent
- F 59.9 percent or less

### Graded Assignments:

Late assignments will not be accepted (and will receive a score of zero), and incompletes will not be granted except under extreme circumstances.

### Special Grading Policies (please take note):

1. No extra credit is available.
2. Grades are not rounded up.
3. No special assignments are available to “boost” a student’s grade.
4. There is no curve.

### Questions about your grades:

I am more than happy to talk with you about your grade and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your graded work. That said, I require a 24-hour “cool off” period. We will not discuss your grade until we both have time to gather our thoughts and have a productive conversation. After the initial 24 hours, students have one week to meet with the instructor to discuss the grade. If the student does not meet with the instructor within a week, then the instructor considers the matter closed.
No Make-ups:

Students will not be allowed to make up missed assignments. Weddings, family vacations, commitments related to other classes, etc. don’t count. No exceptions, so please don’t ask.

Expectations for Class Participation/Conduct/Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one’s own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University (“University”) Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010]. The Student Code of Conduct applies to all work related to this class (available online at http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentaffairs/). All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars and professionals. Please reference OP 34.12 regarding Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and/or cheating are taken very seriously. Any attempt of students to present as their own any work that they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense and renders the offenders liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension. Any evidence of academic misconduct will result in an “F” for the course and will be reported to the appropriate university office in accordance with the Texas Tech University Code of Student Conduct and the rules of faculty governance. Academic misconduct is any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the institution or subverts the educational process.

Please be respectful of your instructor and the other students in the class; again, the class relies on healthy, constructive discussion and debate.

Please turn your mobile devices off while in class. Use your laptops and other devices for class-related purposes only. Please no texting during class.

I reserve the right to remove you from the class should it become necessary to maintain a civil and constructive classroom environment. If necessary, I will reduce your class participation/attendance grade to provide the appropriate ‘motivation’ to secure your compliance with the policies regarding classroom conduct.

Students with Challenges:

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary
arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor’s office hours. Please note instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact the Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405.

Observance of Religious Holidays:

“Religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code 11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

TTU Resources for Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Violence

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other Title IX violations are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution, (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at titleix.ttu.edu/students. Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are: TTU Student Counseling Center, 806-742-3674, https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/ (Provides confidential support on campus.) TTU Student Counseling Center 24-hour Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.) Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, voiceofhopelubbock.org (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.) The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, rise.ttu.edu (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.) Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742-3931, http://www.depts.ttu.edu/tpd/ (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

Miscellaneous:

- The instructor reserves the right to make any changes to the syllabus, schedule, assignments, readings, forms, lecture topics, assessments, and any other course content if deemed necessary to facilitate classroom management and to achieve the learning objectives for the course. Students are responsible to stay aware of these changes.
- I take plagiarism very seriously. I expect your work in this class to be completely your work. It should also be original for this class—you may not receive credit for work you do in this class for another class, or vice versa. If you have a question about the originality of your work, please discuss with the instructor as soon as possible. I reserve the right to report plagiarism or suspected plagiarism to the university. The same policy
goes for both presenting another’s work as your own, for recreating another’s work in substantially the same form, or for using work you’ve done for another class in this class. The instructor will be the sole judge of what constitutes “substantially the same form.” Any and all instances of plagiarism will receive a zero, and your final course grade will be Fail, at the instructor’s discretion. Students agree that in taking this course, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review via Turnitin.com or other plagiarism checks.

Lecture Schedule and Readings

Course schedule is subject to change. In such a case, announcements will be made in class, via e-mail, or via blackboard announcement.

**August 26**  
Class introduction, graduate work expectations

**September 2**  
No class, Labor Day holiday

**September 9**  
Matriculation/coursework requirements (Courses, Qualifying Exams, Dissertation Proposal, Dissertation, paperwork at each step)

**September 16**  
Advisors (temporary, permanent)  
Transfer credits (course equivalency assignment)

**September 23**  
Dean Perlmutter visit

**September 30**  
Academic Integrity

**October 7**  
Establishing a clear research program

**October 14**  
Vita creation and maintenance

**October 21**  
Conferences and journals

**October 28**  
Dissertation Review Presentations

**November 4**  
Dissertation Review Presentations

**November 11**  
Dissertation Review Presentations

**November 18**  
Dissertation Review Presentations

**November 25**  
2nd semester/Summer course selection/advising (degree plan assignment)

**December 2**  
2nd semester/Summer course selection/advising